

## 2013 Regional water management milestones

Governor Brown's January declaration of a drought emergency in California has heightened public interest in the already-prominent issue of water supply reliability. President Obama has turned his attention to the serious drought condition and its impacts on the state, is in communication with the Governor, and has pledged federal support. As high-level government leaders work to mitigate the quality of life and economic impacts of drought, local agencies all over the state continue their ongoing and collaborative work to protect water resources.

is now made up of nearly 60 public, private, and non-governmental organizations. Sixteen organizations make up its governing Board, of which the District is one. KBWA encompasses a nearly one million acre area, roughly bounded by Fresno/Clovis to the north, Pine Flat Reservoir and Orange Cove to the east, Hanford and Armona to the South, and San Joaquin to the west.



### Integrated Regional Water Management

The Kings Basin Water Authority (KBWA) is our regional water management entity, as recognized by the State. Formed in 2001, it

It is important that the residents of the KBWA know their area's water entities are continuing decades-long collaboration, and expanding it regionally. The water issues touched on here are the daily business of dozens of agencies, organizations and companies, and all share the same goal of protecting precious water resources.

KBWA prepared an Integrated Regional Water Management Plan in 2007 that was officially accepted by the State in 2009, and updated in 2012. The update established

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## District receives insurer's recognition award



Sometimes less is more. Insurance losses are a 'less is more' item, and the District has been formally recognized by its insurer for having a loss ratio of less than 20%. At its annual fall conference the Joint Powers Insurance Authority (JPIA) presented the President's Special Recognition Award to members with loss ratios of 20% or

less in three insurance program categories: 1) workers' compensation, 2) property, and 3) liability.

The District received awards for its liability and workers' compensation programs. Loss ratio is figured by dividing total losses by total premiums paid. Liability was 8.2% of the premium, and workers' compensation was 10.7%. Losses in the property program were 24.7%, due in large part to theft and vandalism.

### Why low loss rates are good

The award-winning low loss ratios are reflective of safe employee practices and effective safety training, as well as

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# Message from the General Manager



**Bob Van Wyk**

It's no secret that the current drought represents the driest period in our State's recorded history. On the first day of March, Governor Brown signed emergency drought relief legislation that promises \$687 million for emergency measures to conserve water, secure safe drinking water supplies for hard-hit towns, and bolster social services for those left unemployed because of lost production in farming and food processing. The drought bill also expedites funding for more surface and ground water storage, including recapturing stormwater for urban use.

The legislation gives the highest priority to projects that are already planned or partially completed. The Flood Control District has begun studying the drought relief program to see if it might include grant or loan funds to accelerate water recharge and conservation projects beneficial to the citizens of Fresno and Clovis. Since the District continually plans years ahead of community needs, we hope to be able to contribute

some "shovel-ready" projects to the State's efforts.

It's only a couple of months into the year and already California legislators have introduced seven new Water Bond proposals. These proposals are being pitched as alternatives to the 2012 \$11.4 billion Safe Drinking Water Act Bond, which has yet to be taken to the voters. The 2012 Water Bond has come under increasing criticism for both its cost and its lack of focus on drought solutions. The seven new-for-2014 bond proposals join two other bond alternatives developed in 2013 for a total of nine bond concepts competing for a chance at the November 2014 election. Some bonds focus on big-ticket surface water storage and conveyance projects, others would distribute bond funds widely across many programs. Some of the bond proposals more or less exclude stormwater projects, while others recognize stormwater and urban drainage management as part of the long-term solution to the State's water woes. The District will be busy this spring reviewing all bond proposals to try to ensure that the value of stormwater and irrigation water recharge to the State's long-term sustainability is recognized and supported.



## 10th year for Junior Golf Learning Center

It is hard to believe 10 years have passed since ground was broken at the Fresno-Greater San Joaquin Valley Junior Golf Foundation's site at Teilman and Eden Avenues, near Fresno's Chandler Airport. On December 18, 2003, nearly 50 people willingly gathered in a dirt lot on a cold morning. Junior Golf Foundation's founders Len and Vel Ross were joined in breaking ground by community leaders and project supporters, including long-time District Board member George Marcus. Speaking to Mr. Ross at the event, Director Marcus said, "The District Board supported this project 100%, and I think it will be a good project. I'm very happy you chose this site," to which Mr. Ross responded, "This was easy to do. It's where it should be."

### 10 years later

The goal of building a permanent golf instruction center was realized through countless volunteer hours and the financial contributions of generous donors. The District was also able to help by entering into an agreement with the Junior Golf Foundation to use as a driving range the 24-acre stormwater basin adjacent to the Junior Golf Learning Center. The basin use agreement's 10-year term expired and on January 8, 2014, was renewed for another five years.

The Junior Golf Foundation's guiding philosophy states,



"No boy or girl desiring to learn the game of golf should be overlooked for lack of instruction, equipment, course access, or funds. Golf teaches many lessons of life – including honesty, discipline, compassion, sportsmanship, integrity, and fair play. Golf is merely our catalyst in teaching life skills. It is a game that can be enjoyed throughout adulthood."

Instructors donate their time and expertise to provide six-week golf clinics free of charge to all 'juniors', ages 8-17 years. To learn more about the Fresno-Greater San Joaquin Valley Junior Golf Foundation, visit [www.lenross.com/junior\\_golf\\_foundation.htm](http://www.lenross.com/junior_golf_foundation.htm).



## Jerry Isler, a District icon



**Jerry Isler (right and below), laughs with (l-r) Dwayne Farrow, Don Booker, David Macias, and Rick Lyons at Jerry's 2008 retirement lunch, and flashes a big smile.**



When Jerry Isler retired six years ago it came as a surprise to everyone because he had been joking since 1983 that he had “just two more years to go” until retirement. Then he really did it. And in early 2013 he moved to Prescott, Arizona like he and his wife Debbie had planned, where they bought a beautiful home on two acres. Before they moved Jerry would sometimes join District staff for birthday celebrations and Christmas lunches, so we still got to see him. That made it seem like he really hadn't left. That was fine by us because most of us couldn't remember a time before Jerry Isler and we missed having him at work.

Jerry was hired as the District's first Construction Manager, in 1974, and he was always on the job, taking care of business. Jerry gave the entire community the benefit of his decades-long efforts to keep the quality of infrastructure construction consistently high. His work ethic was incredible, his professionalism was constant, and he was respected by everyone who worked with him - District staff, other agencies' staffs, and construction contractors.

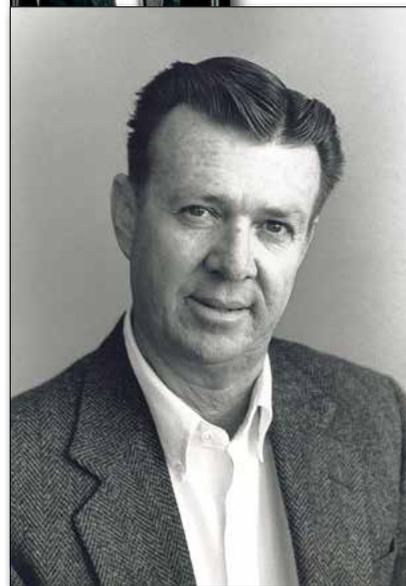
He supervised construction of \$180,000,000 of storm drainage and flood control facilities during his time with the District, and remembered remarkable detail about every section of pipe, bridge, dam, and pump station built. His institutional knowledge was impressive and invaluable.

Jerry Isler treated everyone equally well, and always went out of his way to teach and help. He was thoughtful and generous, making it his tradition to send flowers to every Office Assistant each year for Administrative Professionals Day.

At the end of November, 2013, Verlyn Neufeld, Jerry's friend, longtime co-worker, and now-Construction

Manager, told staff that Jerry had been diagnosed with bone cancer and had been hospitalized. At the end of December he passed away.

It is with great sadness the District staff says goodbye to Jerry Isler. He was our Construction Manager for nearly 34 years, he was always top-notch, and we were lucky to have him. Jerry lived by a creed we can all learn from. He treated everyone with respect and was extremely kind. His greeting always came with a big smile and enthusiasm. The impact he had on shaping the District's flood control and urban drainage system, organizational culture, and reputation in the community is hard to quantify. We remain grateful to him for his many years of truly excellent work, and to his family for sharing him with us. We are thankful we knew him.



**Jerry Isler, Flood Line photos for 1991 feature story - These photos were taken at the half-way point of Jerry's nearly 34 years with FMFCD.**

## Clean Stormwater Grants awarded

At the December 23, 2013, meeting the Board approved funding of 23 Clean Stormwater Grant projects and San Joaquin River class field trips totaling \$30,717. Project grants went to HandsOn Central California and RiverTree volunteers for San Joaquin River clean-up projects, Kings Canyon Middle School for a stormwater re-use project, and Ahwahnee Middle School for a storm drain marking effort. River field trip grants were awarded to 18 schools and the Fresno Police Activities League.

### Clean Stormwater projects

Projects chosen for funding are environmentally-focused and promote community involvement, stormwater quality education and environmental improvement. Since the start of the Clean Stormwater Grant program in 1997, the District has funded 238 projects. Each project has helped the community by increasing public awareness of the importance of keeping stormwater clean. This long-running grant program has helped to build a strong local network of civic-minded groups and individuals. Students

who participated in early grant projects are now adults who hopefully still carry awareness gained by their exposure to public involvement for the good of their community.

### San Joaquin River field trips

The San Joaquin River grant package provided to recipients includes a docent-led field trip at Scout Island Outdoor Education Center, the cost of bus transportation for up to 120 students, classroom materials, and a pre-trip classroom presentation about the local watershed. Hands-on activities at the river help students understand the importance of keeping water resources clean, and the connection between people's actions and the health of the environment.

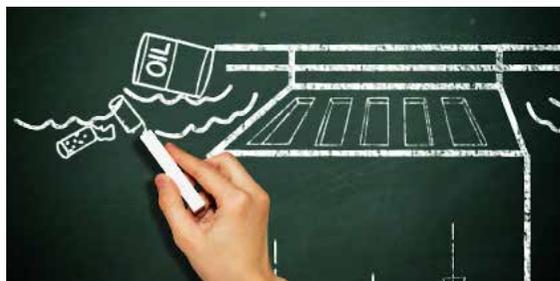
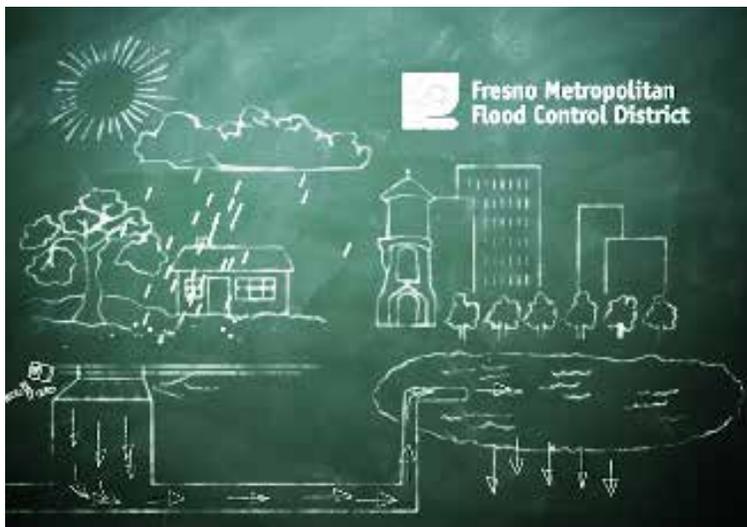
Grants are awarded annually. Applications are released in September and accepted until early November. Application availability and due date will be announced on the District's website ([www.fresnofloodcontrol.org](http://www.fresnofloodcontrol.org)) in September, 2014.

## New PSAs air on T.V. and radio

You may have seen and heard the new Clean Stormwater public service announcements on T.V. and radio in January and February. Using the children's song 'Wheels on the Bus' in some of them was practically guaranteed to stick in people's minds, and that was the idea. Using an iconic chalkboard image and chalk drawing animation was also chosen to catch people's attention. The new PSAs were created by Jeffrey Scott Agency of Fresno and replace the puppet-themed PSAs the District and its partner agencies developed five years ago.

A recent public awareness survey and subsequent focus groups revealed gaps in Fresno/Clovis residents' knowledge of the storm drain system, and the connection between stormwater, pollutants, and replenishment of the groundwater aquifer.

The new T.V. and radio spots address those gaps by starting at the beginning. They show and describe how rain falls on our community, picks up pollutants on its way to ponding basins, and that once the stormwater reaches basins it soaks through the soil to the groundwater aquifer below. The goal is to show that dumping motor oil, paint or garden chemicals and littering can pollute our water. The T.V. spots were produced in English and Spanish, and the radio spots give their messages in English, Spanish and Hmong. Visit [www.fresnofloodcontrol.org](http://www.fresnofloodcontrol.org) to see and hear them all.



## Recreational gems in NW & SE Fresno

Two beautiful, unique parks are waiting for you to discover them, or to revisit.

**Sloan Johnson Oso de Oro Lake Park**, on Forkner south of Bullard Avenue, is an award-winning park on nine acres in a functioning stormwater basin. It has an old California theme and offers play equipment and features that are fully accessible to visitors of all physical abilities. **Trolley Creek Park** is on three acres donated by respected Fresno businessman and philanthropist Y. Stephen Pilibos. It is adjacent to a nine-acre landscaped stormwater basin, open to the public from April to October. Park features were modeled after Oso de Oro's, but it has its own historic Fresno theme, which includes small-scale replicas of the Fresno Water Tower and the Meux Home, and a replica Birney trolley of the same model that used to run on rails near the park site.

### If you haven't been, you really must go

This year Trolley Creek Park celebrates its 10th anniversary, and next year Oso de Oro Lake Park will celebrate its 20th. Please come enjoy these beautiful community recreation gems! Visit [www.fresnofloodcontrol.org/parks](http://www.fresnofloodcontrol.org/parks) to learn more about these and the 23 other multi-use recreation sites in Fresno and Clovis of the Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District.



*Sloan Johnson Oso de Oro Lake Park, on Forkner Ave., south of Bullard Ave..*



*Trolley Creek Park, at Huntington & Helm Aves., north of the Kings Canyon Wal-Mart store.*

### The District's Park Attendants team:



#### Donald Green

Mr. Green was hired by the District on July 1, 1995, to supervise the newly-constructed Oso de Oro Lake Park. At present, he is responsible for Trolley Creek Park. He has been an invaluable ambassador to the public and helped to create a welcoming atmosphere for all visitors.



#### Robert Zuraek

Mr. Zuraek has been with the District since July 3, 2004. He was hired at the newly-constructed Trolley

Creek Park. His consistently positive engagement with park visitors has built community good will and a sense of ownership. At present, he is responsible for Oso de Oro Lake Park. He has worked tirelessly to keep these well-used parks beautiful.



#### Frank Gastelum

Mr. Gastelum has been with the District since September 29, 2008. He works as Park Attendant two days per week, mainly at Trolley Creek Park, and three days at the District offices doing all types of repairs and maintenance. Frank's maintenance and mechanical skills are much appreciated.

Both Robert and Frank were first hired

through AARP's Senior Community Service Employment Program on a part-time basis and were then offered full-time positions by the District.

"Each of the park attendants are responsible for enforcing the District's park rules as well as maintaining the pavilions and restroom facilities and keep the grounds free from trash. A big part of their job is the constant interaction with the public which to me requires natural talent and each of them have their own personal style and do a wonderful job in keeping the parks in great condition and in providing a friendly and professional presence," explains Frances Lopez, Office Manager and co-supervisor of the Parks Attendants team.

Thank you to Donald, Robert, and Frank for their great work and commitment.

# All hands on deck for maximum public benefit



Guest writer:  
**Tim Bakman**  
President,  
*Bakman Water Company*

What started with my father Dick Bakman's idea to create a small community water system to serve a subdivision of homes he built on the family ranch, has since evolved into a 65 year old public water utility, serving a population of approximately 15,000 people. It is a partnership with the community and by community I mean our customers, local governments, regional water agencies and future generations.

Given the drought conditions and declining groundwater aquifers, improving our recharge program is a primary focus. The goal is to essentially put back as much water as we pump out. This requires a balanced water supply and access to recharge facilities. Since our current supplies are strictly groundwater, reaching our recharge goal requires regional planning and coordination with other agencies. Collaborating through regional planning groups has become a strong component of our recharge program. We have been working with nine other water agencies in Fresno County to develop the Fresno Area Regional Groundwater Management Plan (GWMP) and have been participating in the Integrated Regional Water Management Plan along with more than 20 other districts, cities and agencies that comprise the Upper Kings Basin Integrated Regional Water Management Authority ("UKBIRWMA").

In addition to working together as part of larger groups on the Fresno Area GWMP and the UKBIRWMA, direct collaboration with the Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District (FMFCD) is also key to our recharge program. Throughout the past, we have worked together with FMFCD to provide for greater recharge capabilities in our area. For example, together we took the necessary steps to reclassify Basin "X", at Willow and Belmont Avenues, from a recreation basin to a recharge basin. We also partnered to construct a pipeline between Basin "W", on Minnewawa south of Olive Avenue, and Basin "X", which will be instrumental in our recharge program.

Collaborating with the Fresno Irrigation District (FID) is also important to our recharge program. We currently pay

an annual fee to FID to provide recharge on our behalf. We are also in the process of finalizing an agreement that will allow us to purchase surface water for use as recharge. These projects serve as prime examples of how public agencies and private business can work together to benefit the community.

A recent project that involves multi-agency collaboration is the Fancher Creek Master Planned Community, a large-scale mixed-use development built around Fancher Creek, a natural waterway that has fed valley crops for over a century. The water needs of this project are being met through a collaborative effort between Bakman Water Company, FMFCD, City of Fresno, FID, and the Fancher Creek Properties development team. The agencies are working in conjunction on the development to implement projects that increase the capacity for local storage and recharge, return Fancher Creek to a more natural riparian area, and utilize water resources more efficiently.

We applaud the Fancher Creek development team for their creative and innovative approaches to water conservation and sustainable development. This cooperation amongst all parties will bring benefits to the community for years to come. Our future plans can only become a reality through collaborative efforts with other local water agencies, as we each bring a unique benefit to the area and the Central Valley as a whole. With an area wide goal of increasing available supplies for all of our customers while better managing demand, Bakman Water Company understands that we are one piece of the water supply puzzle.

To garner further support for and from the community, we also formed the Bakman Sustainable Community Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation with a mission to create vibrant and self-sustaining local communities. We will meet this mission through educational outreach in green technologies, infrastructure self reliance, and conservation by encouraging multi-purpose development practices that provide clean air, clean water, and opportunities for safe and healthy recreation.

Since its beginnings in 1948, Bakman Water Company has kept abreast of water delivery and quality technologies to best serve its water customers. With the fourth generation of family members at the company and a growing extended family full of highly experienced and talented staff, we have the tools and expertise to continue as a vital piece of this community and its future. We are proud of our role in providing one of life's most precious resources for so many people.



## 2013 Regional water management

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a goal of preparing a first-ever annual report, and KBWA has met that goal with the [release of its 2013 annual report](#). It reports on surface water, groundwater, and water quality conditions in the Kings Basin; the status of 15 measurable objectives outlined in the Plan; lists implementation projects such as regional studies, future projects, completed and ongoing projects, potential grant funding and grants already secured by KBWA members; and discusses governance, policies and membership in the KBWA.

As explained by KBWA, “The region faces many water management challenges including groundwater overdraft, surface water shortages in dry years, and groundwater quality problems in certain areas.” The goals and supporting activities described in the Plan address these recognized water issues. To read the updated 2012 Kings Basin Integrated Regional Water Management Plan and related documents, visit [www.krcd.org/water/ukbirwma/docs\\_gov.html](http://www.krcd.org/water/ukbirwma/docs_gov.html).

### The power of collaboration

In February, the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) released its final funding recommendations for the Proposition 84 Round 2 Integrated Regional Water Management Implementation Grant Program. “The KBWA application scored the highest in the state and

was recommended to receive its full funding request of \$8,734,000,” said Eric C. Osterling, KBWA Program Manager, in an announcement to KBWA member agencies. “The grant funds will be leveraged to complete the following five projects:

1. City of San Joaquin Water Supply Reliability & Conservation Project
2. Fresno Irrigation District Southwest Groundwater Banking Project
3. Laguna Irrigation District Recharge Basin 11 Project
4. Bakman Water Company Water Supply Reliability and Conservation Project
5. City of Kerman Residential Water Meter Project”

Participation in regional plans like KBWA’s provides a mechanism for project vetting and makes member agencies eligible to apply for bond-funded grant programs through the State of California. That is the process each of the above agencies went through in building their successful DWR grant proposal, and is the same process the District went through with its three successful proposals in 2011 and 2013.

The District congratulates its five KBWA co-directors on their success in securing very substantial funding for critical water projects to serve their communities.

## Insurer’s recognition award

Continued from cover

comprehensive safety inspection. Regular safety training, like the in-the-field confined space demonstration shown on the right, are an important part of ensuring District employees are safe on the job. In addition, the District’s inspection and training practices are good for the its constituents, resulting in lower insurance premiums paid with public funds.

In a letter to District General Manager Bob Van Wyk, JPIA’s CEO Walter Sells said, “The JPIA is extremely pleased to present Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District with this special recognition and commends the District on the hard work in reducing claims. **“Congratulations... Keep up the good work!”** Congratulations to you, your staff, Board, and District. Keep up the good work!”

Solid organizational operating procedures ensure employee safety and responsible use of public funds. This is a responsibility the District and its staff take seriously. We will keep up the good work!



**In-the-field confined space safety training** - shown l-r: Bret Philips, David O’Masters, Jean Lespade, Mike Folsom, Paul Allen, and Ryan Schiebelhut (dangling).



## Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District

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## Close Up: Robert McIntyre



Robert McIntyre came to the District in 1995 as a Design Technician in the Engineering department. The District staff was much smaller then at 46, as compared to today's 75 people. Soon after, Robert demonstrated an aptitude for working with computers and local networks. From that point his job duties began to shift from

drafting to 50% drafting and 50% information technology (IT). Then the split went to 80/20, and eventually to IT 100%.

For several years Robert was the one and only IT staffer and was responsible for all computers, printers, and network servers. He brought the District through the transition from its outdated computers (8088's - you tech-savvy people

will know what this means) to Windows-based desktop computers. Robert remembers how the slow machines shaped daily routines of staff. "Jerry Isler [long-time Construction Manager] would come in first thing in the morning and turn on his computer, then go get a cup of coffee, come back and wait some more while it booted up. It took that long."

Robert is originally from the Sacramento area. He and his wife Tami have lived in Fresno for more than 20 years, and have been married for nearly 29 years. They have five children, who range in age from 34 to 13 years, and also have six grandchildren. Theirs is a busy life, and they hope to find out some day what it is like to have free time!

As explained by Robert's supervisor, Larry Kalpakoff, "Robert has knowledge and history with most of the systems here at the District and because of this, he works with many departments in his day to day activities. In addition to his knowledge about the District systems Robert is the person who responds to the alarms in the middle of the night and you can always count on him to answer that late night call. I look forward to many more productive years with Robert here in the IT department."

