



Kaweah Delta Water Conservation District September 1, 2020

By Don A. Wright

The **Kaweah Delta Water Conservation District** held its board of directors meeting remotely from its Farmersville headquarters on Tuesday, September 1, 2020. You know what this date means if you live in the country near trees. You possibly awoke to the melodic chorus of shotgun blasts as it's the first day of dove season. The meeting was held on GoToMeetings. Before the meeting started General Manager **Mark Larsen** said he's getting used to the technology. I think it was Chairman **Don Mills** who cautioned not to get too cocky the string on the can could break or someone mistake the carrier pigeon for a dove. Mills called the meeting to order at a little after 9:00am.

Johnny Gailey asked for a letter of support for the Delta View Water Association stated in public comment his organization will be the lead agency for a grant and the deadline is September 15th. That left a pregnant silence because you can just add something to the agenda after it's

been posted – 72 hours in advance of the meeting minimum. Attorney **Aubrey Mauritsen** suggested if this is a standard action by the board the letter could be written and ratified later. That sounded good to everyone.

Larsen had a sad announcement. Director **Mike Shannon** passed away two weeks ago, rather quickly at the coast. It was a quite a surprise and Mills asked everyone to observe a moment of silence in his honor. I believe Shannon loved to drive Chevy Corvettes. I think it was engineer **Dennis Keller** who said he found a place-mat from a local restaurant in a file somewhere that was the first draft of a plan to start the St. Johns River Association with Shannon's handwriting on it. The original design on a napkin.

Water Master **Vick Hernandez** gave the water report saying the DWR snow survey could lose two sites in the back country. The contracted help wasn't keeping the proper insurance and the new bids are expensive. You have to pack back there and stock a cabin. The sites aren't as high as would be helpful to the forecast. Hernandez said going in with a helicopter would be cheaper and that might be an option. Or, just go with the Airborne Snow Observatory. Some of the areas that would be most advantageous to monitor needs a helicopter to get access and it is in a wilderness area. Flying a chopper might upset the wildlife.

Director and Chairman of the Friant Water Authority **Chris Tantau** gave a Friant update saying most of the FWA focus has been on the Friant Kern Canal repairs. He said the view towards funding is still a bit cloudy and that is impacting the scheduling. One goal being considered is a \$220 million fix on the Reach D&E portions of the canal to design capacity. These are the parts of the canal



most impacted and the \$220 million restores flows and protects against future subsidence. He mentioned part of the procedure is the land acquisition needed is taking longer than hoped. There are a good deal of hoops to jump through when federal real estate policy comes into play.

There is the possibility of the GSAs in the area paying for part of the costs since the subsidence is in that area. There's a board retreat coming up in November and he encouraged other directors to attend. Tantau said the issue of FWA taking title to the FKC is slowly simmering on the back burner. I'm not hearing much support. Keller said there isn't much driving a transfer of title. He said there are Friant contractors who have US Bureau of Reclamation canals in their districts and they want the Bureau to have title to protect them from High Speed Rail. HSR had tried to bully districts to paying for the new infrastructure required for the tracks to cross the canals. The districts told HSR to talk to the Bureau and they were never heard from again. Tantau said the preliminary work needed to start the repairs on the FKC is moving ahead just like someone has a big wallet.

Larsen reported the Hannah Ranch Project is moving along with I believe three/fourths of the supply ditch completed. The heavy equipment needed is being shipped from Georgia and will arrive next week. The excavation is moving along.

Larsen then said the closing on the sale of the Terminus Power Project. The Army Corps of Engineers has yet to assign the agreements with purchaser Eagle Creek Power. Larsen said there are positive vibes coming from ACE that the paperwork will soon be completed but that's different than having the documents ready. I've been told the average time for a non-military ACE project is 20-years. It's hoped this paperwork is on a faster schedule. Larsen also said Southern California Edison wants some other agreements signed but that can't be accomplished until closing. Larsen said no red flags just red tape. He hopes to see this wrapped up by October 1st.

Eric Osterling, GM of the Greater Kaweah Groundwater Sustainability Agency gave his report saying the Prop 218 election is moving forward. The East Kaweah GSA has approved the Prop 218 assessment to go out to the voters. That is planned to take place before the end of the year and the top amount is \$10 per acre. That's about what GKGSA is looking at as well.

Osterling is working with Provost & Pritchard on responding to comments received since the GSP was submitted to DWR. He said the other push is the well monitoring system. He's trying to get Southern California Edison's list of meters for verification. There is a draft Request For Proposal for a data management system. The engineering firm of GEI had been putting together that data and for some reason (read between the lines) is no longer doing so.

Osterling said there was a report that came out showing the Kaweah Sub Basin is a low priority for wildlife concerns and that was a pleasant surprise. He said the report was published on Maven's Notebook and it's not to long. He said the Mid Kaweah GSA has taken the lead on well video. Sky Temp is getting its mountain front recharge study proposal funding together. There are some grants out there that might fit. The next GKGSA will meet on September 14th, a little later this month.

Mills asked about the Prop 218 amounts. Osterling said you have to present the reasoning and at the least the maximum amount. He wants to include a study that shows how much it cost turn down the 218 and let the state take over. A far more expensive proposition.

The meeting the went to closed session at 9:45am and that was pretty much that.

DISCLAIMER OF RESPONSIBILITY; Waterwrights.net strives to provide his clients with the most complete, up-to-date, and accurate information available. Nevertheless, Waterwrights.net does not serve as a guarantor of the accuracy or completeness of the information provided, and specifically disclaims any and all responsibility for information that is not accurate, up-to-date, or complete. Waterwrights.net's clients therefore rely on the accuracy, completeness and timeliness of information from Waterwrights.net entirely at their own risk. The opinions expressed in this report are those of the author and do not represent any advertisers or third parties.



ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. Copyright © 2020 by Don A. Wright

Kaweah Delta Water Conservation District

2975 N. Farmersville Blvd.

Farmersville, California 93223

559/747-5601

KDWCD is part of the Greater Kaweah GSA DWR #5-022.11

[Email: kaweah@kdwcd.com](mailto:kaweah@kdwcd.com)

www.kdwcd.com

Board of Directors

Don Mills – President, Chris Tantau - Vice-President, Ron Clark, Jimi Valov, Jeff Ritchie, Mike Shannon & Brian Watte

Management

Mark Larsen, General Manager - mlarsen@kdwcd.com

Terry Stafford, Facilities Manager - tstafford@kdwcd.com

Dian Rader, Administrative/HR Coordinator - drader@kdwcd.com

Larry Dotson, Senior Engineer - ldotson@kdwcd.com

Shane Smith, Projects/Administrative Manager - ssmith@kdwcd.com

Office and Field Staff

Chemical Applicator/Equipment Operator - Jim Mudford

Equipment Operators - Jesus Sandoval, Chris Bell & Tommy Crosswy

Equipment Operator/Mechanic - Ryon Van Essen

Hydrographer/River Operator - Jose Rivas & Rick Avila

Water Master – Victor Hernandez

Senior Equipment Operator - Tom Dilbeck & Doyle Pettyjohn

Accountant - Shelly Heier

Administrative Assistant - Kim Hollis

Board Coordinator - Anita Wilson

Office Assistant - Kathleen Halvorsen

Engineering Technician - Matthew Jacobus

Primary Consultants

Bruce George - Special Projects Consultant

Dennis Keller - Civil Engineer (Keller/Wegley Consulting Engineers)

Aubrey Mauritsen - Attorney (Ruddell, Cochran, Stanton, Smith & Bixler, LLP)

Richard "Dick" Moss - Civil Engineer (Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group)

Shelley Orth - Editor/Wordsmith

From the Kaweah Delta website:

The Kaweah Delta Water Conservation District (KDWCD) was formed in 1927, under the provisions of California state law known as the Water Conservation Act of 1927, for the purpose of conserving and storing waters of the Kaweah River and for conserving and protecting the underground waters of the Kaweah Delta. Later the Water Conservation Act, as well as the purpose of the District, was expanded to include power generation and distribution.

The District is located in the south-central portion of the San Joaquin Valley and lies in portions of both Tulare and Kings Counties. The total area of the District is about 340,000 acres with approximately 255,000 acres located in the western portion of Tulare County and the balance, or 85,000 acres, in the northeastern portion of the Kings County.

The District's lands are primarily agricultural in nature, although the cities of Visalia and Tulare constitute significant areas of urbanization. Farmersville is the other incorporated area. The population of the District is currently estimated to be in excess of 175,000 people with the principle crops being cotton, misc. field crops, deciduous fruit and nut trees as well as alfalfa.

Numerous public and private entities within the District's boundaries divert water from the Kaweah River and its distributaries. Nearly all of the lands served with Kaweah River water also are served irrigation water from groundwater, primarily due to the erratic and relatively undependable nature of flow on the Kaweah River. All municipal and industrial water uses within the District are supplied from groundwater.

KDWCD and Tulare Irrigation District (TID), which lies entirely within the boundaries of the Kaweah Delta Water Conservation District, has a long-term contract with the federal Central Valley Project (CVP) for water from the Friant Division of the CVP. TID has historically received substantial quantities of CVP water surplus to the demands of the District which augment the Kaweah River supply.

The District and the Kaweah River groundwater basin have experienced long-term groundwater overdraft estimated in 2007 to be as much as 40,000 acre-feet per year. The District has performed multiple studies of groundwater data to determine the extent and volume of groundwater overdraft within its boundaries. There are currently over 40 recharge basins within the District covering approximately 5,000 acres. While KDWCD owns and operates many of these groundwater recharge basins, it does not provide water banking services for others.