



Fancher Creek Basin Nears Completion

The Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District is nearing completion of the Fancher Creek Detention Basin, a 273-acre stormwater detention facility designed to capture and store flood flows before they overwhelm downstream creeks and canals. When complete, the facility will provide a first line of defense against damage to homes, businesses and farms from floodwaters that can overflow local waterways running through heavily populated parts of Fresno.

This project is being completed in coordination with the Fresno Irrigation District. The same canals used during the spring and summer to convey water for irrigation are used during the winter to route flood water through the community. The Fancher Creek Detention Basin project involves combining and rerouting 1.6 miles of irrigation canals into a single channel running through the center of the basin. The canal headworks have been moved to the western edge of the site. The new channel conveys storm and irrigation water to the new headworks, where the water is released to either the Fancher Creek or Mill Ditch Canals.

Two large, interconnected detention basins are being excavated, one to the north and one to the south of the channel. Together they will provide 1,890 acre-feet of water storage capacity, at a 30-day, 200-year storm protection level. This means the basins are designed to handle runoff from storms that have a 0.5% probability of occurring in any given year. The progress on this project will soon allow the District to further reduce the size of the flood plain, resulting in optional flood insurance premium reductions to property owners.

Excavation of the Fancher Creek Detention Basin requires removal of 2.2 million cubic yards of dirt. To date, 1.2 million cubic yards have been excavated. To help expedite project completion the FMFCD Board of Directors established an excavation program that provides dirt free of charge to contractors who need fill material for their construction sites. According to Bob Van Wyk, General Manager of the District, "It's a win-win situation; contractors get needed fill materials for their job sites, and the community benefits from better flood protection while saving taxpayer dollars."



PLEATED WEIRS - Allow flood water to be moved from the channel to the two large detention basins on either side. Together, the basins have the capacity to hold 1,890 acre-feet of stormwater.

The Fancher Creek Detention Basin is the final detention facility to complete the Redbank-Fancher Creek Flood Control project which includes three reservoirs and five detention basins designed to intercept flood waters from creeks and streams east of the Fresno-Clovis Metropolitan Area. Project completion is anticipated in the summer of 2010.

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NEED DIRT? Call Verlyn Neufeld at 456-3292 for information on the Dirt Permit Program.

Message from the General Manager



Bob Van Wyk

As summer draws to a close, I think about how quickly the last six months have passed. In that time the Board of Directors for the Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District has been very busy working on behalf of the community to provide flood control and urban drainage services. Please take a moment to

review some of the issues that the Board and staff have been working on.

▶ In July of 2007, the Board of Directors approved a \$35 million dollar budget for the 2007-08 fiscal year. The budget includes a number of key capital improvement projects and provides engineering services to ensure that master planning keeps up with our growing community.

▶ FMFCD staff have been working closely with the City of Fresno to plan for drainage services in the Southeast Urban Growth Area. Properly planning for storm drainage and flood control facilities is an important part of the community planning process. FMFCD has a seat at the table and is working closely with the advisory committee to ensure drainage issues are addressed early on.

▶ The City of Clovis and the District have been working to prepare drainage plans for the Northeast Urban Village and Harlan Ranch.

▶ In June the District received grant funding for the beautification of three basin sites through the Caltrans Environmental Enhancement Mitigation Program. Two of the basin sites are located on Highway 180, just west of Highway 99 and one is on Ashlan Avenue between Peach and Minnewawa in Clovis. In total, the grants will provide more than \$400,000 for landscaping and irrigation that will greatly enhance aesthetics and wildlife resources.

▶ In April the State Water Resources Control Board released a draft permit that proposed significant changes in the statewide stormwater quality permit for construction activities. District staff, working closely with the California Stormwater Quality Association, the Cities of Fresno and Clovis, the County of Fresno, and local construction companies reviewed the draft permit to better understand the costs and possible benefits of the proposed changes. After careful review, the group concluded that the proposed changes

would impose significant costs, while providing little benefit to local water resources. A detailed response was sent to the State suggesting more reasonable alternatives.

▶ In February, Assemblyman Juan Arambula introduced Assembly Bill 263 which addresses the allocation of local property tax dollars to the Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District. The Bill, if approved, will correct a calculation error that causes local tax dollars for flood control services to be shifted to the State. The correction would allow the District to retain an additional \$633,000 in local property tax revenues each year. The Bill is co-authored by Assemblyman Mike Villines, Senator Dean Florez, and Senator Dave Cogdill.

▶ On a monthly basis, the District sits down with the construction and development community to address concerns and coordinate projects. The meeting is hosted by the Fresno Building Industry Association and provides a very productive venue for open discussion of issues regarding service levels, project review standards, response to changes in land uses, and other topics. The District is committed to being a high quality service provider and this effort helps to ensure affordable and safe developments in our community.

▶ Over the summer months, many FMFCD basins have been used to help replenish our groundwater supply through artificial recharge. In years of low water supply, it is extremely important to retain and recharge as much water as possible to help offset groundwater demands.

▶ During this warm weather season District staff have been working closely with local mosquito abatement districts to prevent breeding of mosquitoes at District basins using mosquito fish and other methods.

Articles in this edition of Flood Line highlight other projects we are working on. Please take a moment to read about many other programs active in your community, and as always please call me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



General Manager,

Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District
(559) 456-3292

Free Swimming Lessons for 200 Children

Together the Water Safety Council of Fresno County and the City of Fresno Parks, Recreation & Community Services Aquatics Program provided free swimming lessons for children who may not otherwise have been able to afford them.

This summer a total of two hundred swimming lessons were offered at five sites. The project was made possible by a \$2,000 donation from the Water Safety Council. This is the third successful year of this effort. To extend the reach of the program, the City of Fresno offered lessons at a reduced cost (from \$20 per child to \$10) which doubled participation to 200 children.

Why Swimming Lessons Are Important

The National Safety Council reports that drowning is the second leading cause of unintentional injury and death of children ages 1-14 years. Near-drowning injuries, chiefly brain damage, can be devastating to children who survive being submerged in water. Swimming lessons for children dramatically reduce the likelihood of drowning.

Businesses, individuals and community groups are invited to participate in the 2008 summer swim lessons

scholarship program. Call the District at (559) 456-3292 if you are interested in becoming a sponsor.

The Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District is a founding member of Water Safety Council, which has been educating adults and children about water safety since 1982. Outreach efforts include an elementary school curriculum, free water safety presentations for child-care providers and parents, and swim lesson scholarships for children.

Visit www.watersafe.org to learn more about the Water Safety Council of Fresno County.

Kids enjoying supervised recreation swim at the City of Fresno's Frank H. Ball Community Center, one of five sites where free swim lessons were offered this summer.



Emergency Communications Get a Boost



The District Board authorized the installation of three data communication antennas on the District's 170-foot radio tower. The installation project was part of the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI). UASI is administered by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and uses federal funds to reduce area vulnerability by strengthening the cycle of response and by ensuring that potential targets are identified, assessed and protected.

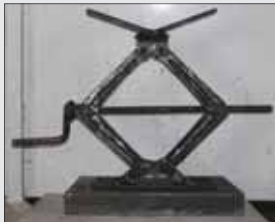
The antennas provide faster, longer range communication for five local emergency response agencies: the **Fresno Police and Fire** Departments, **Clovis Police** Department, **California Highway Patrol** and **Fresno County Sheriff's** Department. Redundant systems are needed to provide reliability to emergency personnel in the field. Using wireless network technology, these agencies can put more critical information in the hands of first responders faster than ever before.

The cost of locating, permitting, and constructing communication towers is very expensive, so the opportunity to partner with the District saves time and money. The site also offers good security and back up power to operate the equipment during emergencies. The District uses the tower for daily radio communication and to connect telemetry systems used to measure water elevations at 34 stormwater basins.



Employee's Invention Wins JPIA Safety Award

Jean Lespade, Telemetry Technician, designed and built a low-cost device that has been used by the District field staff in a wide array of labor and manpower saving applications for the past three years. It consists of a common automobile scissor jack, bought at an auto wrecking yard for about \$5, welded to a wide metal base. The total price to produce each device is under \$60.



The simplicity and low cost of the device was recognized by the District's insurance carrier, Joint Powers Insurance Authority, as producing savings in labor and potential back injuries associated with the work performed. The device is lightweight, strong, and the wide base provides stability in muddy or sandy conditions. Three years of field use has proven its usefulness and durability. Some uses include:

- Assists in the alignment of irrigation pipe connections. One worker, rather than two, can now safely align pipe for connection;
- Used to stabilize and hold pickup tool boxes in proper alignment during installation;
- Changing tires on utility and pump trailers in sand and mud; and
- Positioning trailer tongues for one-man hookups.

This story appeared in September/October 2006 JPIA's Perspective newsletter

District Hosts Construction Industry Workshops

The Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District provides compliance assistance for businesses impacted by stormwater regulations. In addition to the training workshop normally held annually*, shorter versions are held monthly at the Flood Control District offices, and are scheduled as follows:

- August 23
- September 20*
- October 25
- November 15
- December 13

The workshops assist developers, contractors and sub-contractors responsible for implementing stormwater pollution prevention (erosion and sediment control best management practices BMPs) at construction sites. There is an emphasis on erosion and sediment control BMPs. Attendees find out how to comply with state and local regulations by:

- Learning about job site runoff problems and solutions,
- Recognizing basic stormwater pollution prevention BMPs, including erosion and sediment control BMPs,

- Scheduling erosion and sediment control BMPs according to the season,
- Maintenance and inspection of stormwater BMPs; and
- Keeping the construction site in compliance with stormwater regulations.

The more detailed, annual half-day training is scheduled for September 20 at the Clovis Memorial Building. A workshop announcement will be posted on the District's web site.

Flood Control District staff works with the Associated General Contractors of California, the Building Industry Association of the San Joaquin Valley, and the Fresno Builders Exchange to host these training events and to advertise them to their membership.

To sign up for a training workshop, or for more information on stormwater compliance assistance, call Daniel Rourke at (559) 456-3292. There is a limit of 40 people per course. Visit www.fresnofloodcontrol.org to see the training flyer, which includes a map to the District offices.



Straw Wattles, shown here, are used as sediment barriers along the perimeter of a construction site to reduce the flow of sediments off the



construction site. There are several products on the market that reduce the amount of soil and other materials that can leave construction sites and enter the storm drain system.

Development Community Roundtable Provides Input

On May 1, 2006, the Board of Directors of the Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District hosted a meeting with builders, land developers, and engineers to discuss ways in which the District can improve its review process of entitlement applications, building plans, and flood control easements. Participation and input from the development community is an opportunity to help shape the future of the program and provide the highest possible level of service.

The meeting was led by Craig Scharton, CEO of the Central Valley Business Incubator, who asked questions and crystallized the answers into tasks. Discussion resulted in a list of 43 action items needed to achieve program improvements.

In the year since, District staff has worked on the 43 action items, toward the goal of providing the highest possible level of service to the community. Some of the changes:

- **Staffing** - Hiring one more engineer for the Master Planning section, one more for the Rural Streams section, as well as a GIS analyst;
- **Agency Coordination** - hold staff briefings for the cities of Fresno and Clovis and the County to describe the FMFCD Notice of Requirements Process and effectively communicate the purpose and expectations for FMFCD requirements;
- **Coordination with Development Community** - District will participate in monthly roundtable meetings hosted by the Building Industry Association;
- **Advanced Planning** - collaborate with the cities of Clovis and Fresno, and the County on anticipating growth

and the drainage infrastructure needed to support it.

This private enterprise style approach to performance evaluation highlights areas where improvement is needed. Streamlining of work and better communication are consistent themes. Finding ways to improve efficiency has a real impact on providing value for taxpayer money, and eliminates delays.

Development comes in all shapes and sizes, and all of it requires review by several government agencies. The District is doing its part to streamline the process of plan review and provide timely service, while making sure plans meet design specifications for a unified community drainage system.



News Line

Student Volunteers Beautify Parks



Students from several local high schools came out to work during Spring Break at two parks in Fresno, Trolley Creek Park (shown above) near Kings Canyon Road and Winery Avenue, and Sunset Park at Teilman and Eden Avenues.

Approximately forty student volunteers in the Fresno County Economic Opportunity Commission's In-School Youth Program painted, planted and beautified the two parks. EOC/Workforce Investment Board and Flood Control staff, and even one parent, provided guidance for the project, and enjoyed lunch and beautiful weather together.

The In-School Youth Program is a collaboration between EOC and Fresno Unified School District. EOC Career Counselors work with each Fresno high school, including charter schools and alternative education programs, in an effort to encourage students to stay in school and improve school performance.

If your non-profit organization is interested in partnering with EOC's youth program, please contact Jeff Davis at (559) 499-3731.

Teacher Resources Focus On Local Connections to State Standards

The District's Clean Stormwater program, created in 1996, is responsible for effecting public involvement and education to help increase awareness and change behaviors that contribute to water pollution. A variety of educational tools are available at no cost to teachers. Some materials meet California Department of Education standards while making a connection to local landmarks and water resources. They include:

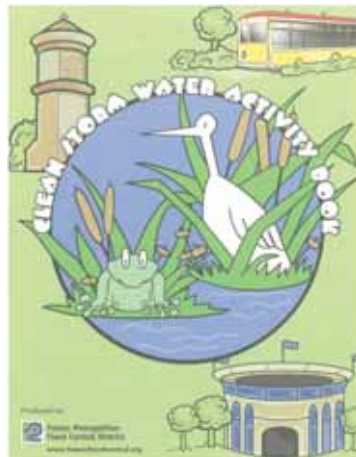


Urban Water Cycle Poster

This 36"x48" poster was developed with the expertise of Fresno and Clovis teachers and meets 5th grade Earth Sciences standards. It uses local landmarks to illustrate the elements of the water cycle and provides a large number of water cycle-related definitions.

Clean Stormwater Activity Book

This eight-page activity book can be used as a companion piece for the water cycle poster, or as an extra tool to use with an existing water cycle unit. It uses word search, code breaking, and multiple choice questions to teach pollution prevention. It is geared for 4th through 6th grades. Classroom sets will be delivered upon request.



Storm Drains 101

This five-minute video is made for students in the 7th through 12th grades. It delivers rapid-fire stormwater pollution prevention facts, and teaches the basics of the urban drainage system. This engaging video explains why keeping stormwater runoff clean is important to us all. "Storm Drains 101" is available in VHS or DVD format. Learning about storm water – where it flows, how it becomes polluted, and how to prevent storm water pollution – is fundamental to understanding and protecting our local water resources.

School Presentations

District staff can come to your school and put on a fun, interactive assembly or classroom presentation that teaches students about local water resources and ways they and their families can prevent pollution.

Watershed Maps and Photos

To complement classroom learning, District staff can provide teachers with aerial photographs and maps that show how storm water is managed in their backyard – where it drains, and how it flows. This helps to connect the book learning to real life conditions in our community.

For details on these educational resources call Brandy Swisher at (559) 456-3292, or visit:

www.fresnofloodcontrol.org

Erase the Waste Curriculum

This program was developed by the California Water Boards and designed to introduce teachers to an innovative student-centered science investigation, focused on California's growing problem of polluted runoff. A complete web site, www.waterlessons.org, offers the following:

- Units of study aligned to California Content Standards and which support the new Education and the Environment Initiative – a unified strategy to bring education about the environment to California schools.
- Free, ready-to-use lesson plans for 4th through 6th grades.
- Online teacher support.
- Lesson plan builder to make your own personalized lesson plans.

Clean Stormwater Mini-Grants Awarded



Each year the District's Board awards several \$2,000 mini-grants. The grants help to establish partnerships with community groups and local schools by funding projects that protect or enhance water resources, or educate citizens about storm water quality.

Eleven grants, totaling nearly \$20,000, were awarded in 2007. The grant projects explore different perspectives on storm water quality, from water quality educational field trips for underprivileged students to riparian habitat restoration and workshops to educate newly arrived Hmong families about a variety of water quality and water safety issues.

This year's successful applicants are: Center for Land-Based Learning; City of Fresno Parks, Recreation

& Community Services; Fresno Coalition Against Misuse of Pesticides (FresCAMP); Leadership Fresno Class XXIII; Liberty Elementary School, Clovis U.S.D.; Master Gardeners Association of Fresno County; Quail Lake Environmental Charter School, Sanger U.S.D.; San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust's River Camp; Scout Island Education Center; Stone Soup Fresno; and Tree Fresno.

Since the grant program's beginning in 1997 many interesting and educational projects have been funded. Visit www.fresnofloodcontrol.org for stories and photos of past projects.

Emergency Planning a District Priority

Response to the Gulf Coast hurricane disasters and increased concern about levees in California highlight the fact that emergency planning is a critical element of District operations. Each year District staff reviews and updates emergency response planning procedures and agency contact information. The program has been expanded to include planning meetings with emergency operation coordinators, local law enforcement agencies, streets and roads departments, state water officials, and other emergency response officials.

The District hosted the meetings to renew its commitment to interagency coordination. District staff described how the flood control and urban drainage systems operate to move stormwater away from urbanized areas and developed land. Scenarios involving localized flooding, dam failures, and levee breaks were discussed and participating agencies provided a summary of their response capabilities and emergency planning. County and State emergency services staff discussed interagency coordination on evacuation, traffic control, emergency planning, disaster declarations, and protocols for requesting state emergency aid.

While natural disasters cannot be avoided, Ken Austin, Emergency Services Coordinator with the Fresno County

Office of Emergency Services (OES), states that we can better respond to community needs if agencies coordinate response efforts. These planning sessions allow agency staff to better understand how to prepare for flooding emergencies in our community. Visit www.co.fresno.ca.us/5600/communityhealth/EnvironmentalHealth/OfficeEmergencyServices/ for more information.



Friant Dam is one of the structures included in Fresno County's emergency response plan. It provides storage for 520,500 acre feet of water and is upstream from Fresno & Clovis.

Close Up: Board Chairman Change

Frank Franco, the longest serving Board Chairman in FMFCD history, as well as the longest serving Director, stepped down as Board Chairman but will continue his role as a Director for the District. Mr. Franco, appointed to represent the City of Fresno in 1988, was first elected Chairman in 1996 and served in that capacity through 2006.

Richard Welton, who represents the County of Fresno on the seven-member FMFCD Board, was elected Board Chairman by unanimous vote of the Board.

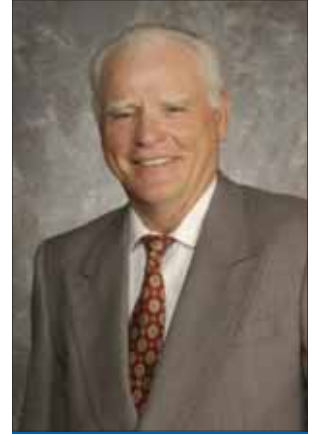
While their professional backgrounds differ, their goal of providing balanced and objective leadership is the same. Mr. Franco has worked for the Fresno County Economic Opportunities Commission for more than twenty years and is the Business Liaison, bringing together disadvantaged youth



*Past Chairman
Frank Franco*

and the business community. Mr. Welton is a Civil Engineer who has served in Public Works around the Central Valley for the past forty years.

During Mr. Franco's twenty years on the Board and ten years as Chairman, the District accomplished many projects that have a positive influence on our community, now and well into the future. They include development of an urban drainage and flood control system to protect life and property, completion of numerous basin parks and implementation of a stormwater quality program that is protective of water resources. Under Mr. Franco's and the Board's leadership, the District has built a reputation as a cooperative partner with other public agencies and the private sector to help meet the needs of our community.



*Current Chairman
Richard Welton*

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