

## FAQ: Clarification of NID Community Survey Comments

The Nevada Irrigation District (NID) conducted an online survey in August 2022 to get a snapshot of customers' and residents' views about water and the District. Some 682 people responded to six questions. The final question was: "What would you like to tell NID?" The 348 comments ranged from outlooks about customer service and field worker expertise to the quality of water and the efficiency of the District's delivery system.

While the vast majority of comments were insightful and quite helpful to NID in understanding community perspectives on the District, some statements conveyed misconceptions about key aspects of NID's operations.

This FAQ serves to clarify misstatements in survey comments so that the community will be better educated about NID operations, and we can continue a knowledgeable discussion about how to plan for our water into the future.

- Selling water to "outside interests"
- Selling water downstream
- Mandated water conservation
- Testing treated water
- Forest health and fire safety
- NID canal access—not trails

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### Selling water to "outside interests"

#### Comments:

"Stop allowing more people to draw from your water if you can't meet demand of current customers." 8/7/2022

"As water demands in the state expand we need to protect our supply and not sell it to outside interests." 8/4/2022

"Please don't sell or send our water to others. We need it for the future." 8/6/2022

#### Response:

The "outside interests" to which NID sells water are a limited number of traditional surplus water purchasers that are members of our local community.

For example, the District sells both treated and raw wholesale water to the City of Grass Valley and Nevada City. In 2021, NID provided Grass Valley with 51 acre-feet (AF) of treated water and 979 AF of raw water. Nevada City received 311 AF of raw water in 2021.

Every year, NID's Board of Directors assesses the District's water supply to determine it is above the threshold for normal operations and has water that is in surplus to the needs of lands within the District boundaries. When that is the case, the Board will make a declaration of surplus water availability and authorize local water sales to traditional surplus water purchasers, which are not in district boundaries.



## Selling water downstream

### Comments:

- “Stop giving or selling our water away to Southern California! Keep it local.”
- “Concerned that our water is being shipped out of the area to uncontrolled growth down the hill.”

### Response:

NID does not have agreements or contracts to sell its water “downstream” to Southern California agencies or Sacramento Delta interests.

The District does provide water to the Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) for use in NID’s service area in the City of Lincoln.

The only water transfer performed by the District was to neighboring water purveyor South Sutter Water District. That ceased in 2013.

A portion of the District’s water is used for environmental purposes, which includes non-recoverable in-stream flows.

## Mandated water conservation

### Comments:

“Stop telling us when we can and can’t use water.” 8/7/2022

“Keep Nevada County green, don’t tell people to cut back on water when you know that what we don’t use just goes down the hill.” 8/4/2022

### Response:

During periods of extreme drought, water conservation has been mandated by the State of California and NID to ensure there is water available for customer deliveries.

Due to the severity of the drought, in 2021 Governor Gavin Newsom declared a state of emergency on more than 40 counties to protect water supply throughout the state. Nevada and Placer counties were included on that list.

Also, the California State Water Board has ordered some water right holders to stop drawing surface water from certain watersheds. These curtailments meant NID could not divert water to store in its reservoirs. Under these curtailments, NID is required to allow any and all surface water to flow through our conveyance and diversion systems.

On March 28, 2022, Governor Newsom issued an Executive Order requiring the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) to adopt emergency regulations requiring all urban water suppliers implement water shortage contingency plans for a shortage level of up to 20 percent. On May 24, 2022, the State Water Board adopted the statewide emergency water conservation regulation that required water suppliers to implement all demand-reduction actions under Level 2 of their Water Shortage Contingency Plans.

On May 25, 2022, NID’s Board of Directors implemented the Governor’s Executive Order to achieve a 20 percent reduction in water use as compared to 2020 levels. [Click here to read the NID Resolution.](#)

The District’s Drought Contingency Plan Stage II included wise water use practices, including restrictions on runoff and mandating that garden hoses must have nozzles attached. In addition, the Plan called for a mandatory 20 percent reduction of water use by treated water customers and limited watering days for all customers to three days a week.



## **Mandated water conservation (continued)**

While the District wants to accommodate its customers' individual water use and demand, NID must comply with State regulations.

As water conservation has become a way of life and drought conditions continue to persist, NID must do its part and help to protect precious water resources. The District is a public entity, and must abide by all state mandates and emergency proclamations.

## **Testing treated water**

### **Comments:**

- "NID needs to do more extensive testing and adopt higher water quality standards." 8/4/2022
- "When I was a child I could drink our water right from the tap or hose. Or was sweet pure and tasty. Now I won't drink the tap water unless it is filtered through a zero filter. Now It smells bad. I'm afraid to drink it and sometimes to bathe. Purity is my major concern." 8/4/2022
- "it still tastes like chlorine to me" 8/4/2022
- "Tap water has a chemical taste." 8/4/2022

### **Response:**

NID drinking water continues to meet and exceed state and federal public health standards, based on testing results that serve as the basis for the District's Water Quality Report.

The report, also known as the Consumer Confidence Report, summarizes NID's water quality monitoring and testing programs. The information focuses on water supplied through our six water treatment plants.

NID water is monitored for a variety of substances on a very strict sampling schedule, and the water we deliver is required to meet specific health and safety standards.

Regulated substances include chlorine, coliform, copper, lead, and turbidity. Secondary substances include aluminum, chloride and sulfate. Unregulated substances include calcium, pH, and cryptosporidium.

Read the report, [click here](https://www.nidwater.com/files/1e68c2c9b/NID+WQR+2021.pdf). <https://www.nidwater.com/files/1e68c2c9b/NID+WQR+2021.pdf>

## Forest health and fire safety

### Comments:

- “The NID watershed property needs to be maintained and defensible again wildfires.” 8/4/2022
- “Maintain your property for fire protection” 8/4/2022

### Response:

NID forest management projects are essential for protecting the watersheds in our care. Projects include fire hazard mitigation and hazard tree removal, forest community improvement, and habitat restoration.

For example, the Scotts Flat Fire Fuels Treatment and Health Forests Project will complete 300 acres of fire fuels treatment adjacent to the reservoir in the Deer Creek watershed. It is part of a 3-year and 600-acre treatment goal for the District. This area is integral to the water supply infrastructure that NID manages for communities in Nevada and Placer counties.

Read more, [click here](#).

## NID canal access – not trails

### Comments:

- “I feel that NID should take an active role in protecting the trails along the canals from greedy landowners. Those of us that use the trails are stewards of the property. It is as important a feature of the neighborhoods as the water itself.” 8/8/2022
- “NID should allow/ensure public access to ditch trails along Combie Lake so public can enjoy walking trails/recreational opportunities (near Ranchos/Darkhorse). Private owners that blocked access with fencing should be required to remove such.” 8/5/2022
- “New landowners are gating off access to NID canal roads. These trails have been used by locals for many decades to exercise themselves and their animals. The fence/gates put up cut off wildlife corridors and animals are getting cut and hurt by the sharp fencing. And these canal roads also serve as wildfire escape routes that are now blocked. NID should work to require public access to these canal trails.” 8/4/2022 1:50 PM

### Response:

NID does not own the land that is traversed by many of our canals. Because the District does not own the land, it does not have the legal authority to provide permission to the general public to access canals that are located on private property. In addition, the canals and means of access are not developed or constructed for public use.

To successfully convey water to water treatment plants, power plants and customers, NID relies on easements, rights of way that are prescribed, and those that have been granted to the District over the course of many years. These rights are solely for the use of the District to construct, operate and maintain the water system.

Even as the District utilizes these rights, the land still belongs to the property owner, who has sole discretion as to whom they will allow access their property.