



**Draft EIR Released
on Canal Project**

Page 3
←

**Strategic
Planning**

Page 2

**Wet and Wild
Winter**

Page 3

NID *WaterWays*

A Newsletter to the Customers
of the Nevada Irrigation District

Volume 27 • Number 1 • Spring, 2006

Running Water

***Today's Water Distribution
Operators Meet New State
Certification Standards***

They are the people who oversee and regulate operation of canals, pipelines, pumps and many of the other facilities needed to provide NID water users with a dependable high quality water supply.

Beginning next year, NID's team of Water Distribution Operators, along with treated water distribution operators from across California, will be required to hold state certification in their field.

Voluntary to Mandatory

State certification is not a major hurdle for the district. "We're ahead of the curve," says Assistant Water Supt. Larry Markey. "Our people have been certified through a voluntary program with the American Water Works Association (AWWA) for the



NID Water Distribution Operators Tim Bradley, Mark Woods and Ken Hart all have achieved Grade III certification from the state Department of Health Services.

past 20 years."

Sixteen employees in NID's Water Distribution Section already hold either Grade 2 or Grade 3 state certification in water distribution. Four of the district's newest operators were in training and expected to win certification in April, Markey said.

State certification brings a higher level of professionalism to the duties of Water Distribution Operators (WDOs). This

complements the existing certification program for Water Treatment Operators (WTOs), the people who produce and store treated drinking water.

Irrigation Water, Too

While state certification for water distribution is related to drinking water and public health, Markey says NID's diverse water system requires operators also to be proficient in the operation of irrigation

(Please see WDOs, Page 3)

General Manager's Report

Strategic Planning Helps Prioritize District Business

By Ron Nelson



To best serve our customers today and tomorrow, NID is involved in an ongoing strategic planning process.

Over the past two years, the NID board and staff, with public participation, have outlined and prioritized 21 specific goal areas. The board is now reviewing objectives within each area.

The goals and objectives cover a wide range of everyday business activities. Through strategic planning, we hope to focus our resources on those areas the board sees as needing the most attention.

The board has adopted its No. 1 objective within the Water Management & Operations function, which is the expansion of water service to areas of the district where it is not yet available.

Here are the remaining goal areas and objectives we have identified:

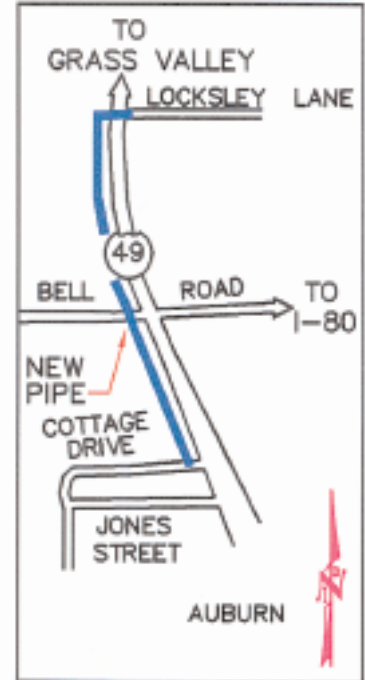
- **Water Management.** Ensure reliability of the delivery system.
- **Water Management.** Active preservation of NID water rights.
- **Finance.** Develop a process for human and financial resource allocation.
- **Hydroelectric.** Develop a strategy for effective management of the NID hydroelectric power system.
- **Asset Management.** Improve and develop a management system for maintaining, preserving and replacing NID assets.
- **Water Management.** Protect water quality through watershed management.
- **Asset Management.** Develop a system for planning for future needs.
- **Personnel.** Develop a recruitment, selection and succession planning system.
- **Recreation.** Manage recreation facilities safely and efficiently.
- **Asset Management.** Evaluate and expand systems for complying with governmental regulations.
- **Hydroelectric.** Develop a strategy for retaining and improving contract relationships.
- **Personnel.** Design and implement a work force/work place security plan.
- **Personnel.** Assess and improve employee salary and benefit packages as appropriate.
- **Communic./Technology.** Improve internal and external network systems and communication.
- **Public Relations.** Improve and develop a public outreach strategy that provides for effective two-way communication.
- **Public Relations.** Evaluate and improve a strategy for quick and effective response to inquiries.
- **Personnel.** Evaluate and improve employee safety programs.
- **Communic./Technology.** Develop and update a technology plan.
- **Public Relations.** Develop a process to better support and enable employees to be good ambassadors for NID.
- **Recreation.** Partner with community organizations to enhance and expand existing and new recreation areas.

As you may see from this list, NID is taking a positive, proactive approach in addressing the many and varied areas of responsibility of a unique, 85-year-old district such as ours.

I am hopeful that this overview of our strategic planning process will reassure customers that the district is on the right track and will be very well-prepared to meet your water needs in the years to come.

Highway 49 Pipeline Project in No. Auburn

To improve fire flow and meet needs for future demand, NID is planning to install a new 16-inch main line along Highway 49 in North Auburn.



The pipeline will run along the west side of Highway 49

The North Auburn Highway 49 Transmission Pipeline is planned to run for 4300 feet along the west side of Highway 49 from Locksley Lane south to Cottage Way.

Construction This Fall

The district has selected a consulting firm, Mead & Hunt, of Sacramento, to design and construct the water project. Construction is planned to commence in September or October and be completed by Jan. 30, 2007.

After crossing Highway 49, most of the work is expected to be along the west shoulder of the highway. Some traffic controls are anticipated.

A Wet and White Winter

Big Storms Push December, March Precipitation Well Above Average

The month of March came in like a lion and stayed that way, with snow piling up in the foothills as well as on the mountain watershed.

In the April 1 snow survey, district snow surveyors measured a 111 percent of average water content on NID mountain watershed, well beyond the 67 percent level of Mar. 1.

By Apr. 6, precipitation at Bowman Reservoir (elev. 5,650 ft.) had reached 93.17 inches, or 156 percent of average for the date. With three months left in the current rainfall year, the current season already was the 12th wettest in 119 years of NID weather records.

The month of March produced 23.14 inches, or 220 percent of average precipitation, but it was the month of December, 2005 that approached the record books. It measured up as the fifth wettest December on record, with 27.49 inches of precipitation, or 406 percent of average.

NID water storage as of Apr. 6 stood at 218,900 acre-feet, 87 percent of capacity and 121 percent of average for this time of year. All district reservoirs will fill this year.

WDOs - Continued from Page 1

water systems, and in some cases, small hydro-electric power plants.

NID distribution operators patrol nine routes within the district; five in Nevada County and four in Placer County. All include both treated water and raw water, except for two rural Placer County routes where only irrigation water is supplied.

Operators and relief operators cover the routes daily, regulating pipe and canal flows, checking pumps, spillways, water boxes and meters. Operators often provide first response to customer calls and water emergencies.

Increasing levels of certification require more time and experience on the job, along with continued training in subject matter from pressure, hydraulics and electrical systems to matters of odor, taste and customer service.

"It's a job that requires a thorough understanding of water in all its forms," said Markey. "We are very fortunate to have a good group of operators who work hard and take pride in their work."

Lower
Cascade
Canal
Project
Area



District Seeks Public Comment on Cascade Project Draft EIR

The NID Board of Directors is seeking public comment on a draft environmental impact report for a major water system improvement project.

As planned, the Lower Cascade Canal/Banner Cascade Pipeline Project will divert some of the water from the Cascade Canal through a buried pipeline across the southern flank of Banner Mountain near Nevada City. The Cascade Canal will remain in operation.

The new pipeline will provide a larger and more reliable source of water for two NID water treatment plants as well as for irrigation water users in the southern portions of Nevada County.

Combined with the \$18 million Upper Cascade project, completed in 2002, this is NID's largest water project in three decades. Construction on the Lower Cascade job is estimated at \$15 million.

NID directors on Mar. 22 authorized a 60-day public review period for the draft EIR, beginning Mar. 31. Public workshops are planned at 6 p.m. on Apr. 18 and May 2 at the Grass Valley Elks Lodge, 109 South School Street.

The draft EIR may be reviewed on NID's website, www.nid.dst.ca.us. Free CDs containing the report are available at the NID Business Center. Print copies are available at cost through House of Print & Copy, Grass Valley.

Irrigation Season is Here: Do You Have Any Leaks?

As the 2006 irrigation season opens, NID encourages all customers to inspect outdoor watering systems for leaking water lines, valves and faucets. Prompt repair will result in more efficient use of valuable water supplies.

The NID irrigation season normally opens on Apr. 15 and runs for six months through Oct. 14. Many of the district's irrigation water customers purchase water on a seasonal basis.

• NID NEWS BRIEFS •

Harry Thomas Retires.

After 40 years in his field, Harry Thomas retires Apr. 8 as NID's Senior Construction Inspector. Thomas, who worked for Nevada County before joining the district in 1970, has been an important presence at NID construction sites, where over the years he has inspected hundreds of projects. Harry and his wife, Patricia, reside in Grass Valley.



Southern Dedication. A dedication ceremony for the David E. Southern Recreation Facility at Cascade Shores, Scotts Flat Reservoir, is planned at 1 p.m. on May 21. The recently improved recreational day use area is named in honor of the late Dave Southern, a Cascade Shores resident who served on the NID Board of Directors from 1985-98.

Protecting the Public Water System. Are you planning to build something -- a road crossing, culvert, fence or building -- near a canal or pipeline? Please check with the district first. NID has a policy to ensure that private facilities do not encroach upon operation of the public water system.

Storm Damage. The heavy storms of December and early January caused an estimated \$471,300 in damage to NID water systems in both Nevada and Placer counties. Slides, erosion, overtopped canals and downed trees accounted for much of the damage. The facilities are up and running but permanent repairs are expected to continue into summer.

Street Mailing Address. NID receives all district mail at its street address. It no longer uses a post office box. The district's mailing address is: NID, 1036 West Main Street, Grass Valley, CA 95945. NID phone numbers are: (530) 273-6185 and (800) 222-4102. Online information is at: www.nid.dst.ca.us.

Placer Payment Options. Placer County customers may drop off water payments at one of two convenient drop boxes. A drop box is located outside the gate at the North Auburn Water Treatment Plant on Locksley Lane and a second box is situated near the entry to the Pak N' Save store, 2550 Bell Road, in Auburn. NID also offers an electronic bill payment program. Call the office for details.

New Pipeline for Forest Knolls

An old 1960s era water system serving 75 homes on Banner Mountain near Nevada City will be replaced this summer.

The treated water pipeline serving Forest Knolls was installed by a private developer and later turned over to NID for operation and maintenance. Much of the old system runs through backyards and under fences and landscaping and cannot be replaced.

NID will install new main lines along road shoulder easements on Forest View Drive, Tree Top Circle, Sunny Slope and Northview Drive. The project includes 7100 feet of new main lines and 5100 feet of new service lines and is budgeted at \$875,000.

Winter Flushing Complete

To assure water quality, NID flushes each of its treated water systems every winter. Flushing removes tiny particles and debris that can collect in the lower, slower and dead end sections of pipelines.

Flushing is normally conducted in the December-March time period when demand on the water system is low.

By mid-March, six of the district's seven treated water systems had been flushed. Completion of the Lake Wildwood-Penn Valley system was scheduled by the end of the month.

Weed Control Schedule is Online

To keep the canal system free of overgrowth, NID conducts an aquatic weed control program each year April through October.

Weed control schedules are sent to irrigation water customers each March and are also posted online. To see the schedule, go to the NID website, www.nid.dst.ca.us, and click on Water Services.

How to Contact Your Elected Directors

DIVISION I - *Nevada City Area*

Nancy Weber, (530) 265-0424

DIVISION II - *Grass Valley-Chicago Park*

John Drew, (530) 272-5257

DIVISION III - *Lake of the Pines-Alta Sierra*

Dr. Scott Miller, Call NID (530) 273-6185, ext. 222

DIVISION IV - *Lincoln-North Auburn*

R. Paul Williams (916) 645-8507

DIVISION V - *Penn Valley-Lake Wildwood*

George Leipzig (530) 432-2492

www.nid.dst.ca.us