

THE Current



MID's Monthly Newsletter

January 2017



MID Main Office
744 W. 20th Street
Merced, CA. 95340
(209) 722-5761

Customer Service
Water: (209) 722-2720
Electric: (209) 722-3041

Board Meetings
Merced Civic Center
678 W. 18th Street
Merced, CA. 95340

The first Tuesday of every month at 10:00 am

Mailing Address
PO Box 2288
Merced, CA. 95344

Websites
www.mercedid.org
www.lakemcclure.com



Did you know that MID is on Facebook and Twitter?

Join hundreds of your friends and neighbors to stay connected.

Like us by visiting www.facebook.com/MercedIrrigationDistrict or clicking on our Facebook link at the MID website.

Merced residents oppose Bay Delta Plan in both Merced and Sacramento



Seen above are Robert Dylina, left and Mike Carpenter, right discussing local economic concerns with State Water Resources Control Board. Dylina is chairman of the Greater Merced Chamber of Commerce and Manager of Envoy Mortgage. Mike Carpenter is a partner at Leap-Carpenter-Kemps Insurance Agency.

During two all-day hearings at the end of the year, large cross sections of the Merced community shared concerns about the far-reaching impacts of the state's Bay Delta Plan. Those concerns ranged from the impacts on Merced's drinking water quantity and quality to the devastating impacts the plan would have on the local economy.

About a dozen residents and local government officials traveled to Sacramento in late November to provide testimony about the impacts of the lost water. In mid-December, local residents, elected officials and community leaders packed a hearing held at the Merced Theater in downtown Merced to share their concerns with state officials.

Specifically, the State Water Resources Control Board is moving forward with an enormous plan that calls for the diversion of Merced River water away from Merced and instead sends it north to the Bay Delta. There, the water will benefit other communities and farms. An independent analysis of state and local government records has shown the water diversion would result in the loss of more than \$230 million in economic activity and nearly 1,000 jobs.

Robert Dylina, Chairman of the Greater Merced Chamber of Commerce and Manager of Envoy Mortgage, was among a contingent of the Merced Community that traveled to a hearing in Sacramento with the State Water Board on Nov. 29. He told the

[See "Bay Delta Plan" Back Page](#)

A Year-End Review

Merced Irrigation District remains grateful to have spent another year serving the community and supporting *Your Way of Life*.

Among the highlights of this year have been celebrating 20 years of providing public power, a cooperative effort with the UC Solar Institute and a break in the multiple-year drought.

Some Drought Relief:

After several dry years, MID saw its first significant storms since 2011. Heading into January Lake McClure is about 45 percent full. The District still continues to face challenges to its water supply through proposed state regulations.

[See "Year - End Review" Back Page](#)

Continued From Front: "Bay Delta Plan"

State Water Board that Merced is just now beginning to see economic improvement following the recession and housing collapse, which had put Merced in the national headlines in 2008 and 2009. The economic impacts of the Bay Delta Plan would be a significant blow to Merced's economic recovery, he said.

Fernando Aguilera, with the Merced Atlas Soccer Academy, delivered 800 letters to the board during the Sacramento hearing expressing concerns about the impacts to local drinking water quality. He further expressed concerns about the message being sent to local youth in a disadvantaged community.

"At nearly every direction they face, they are given a simple message: you can't do that – you are from Merced. They are constantly enticed to simply give up hope of a better future and give in to the negative influences around them," he said. "What am I supposed to tell them?"

Mike Carpenter, a partner at Leap-Carpenter-Kemps Insurance Agency, explained the ripple effect the Bay Delta Plan would have on local businesses such as his. Approximately 40

percent of the local insurance office's business is connected to agriculture production and processing, he said.

City of Merced's Economic Development Director Frank Quintero expressed concerns about meeting the water needs of future growth and commerce. Several speakers questioned how Merced would meet the water needs of future residents, including those who moved to the community in search of more affordable housing from such places as the Bay Area.

Multiple questions were raised about how new growth and commerce in Merced would be managed if the community loses its water supply. Unlike many other communities in the state, Merced does not have access to water supplied by the State and Federal water conveyance systems: the entire community depends on groundwater for drinking. That local groundwater is replenished each year, in part, with water stored in Lake McClure. In total, MID's operations help contribute up to 140,000 acre feet of water into the local groundwater: that is the equivalent of more than one-tenth of

Lake McClure's capacity of fresh water benefiting local groundwater quality and sustainability.

Tim Goodson owns and operates Calaveras Trout Farm, the second largest trout farm in the state. His fish are planted in lakes for anglers across California after being raised with Merced River water near the community of Snelling. Goodson told the State Water Board that the Bay Delta Plan impacts would have a crippling effect on water temperatures and his ability to produce trout for California anglers.

The State Water Board's purported need for the new water diversion is to support salmon and wildlife in the Bay Delta. In direct response, Merced Irrigation District has proposed the Merced River S.A.F.E. Plan, a multi-benefit approach that supports salmon and the local environment in the Merced area while protecting local water quantity and quality.

All comments are due to the State Water Board by noon March 17. To write a letter or for further comment, please visit www.MercedRiverSAFEplan.org

Continued From Front: "Year- End Review"

50-year-old Gate Removal:

Prior to Lake McClure experiencing an increase in water levels, MID took advantage of the low-water level to remove a 65,000-pound gate from the inlet of the New Exchequer Hydroelectric Project. Measuring 23-feet tall and 13-feet wide, it had been submerged for nearly five decades. The gate was more than 100 feet deep when removed and is now ready to be used when needed.



This 65,000-pound gate was pulled from 100 ft. below Lake McClure.

Fireworks Return:

As a result of improved water levels at Lake McClure, Fireworks returned for the first time since 2013, drawing a large crowd over the three-day weekend in July. Thousands gathered along the shoreline to watch the fireworks as they lit up Lake McClure.

UC Solar Partnership:

In April, MID and the University of California Advanced Solar Technologies Institute (UC Solar) partnered together through a one-year pilot program to establish the Renewable Energy Learning Center at the Stephen Leonard Youth Center in Merced. During this time, youth and their families have had the opportunity to learn about the science of renewable energy and attend various classes.

"The UC Solar Institute is working to develop tomorrow's technology and is working to keep the cost of renewable energy affordable. This partnership marks a tremendous benefit to our entire community – and especially our local youth," said Don Ouchley, Deputy General Manager of MID Energy Resources.



Students Learn from UC Solar Researchers.

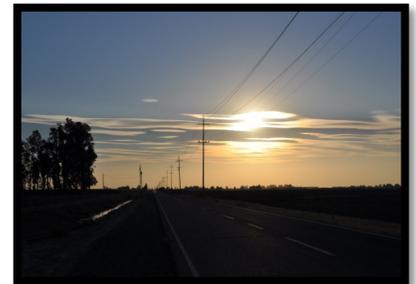
Celebrating 20 Years:

In May of 1996, MID began selling electricity to its first customer. Since then, the District has built an electric system that serves publicly owned electricity to more than 8,000 residents and businesses. May marked 20 years that MID has been lighting the way.

To learn more about the benefits of public power and to receive free tips about saving energy and saving money, visit MIDLightsTheWay.com

South Transmission Project:

In early October, MID approved a project on the outskirts of Merced that will improve reliability and will help the growth of MID electric service. The South Transmission Project relies on existing rights-of-way.



The South Transmission Project relies on existing rights-of-way.