



GM Newsletter

July 2023

From The Desk of Jennifer Hanson, General Manager

Water For Life

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Message from the General Manager

It's time to talk fire. The heat wave, unfortunately, is a harbinger of the wildfire season. As vegetation dries and blooms have withered, the number of fire alerts is increasing.

NID continues to take necessary precautions to protect our community against wildfire, both in projects to improve forest health and in actions. For example, as of July 28, campfires are banned in the District's foothill campgrounds at Rollins and Scotts Flat lakes (see page 4).

Update: the upper division recreation facilities are now accessible. Our crews have been working hard around Jackson Meadows to address winter storm damage.

If you are heading to the mountains, remember 80 percent of fires are human-caused in Nevada County. Please use caution wherever your adventures take you. Once a fire starts, it is devastating to our watersheds, including water resources and ecosystems.

Interestingly and importantly, read the "black vs green forest health" article on Page 2. The cost of forest recovery after a wildfire (working in the black) is twice as expensive as proactive measures to reduce forest fire fuels (working in the green).

Thank you for your support of NID and caring for our community.



Burn scar on the Bear River. NID remediation on the site is working—notice the green growth on the hills. Read the story on Page 2.

Black and green: committing resources to forest health

NID sponsors a tour for state leaders to witness post-wildfire and proactive watershed projects

It's a stark contrast between bringing back a forest devastated by a wildfire and taking action to establish a healthy watershed before disaster strikes.

Prime examples are a comparison between Nevada Irrigation District's (NID) work to remediate the destruction caused by the River Fire in 2021 on the Bear River and projects to thin trees and reduce ground fuels around Scotts Flat Reservoir.

NID hosted members of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) and California Legislative aides for a tour on Thursday, July 20. The takeaway was that proactive measures are considerably cheaper and greatly benefit forests and watershed health, and the result supports healthy and vibrant forest ecosystems.

Working in the Black

The River Fire began at the Bear River Campground in Placer County on Aug. 4, 2021 and scorched 2,619 acres before being fully contained on Aug. 13. Under a hot sun, tour participants looked out over miles of scorched terrain with blackened tree trunks and branches as far as they could see.

"There is an emotional, visceral feeling when you stand in a burn scar," said NID Environmental Resources Administrator Neysa King. "Here was a beautiful, viable forest including oaks, pines and bay trees. It was alive through thousands of years of history."

Many have described the scene as "destroyed," yet there are signs of recovery. NID's work has focused on restoring 150 acres of district-owned lands in the Bear River canyon, between Chicago Park and Lake of the Pines. Nearly half of the required work was done on steep slopes by hand crews.

King pointed out that the burn scar is beginning to rebound with green underbrush and small oak trees: "This area will naturally recover, and fire is an important part of these ecosystems; but it will take time. Our project is being done to hasten that recovery," King said.

The cost of the NID's River Fire remediation will be \$4,700 an acre for the hand-crew work through reforestation.

Keep reading about the "green" work at Scotts Flat with a price comparison. Which costs more? Post-wildfire or proactive fire fuels reduction? Page 3



(Above) NID Environmental Resources Administrator Neysa King (yellow shirt) and NID Assistant General Manager Greg Jones describe the work being done in the River Fire burn scar.



Black and green: committing resources to forest health

(continued from page 2)

Working in the green

By contrast, the tour continued to Scotts Flat Lake where NID has completed over 500 acres of forest treatment to create a “shaded fuel break” and to reduce dense forest area by thinning excess trees and reducing ground fuels. The water is blue, and the trees are green. It’s an example of building a healthy watershed.

The cost of this work was \$2,250 an acre.

Neysa King talks about the important, successful watershed work done around Scotts Flat Reservoir.



The Scotts Flat work has resulted in a beautiful, healthier watershed.

Being proactive pays off, King stressed:

“Water comes from watersheds, so it is imperative that we keep pushing forward to keep our watersheds healthy. Work in the black costs twice as much as working in the green.”

There is an urgency to complete forest health and watershed projects, especially in the headwaters of the Sierra Nevada, which is NID’s water source. In Nevada County, 80 percent of the wildfires are people-related. Compounding that, recreation in the mountains has increased. A changing climate will continue to stress the forests communities, and forest management projects will help to reduce this impact.

“Where the people are, fires start,” King said. “It is vital that we do the work to strengthen our watersheds now.”

The purpose of the tour was to give state leaders the opportunity to view two successful, albeit quite different, projects. The point was to drive home the need for committed funding.

“We know what to do; the science is there. We – water districts, the state, local communities, federal government and others - all need to work together collectively. The key is securing committed funding to make this happen soon,” King said.

Toward NID’s projects, the SNC, a state agency, awarded \$570,000 in grant funding for the Bear River Wildfire Recovery Project in 2022.

The agency also funded \$981,000 toward the Scotts Flat Reservoir Forest Health and Wildfire Risk Reduction Project in 2018.



Scotts Flat pre-treatment



Post-treatment

NID restricts fires in campgrounds to reduce wildfire risk

Effective Friday, July 28, wood and charcoal fires are prohibited in foothill campgrounds owned and operated by the Nevada Irrigation District (NID). This includes recreation facilities around Scotts Flat and Rollins reservoirs.

“This restriction is being enacted to help prevent human-caused wildfires and protect public safety,” said Monica Reyes, NID Director of Recreation. “It’s getting dry, and wildfire risk is escalating. Our goal is to keep everyone safe.”

Under the restrictions, no wood or charcoal fires will be allowed in the campgrounds. Propane fire rings and BBQs are allowed on low or medium flame.

The fire restrictions include these campgrounds:

- Scotts Flat Campground
- Orchard Springs Campground
- Long Ravine Campground
- Peninsula Campground
- Greenhorn Campground



Learn more about NID recreation, click [here](#).

Vegetation Management: grazing goats



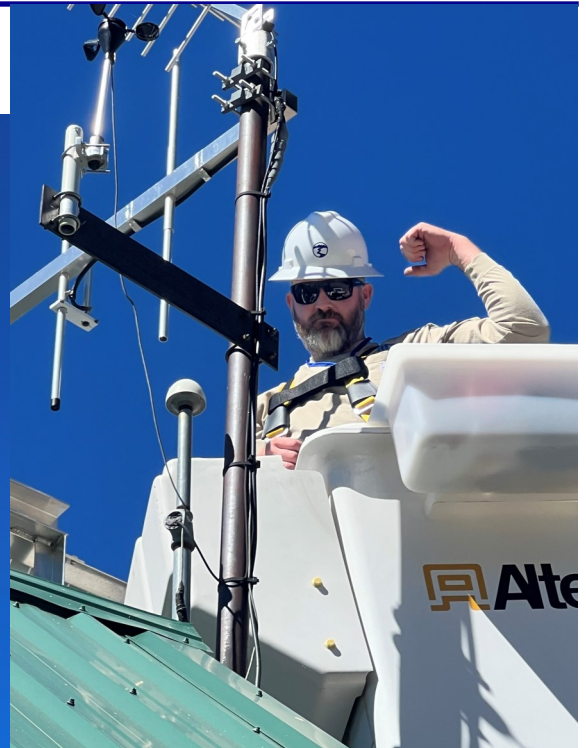
The NID Vegetation Management team is using goats to graze unwanted vegetation around foothill reservoirs.

For example, at Union Reservoir in Smartsville, goats grazed 30 acres this month.

Mountain recreation now accessible

Recreation facilities around Jackson Meadows are accessible after a prolonged delay caused by snow-related conditions.

NID maintains and operates campgrounds in the Jackson Meadows – Bowman Lake areas.



[Click here for camping info](#)



(Above) At Jackson Meadows Lake, NID Hydro Communication Technician Ed Aschow repairs an antenna used to bring reservoir and river data in from the lake. The antenna was damaged by the heavy snows early this year.

NID News Briefs

New Office Hours

The Grass Valley Business Center lobby hours and Customer Service telephone hours have changed. The new business hours are Monday-Friday, 9 AM- 4 PM.

1036 West Main Street Grass Valley, CA 95945
(530) 273-6185
After-hours emergency (530) 273-3346

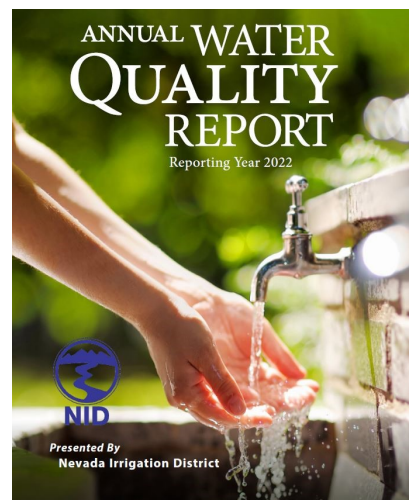
Water Quality Report

NID drinking water continues to meet and exceed state and federal public health standards.

The District has released its Annual Water Quality Report (also known as the Consumer Confidence Report), which summarizes water quality monitoring and testing programs for the 2022 calendar year.

The information focuses on water supplied through the Elizabeth L. George, Loma Rica, Lake Wildwood, Lake of The Pines, and North Auburn water treatment plants.

[Read the NID Water Quality Report \(reporting year 2022\)](#)



Rebates—Storage Tanks

NID's raw water customers can receive up to a \$500 rebate by installing a water storage tank. The Raw Water Storage Tank Rebate Program was developed to help customers improve their irrigation water system reliability through customer side storage.

The minimum storage tank allowed through the rebate program will be 500 gallons.

- * 500 gallons- \$150
- * 600-1,500 gallons- \$300
- * 1,600 gallons or more- \$500

Learn more, [click here](#)

To check availability and request application contact Water Efficiency Technician Kaycee Strong. 530-273-6185 ext.1244 or email strongk@nidwater.com

Rebates—Toilets

Residential treated water customers can receive a rebate when they replace older toilets with High Efficient Toilets (HET) rated at 1.28 gallons per flush or less. Funding is limited and rebates are available at a first-come, first-serve basis.

Learn more, [click here](#)



Bowman Lake

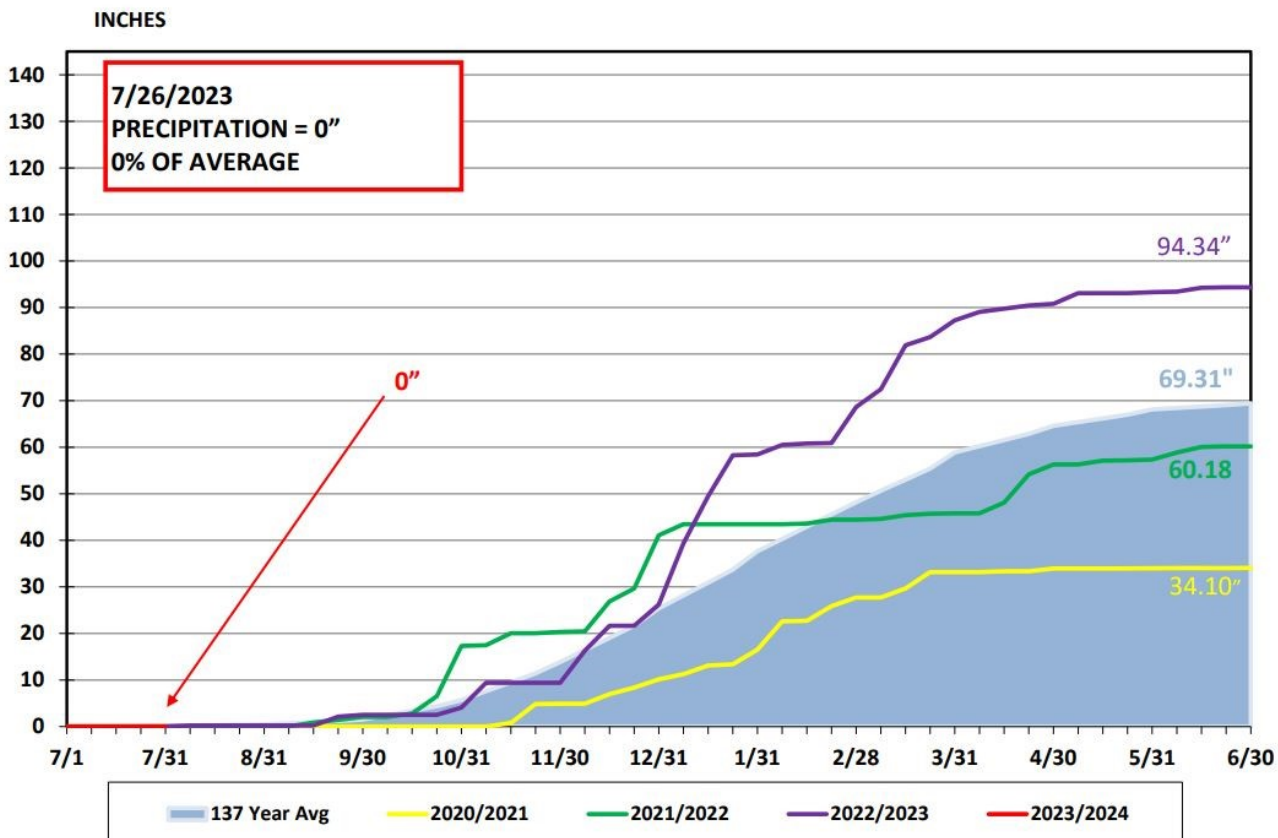
NID has been keeping weather records for Bowman Reservoir (elevation 5,650 ft.) since 1929.

The 69.2-inch annual average precipitation at Bowman compares to an annual average of 56 inches at 2,700 feet near Nevada City and 52 inches at 2,400 feet in Grass Valley.

Precipitation is measured for the 12-month period beginning July 1 and ending June 30.

It's a new water year! As of July 26, 00 inches of precipitation have fallen at Bowman. That is 00 percent of average.

BOWMAN LAKE PRECIPITATION



Reservoir storage is 115% of average

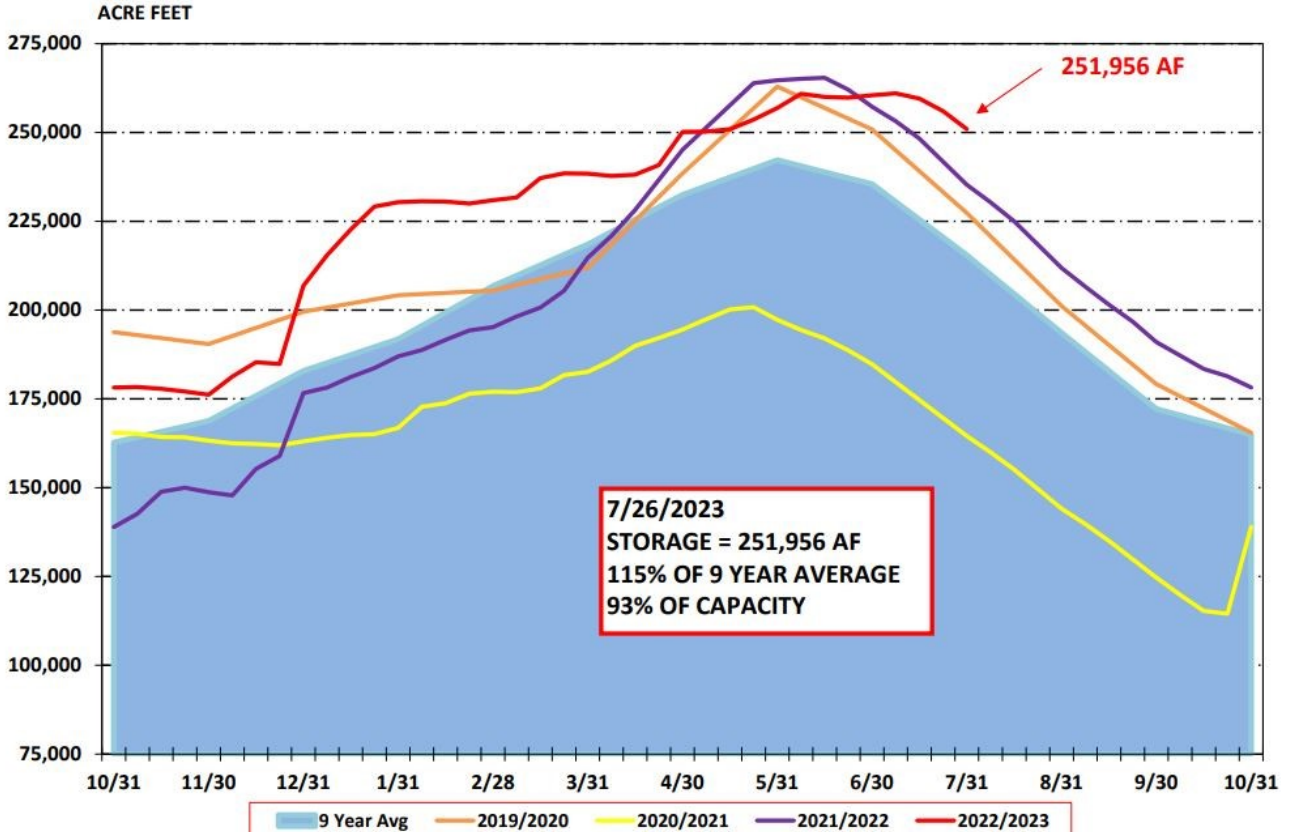
Reservoir storage is 251,956 acre-feet as of July 26. That is 93 percent of capacity and 115 percent of the nine-year average.

NID's water managers regularly post updates of local reservoir levels. You can see how water levels fluctuate in easy-to-read charts.

It's all just a click away on the NID website under [River & Reservoir Data](#).



NID RESERVOIR STORAGE



Project Updates—Engineering and Hydropower

The NID Engineering Department has a number of projects in various phases of construction. Read about the projects on our website, and sign up for email alerts for news about a specific project.

Updated Project Status Reports are now available on the [District's Projects webpage](#). This report provides project information, planner information, and a brief project description.

[Engineering Department Project Status Report](#)

[Hydroelectric Project Status Report](#)

David Way Pump Station

The David Way Pump Station project includes the replacement and upgrade of the District's original pump and pump station constructed over 50 years ago.

The pump provides water and pressure to 93 properties using a pneumatic pressure tank. In 2011 a generator was installed to supply electricity to the pump station during power outages.

The original single pump does not have any backup and does not supply standard fire flows during an emergency. If the pump is taken out of service or in need of repair, the 93 properties get minimal water under gravity pressure.



Former pump station

In 2021, the District contracted with EFI Solutions to build an off-site complete pump station and have it shipped complete to the project site. The new pump station was constructed on a movable steel frame foundation and includes two normal operation pumps (one for backup) and one fire flow pump delivering full fire flows. The pump station also came with a new generator mounted on the same steel frame.



New pump station

The new pump station is crucial to the continued service of treated water to the 93 customers. It also provides water for an additional 21 properties to the west that is part of the Maranatha Place Waterline Extension. This brings water to many of these properties that have poor to no operational wells (relying on raw water). The new waterline extension also provides fire service to three new fire hydrants further increasing the community fire safety.

**NID Special Board of
Directors Meeting (Plan
for Water workshop)**

Tuesday, August 22
NID Office, Grass Valley
4 PM

**NID Regular Board of
Directors Meeting**

Wednesday, August 23
NID Office, Grass Valley
9 AM

**NID Special Board of
Directors Meeting (Plan
for Water workshop)**

Tuesday, September 12
NID Office, Grass Valley
4 PM

**Meetings
& Events**

Nidwater.com
for more
information



[NID "We Deliver" video \(1:09\)](#)