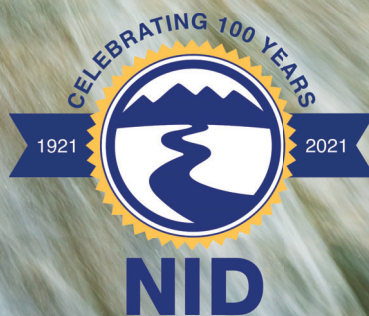


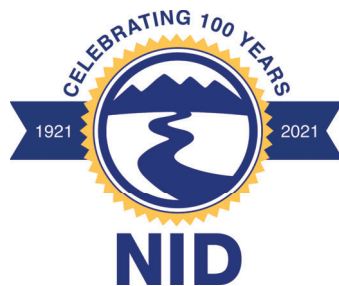
**Nevada  
Irrigation  
District**

**Delivering  
Water for  
Life**



# Nevada Irrigation District

## Delivering Water for Life



# Credits

**Authors:** Dave Carter, Susan Lauer

**Advisors:** Greg Jones, Les Nicholson, Terry Mayfield, Ken Hart, Sue Sindt and Tomi Riley

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1036 West Main Street  
Grass Valley CA 95945  
[www.nidwater.com](http://www.nidwater.com)  
[info@nidwater.com](mailto:info@nidwater.com)

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# Preface



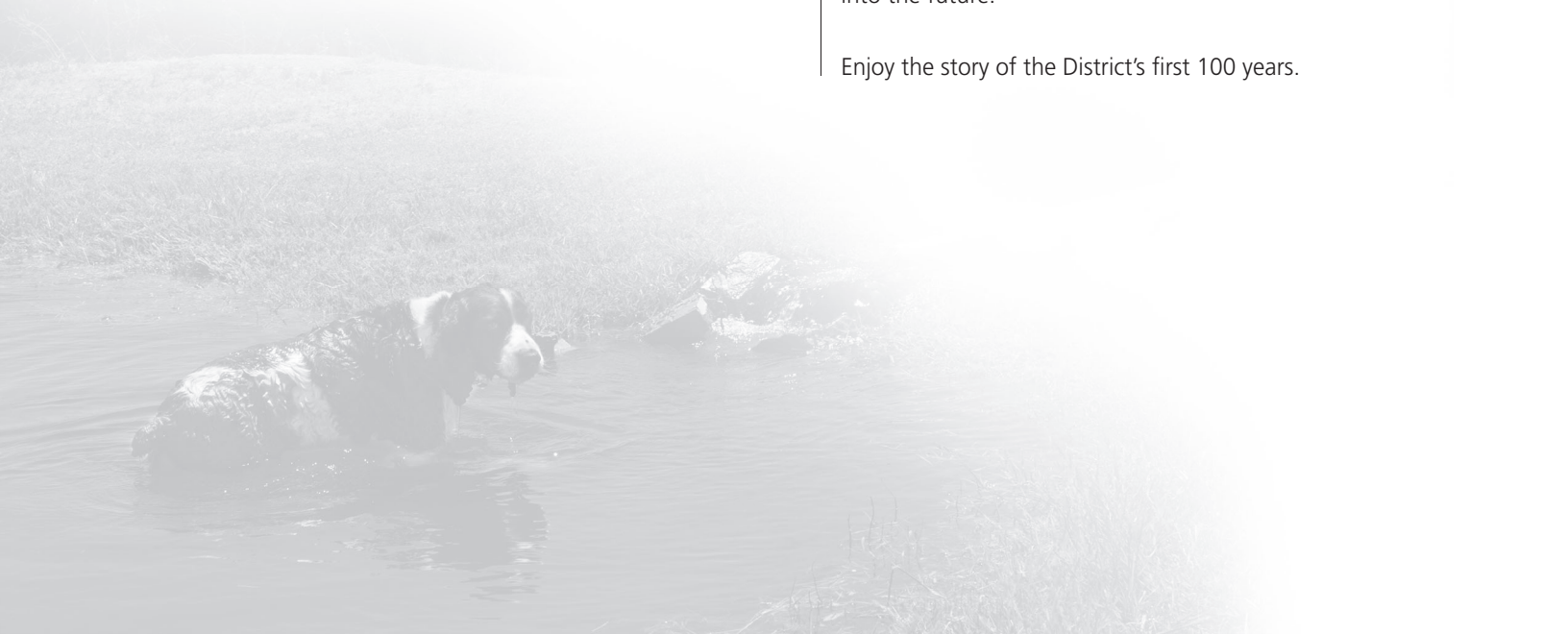
**Jennifer Hanson**  
*NID General Manager*

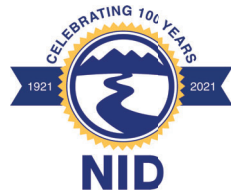
The Nevada Irrigation District (NID) is a prime example of how vision and resolve by a community – local farmers, ranchers and average citizens – to secure a dependable water source manifested in the creation of California’s second largest irrigation district (by geographical area). NID has served the community for 100 years and will continue to provide high quality Sierra Nevada water for generations to come.

This book celebrates NID’s history and the innovative, bold steps it took throughout a century to ensure the communities of the Sierra foothills are guaranteed a reliable supply of water for farms, fields, households and businesses.

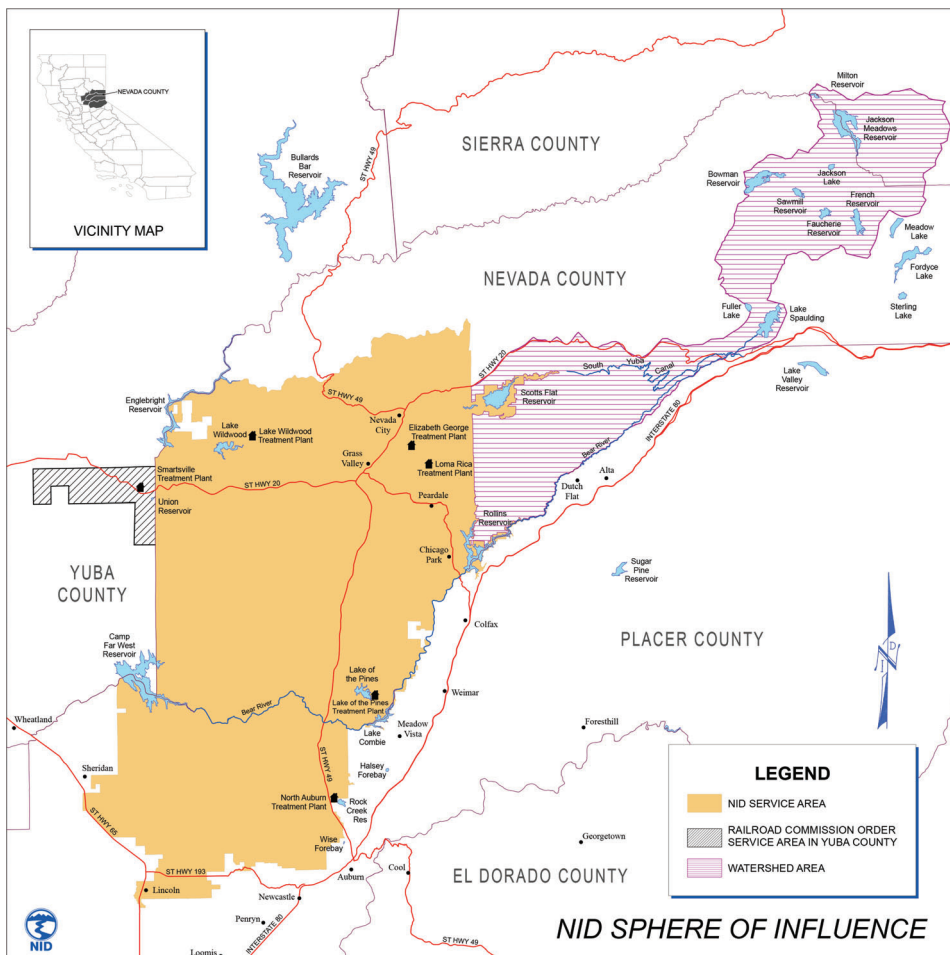
The story of NID is a chronicle of foresight, grit and responsiveness. It’s been a fascinating journey that will continue to play out for decades to come. Throughout the District’s history, the intention has been constant: provide fresh, clean water and reliable water to the Sierra foothill communities in Nevada, Placer and Yuba counties. That has been NID’s mantra, and will continue to be well into the future.

Enjoy the story of the District’s first 100 years.





# Board of Directors



**Chris Bierwagen**  
*President*



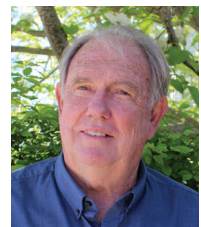
**Laura Peters**  
*Vice President*



**Ricki Heck**  
*Director*



**Karen Hull**  
*Director*



**Rich Johansen**  
*Director*

# Introduction



French Lake

**It was a dream come true for local farmers and community visionaries** to tap the pure snowmelt of the high Sierra Nevada mountain range to water their lands in the drier foothills. Since its formation 100 years ago, the Nevada Irrigation District, known as NID, has had one mission: to provide the people of the Sierra foothills with high-quality water for their farms and fields and, later, their homes and businesses.

Today, more than 200 NID employees work hard to meet the District's commitment to deliver water to the communities in Nevada, Placer and Yuba counties. The District owns and operates an extensive reservoir and canal system and a network of water treatment plants. It also generates renewable hydroelectric energy and provides public recreation at campgrounds and reservoirs.

The California Gold Rush in 1849 put the Sierra foothills on the map around the world, as the hope of striking it rich drew more than a hundred thousand prospectors to stake their claims. The

new towns of Grass Valley and Nevada City grew quickly to support the influx of miners, and Penn Valley was established, thanks to its location on a wagon route between mining regions and Sacramento to the west. To the south, towns in Placer County served as important passageways to the Gold Country.

Agriculture thrived, initially to provide food to the miners, and later as many decided to settle in the area to farm and ranch. In addition, the large and very lucrative hard-rock mining operations around Nevada City and Grass Valley provided jobs, boosted the local economy and established permanent communities. This created an increased need for a reliable water supply. Depending on groundwater from early wells or purchasing water from private companies established after the Gold Rush was not a viable long-term solution for foothill residents.

The idea for forming a local, publicly operated irrigation district was established in 1917, when



Bert and Kate Church drove their cattle from parched dry pasture in western Nevada County up to the green mountain meadows of the Sierra Nevada. They envisioned a water system where the abundant waters of the mountains could be carried to the fertile but dry farms and ranches at the lower elevations. In 1921, the dream became a reality when Nevada County voters overwhelmingly approved the foundation of an irrigation district. Five years later, in 1926, residents of Placer County chose to join the District, and the boundaries expanded to include nearly 270,000 acres. NID began to deliver irrigation water to local farms in 1927, using many of the existing reservoirs and old canal systems built during the Gold Rush. The cost to customers at the time was about 10 cents a day.

Today, the District still depends on the snowpack on 70,000 acres of mountain watershed as the source for both treated drinking water and irrigation water to supply nearly 25,000 customers in Nevada, Placer and Yuba counties. Also, NID has been a leader in the state in using water flows to produce clean hydroelectric energy since the 1960s. The District's seven power plants generate enough electricity to supply the equivalent of more than 60,000 homes.

NID operates reservoirs that store the precious water and offer outstanding outdoor recreational opportunities. In the Sierra foothills, Rollins and Scotts Flat reservoirs feature campgrounds, day-use beaches and facilities where guests can enjoy fishing, water skiing, sailing, kayaking and swimming. In the higher elevation mountains, Jackson Meadows features several campgrounds, picnic day-use sites and boat ramps. Other campgrounds are located at Bowman, Canyon Creek, Sawmill and Faucherie reservoirs in the Bowman corridor.

For 100 years, the men and woman of NID have dedicated themselves to keep high quality water flowing to farms and fields, households and businesses; and the foothill communities have prospered and quality of life enhanced. Leading into the future, the mission remains the same: NID stays committed to putting the community water needs first. We pledge to carry on our legacy to deliver water for life. ■

NID provides water to irrigate pastures.