

# WaterWays

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## Above-average snowpack and reservoir water levels

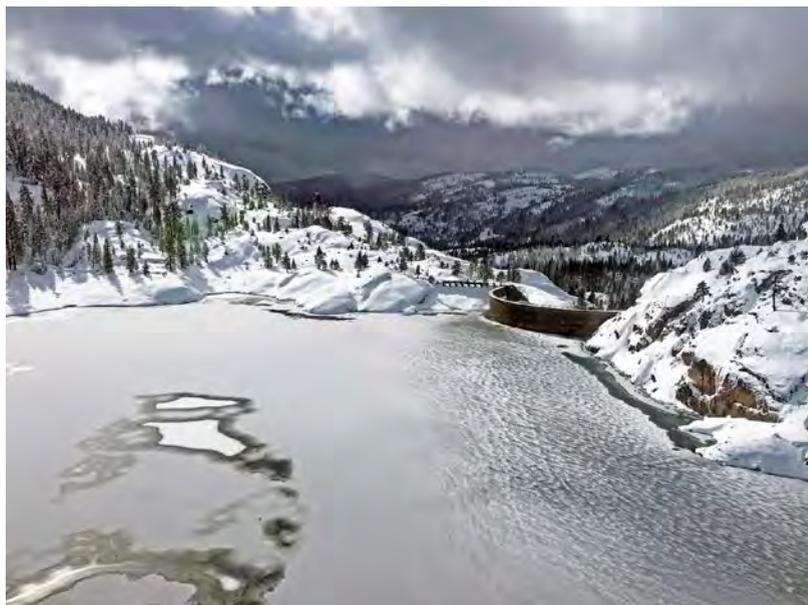
Snowpack and reservoir water levels are slightly above average this winter season, with a series of early-year storms adding to the snow levels in NID's upper mountain division.

NID depends on Sierra snowpack for its water source; the snow that falls high up in the mountains today will be the water that nourishes local farm fields and provides our drinking water during the summer.

"This is a very promising start to the year with both the snowpack water content and reservoir storage being above average," said Sue Sindt, NID's Water Resources Superintendent. "With more storms forecasted, January was above average and February has started off wet. Hopefully that will be sustained through March."

NID has been keeping weather records for Bowman Reservoir since 1929. The District conducts three official snow surveys each year in February, March and April. On average, the 5,650-foot elevation reservoir receives 69.2 inches of snow and rain each year.

As a member of the California Cooperative Snow Survey, NID provides snow survey results to the state to determine water availability locally and statewide. Learn more about how you get your water [here](#).



Wintry conditions are evident on Feb. 6 at the Bowman South Arch Dam.



### The more things change, the more they stay the same.

While skis were the preferred mode of transportation to the high country for an NID snow survey in 1926 (left photo), today's hydrographers rely on a helicopter to get to the high country.

Snowpack measurements provide vital information to NID experts who manage the water supply for our community.



## NID customers adopt water conservation as a way of life

Customers can feel good about their voluntary efforts to reduce water usage. In January, customers used 9 percent less treated water than in 2013, which is the first year of the worst drought in modern times and serves as a benchmark for water conservation measurements. In total for 2018, customers used 12 percent less treated water than in 2013.

This is an indication customers are embracing the concept that water conservation should be a way of life throughout the year, whether during the wet, cold winter or dry, scorching summer.

“Our new norm of water usage is well below that of the recent drought years,” said Chip Close, NID operations manager. “Thank you to NID customers who have voluntarily incorporated water conservation into their lifestyles. It is important to be responsible stewards of our water resources, and conservation is a crucial way to stretch our limited supply and be responsive to the effects of climate change and future drought.”

Now that winter is upon us, wetter weather means gardens and landscape do not need irrigation. There still are opportunities to conserve water. Find some easy water conservation actions at NID’s website [here](#):

- Use an online water usage calculator to see how much water your family really uses
- Install low-flow shower heads and shorten your shower. Showering accounts for nearly 17 percent of residential indoor water use – up to 40 gallons per day for an average family
- Improve the efficiency of your toilet with an old trick. Place a brick in the toilet tank. The brick displaces about half a gallon of water, which reduces the amount needed per flush. Plus, there’s little effect on the flush power.

## NID welcomes new Directors

NID welcomes three new members to its Board of Directors. Ricki Heck (Division 1), Chris Bierwagen (Division 3) and Laura Peters (Division 4) joined Directors Nick Wilcox and Scott Miller on the Board.

Elected to four-year terms, NID Directors set policy to ensure a reliable, high-quality water supply for our farms, homes and businesses in Nevada and Placer counties. Read the bios of the Directors [here](#).



**(From left to right) Laura Peters, Chris Bierwagen and Ricki Heck were inducted on Dec. 12, 2018.**

## Jacqueline Longshore named NID Maintenance Manager



**Jacqueline Longshore during a fish rescue at the Scotts Flat plunge pool.**

Congratulations to Jacqueline Longshore, who has been promoted to Maintenance Manager. In her new position she will oversee the activities of employees in Construction, Service, Facilities Maintenance and Fleet Maintenance.

Ms. Longshore started as a Senior Vegetation Control Worker with NID on June 6, 2011, and promoted to Assistant Maintenance Superintendent – Vegetation Control on May 6, 2013. She transferred to Hydroelectric as the Hydroelectric Program Analyst on Feb, 10, 2014, then promoted to Hydroelectric Compliance Administrator on May 19, 2018. On Jan. 7, 2019 her promotion to Maintenance Manager was announced after former Manager Brian Powell retired.

Prior to NID, Ms. Longshore worked for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection as a Forestry Assistant and Urban Forester. She holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Forestry and Natural Resources Management from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, and has a minor in water science and concentration in resources management.

## NID News Briefs:



### Finding the most effective, least toxic treatments for vegetation management

NID's Vegetation Management Crew completed aquatic vegetation treatments in October as part of the District's ongoing efforts to test and find alternatives to conventional herbicides.

### NID keeps the water running for federal workers

NID gave a helping hand to Federal employee customers impacted by the government shutdown. NID worked with customers to develop payment plans and forego any fees and penalties associated with late payments.

### Check out NID videos on YouTube:

#### Watershed Stewardship at Scotts Flat

NID places a high priority on watershed stewardship. Focused efforts improve the health of watersheds, which are our ultimate source of water. Learn about NID projects addressing forest health and fire risk at Scotts Flat Reservoir. Click [here](#).



#### NID's Vegetation Management Program

With more than 400 miles of canals in Nevada and Placer counties, weed control is a big job for NID boundaries. The District's integrated program aims to prevent algae and other growth from clogging canals, limiting access and affecting water deliveries. Click [here](#).

#### Water Conservation: Saving Water on the Farm through Drip Irrigation

This video profiles Rich Johansen, farmer who conserves water through drip irrigation on 12 organic acres in Penn Valley. Click [here](#).

#### South Yuba Canal

NID is purchasing PG&E's Deer Creek facilities, including the powerhouse, most of the South Yuba Canal and Chalk Bluff Canal. These are significant components for NID water deliveries to more than 30,000 people in Grass Valley and Nevada City. Click [here](#).

#### Sediment and Mercury Removal at Combie Reservoir

This pilot project aims to remove and clean about 80,000 cubic yards of sediment from Combie Reservoir to reduce elemental mercury in the Bear River watershed and restore water storage capacity in the reservoir. Click [here](#).



A group of kayakers enjoy the serenity of morning on Scotts Flat Reservoir during 2018's No Motor Day.

## Save the Dates for Fun!

Bring the family and join in these fun events at NID Reservoirs and Campgrounds:

April 20: Easter Egg Hunt at Orchard Springs

May 19: No Motor Day at Scotts Flat

Sept. 14: Kid's Triathlon at Orchard Springs

Sept. 15: BSM (Barbara Schmidt Millar) Triathlon at Cascade Shores Boat Launch

# Focus on reducing fire risk and improving watershed health

NID places a high priority on efforts to improve watershed health, including work to restore montane meadows, improve fish habitat and reduce the risk of catastrophic fire in our forests.



Here's what's happening in 2019:

**Fire Fuels Reduction & Forestry** – Hazard tree and fire fuels removal is underway between Scotts Flat Campgrounds Gate 1 and Gate 2. Also, both sides of Scotts Flat Road will be thinned.

CALFIRE is conducting site preparation for a California Forest Improvement grant for fire fuels mastication at Scotts Flat between Gates 1 and 2 and at Peninsula Campground at Rollins Reservoir.

**PG&E Expanded Vegetation Management Program** – Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) is clearing power lines around Scotts Flat in the designed Tier 3 fire-threat area, which is established by the California Public Utilities Commission as having an extreme risk

from utility-associated wildfires. The work – including removal of wood and small material -- is occurring from the Scotts Flat powerhouse up to Scotts Flat Road, and from the Gate 2 entrance out Casci Road (about one mile). PG&E contractors worked with NID staff and a forester to mark the trees and lay out the treatment areas.

## Hazard Tree Removal at Bowman Reservoir

Hazard tree removal is completed at the dispersed campsites at Bowman Reservoir ahead of the recreation season that generally runs from Memorial Day through Labor Day, depending on weather the high mountain areas.

## English Meadow Restoration

As the restoration efforts continue at English Meadow (elevation 6,152 feet), Summer 2018 was a good season with more than 47 bird species identified, wetland delineation finished and an archeological survey and second year of plant surveys completed.

The meadow is northeast of English Mountain, southeast of Findley Peak and west of Jones Valley.

NID's multi-year restoration project seeks to improve meadow function and habitat, and reconnect the meadow to the Middle Yuba River. When the natural connection between the river and meadow is re-established, function will be restored. More water will accumulate as the spongy ground absorbs snowmelt runoff and percolates it through the soil. The water will remain in the meadow longer into the year, instead of pulsing out in a rush when the snow melts.



## NID Board of Directors



DIVISION I  
Nevada City Area  
**Ricki Heck**



DIVISION II  
Grass Valley -  
Chicago Park  
**Chris Bierwagen**



DIVISION III  
Lake of the Pines -  
Alta Sierra  
**Scott Miller, M.D**



DIVISION IV  
Lincoln -  
North Auburn  
**Laura Peters**



DIVISION V  
Penn Valley -  
Lake Wildwood  
**Nick Wilcox**