



Western Canal Water District, June 16, 2020

By Joshua Dowell

On June 16th, 2020 at 9:00 AM the **Western Canal Water District** held its monthly board of directors meeting at their office in Nelson, California. There was also had a dial in option available for those that were not available to be there in person but wished to attend the meeting. The meeting was called to order on time and immediately started with public comment. General meeting practices followed with the approval of the last meeting's minutes on April 21, 2020 and a quick financial standing of the district for the last two months. A unanimous vote approved the financial report.

Manager **Ted Trimble** reported that **Lake Orville** currently sits at 812 feet elevation with 2.3 million acre feet in storage, not bad for a dry spring. The lake is only down 110,000 acre feet from the last meeting of the board back in April. From 6,000 to 8,000 acre feet are being moved into storage each day, with September being the period that will serve as the best benchmark for the year. **Mr. Trimble** also informed the board that the US Geological Survey will be check ditches for snake populations... that's a job that I am unfortunately going to take a rain check on.

Western Canal's Financial Advisor **Daniel Harvey** opened discussion with the board about the district's current financial standing, followed by the consideration of the Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART grant. The real meat of this meeting was a long discussion about the **Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)** and activities that the district is undertaking to prepare for its arrival. Members of the board expressed that they are actively working to get more surface water delivered to the system to provide some mitigation against the lack of available groundwater.

Around noon the board took a recess and planned to open closed session right after the recess had concluded. Unfortunately, I had to leave the meeting after three hours of discussion and missed the board of directors reports. Although, if the extended SGMA discussion shed any light to what their reports looked like, the directors and staff are working nonstop to make sure that they are in compliance.



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Josh Dowell brings a combined background of ag technology, water policy and grower focused service.



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WESTERN CANAL WATER DISTRICT – P.O. Box 190, Richvale, Ca 95974 www.westerncanal.com 530/342-5083
Board – Greg Johnson President, Eric Larrabee Vice President, Bryce Lundberg, Daniel Robinson & Josh Sheppard

Staff – Ted Trimble GM, Dustin Cooper Legal Counsel, Craig Myers Assistant GM/Ops & Maintenance & Anjanette Shadley Assistant GM/Admin & Communications.
DWR SGMA# 5-021.70 Richvale ID GSA

WCWD was formed by a vote of landowners on December 18, 1984 as a California Water District, and currently encompasses a land area of approximately 67,500 acres, of which approximately 59,000 acres are irrigable. The District purchased the "Western Canal" water system from Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), who had acquired it from the Great Western Power Company. The canal was originally developed by the Western Canal Company, which began operations in 1911. The pre-1914 surface water rights of the District comprises 150,000 acre feet of natural flow from the Feather River, subject to reduction during drought; 145,000 acre feet from upstream storage water not subject to reduction. On May 27, 1969, PG&E entered into an agreement with the California State Department of Water Resources (DWR) providing for the diversion of Feather River water below Oroville Dam. That agreement, which was reauthorized through a new agreement executed in 1986 after the District was formed, spells out the timing and quantity of deliveries by DWR to the District.