



## **Merced Irrigation District Supports MERCOCO McLane Cycling Classic with New Lake McClure Road Race**

### ***12.5-Mile Loop Provides New Challenges in Sierra Nevada Foothills***

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MERCED, CA – Merced Irrigation District has announced its participation in the upcoming annual MERCOCO McLane Cycling Classic Race. MID will host this year's first ever MID Lake McClure Road Race in the scenic and challenging Sierra Nevada foothills, east of Merced, on Thursday, March 3, 2011.

The foothill race is an extension of the Individual Time Trials, Downtown Grand Prix and Almond Blossom Road Race that make up the MERCOCO McLane Cycling Classic. The new race will also add an additional day to the now four-day event.

“All of us at MID are extremely excited about supporting the race and offering a venue for this new course,” said MID General Manager John Sweigard. “This is just one more way to support our community.”

For nearly two decades, the MERCOCO McLane Classic has been a fixture in Merced County, drawing thousands of spectators and cyclists to the family-friendly event. In addition to driving significant economic activity, the proceeds benefit the nonprofit United Way of Merced County, which works to improve education, health and income in the community.

During the MID Lake McClure Road Race, cyclists will race a 12.5-mile loop through MID's Recreation Area near Lakes McSwain and McClure and be confronted with more than 4,500 feet of accumulated elevation gain.

The race will begin near the entrance of Lakes McSwain and McClure Recreation Area, just off of Lake McClure Road. Cyclists will race north up Lake McClure Road and turn west on Haul Road. They will then

turn back south on Merced Falls Road and again turn northeast at the road's intersection with Lake McClure Road.

The loop will be completed seven times. After the seventh lap, cyclists will finish by racing to an area just above the New Exchequer Dam on Lake McClure.

"This is really going to test the athletes' endurance. The addition of this race is going to take the MERCO McLane race to an entirely new level," said Doug Fluetsch, of Merced, who has organized the event since its inception.

"MID is ready and willing to provide any service and assistance we can to the organizers of this race," said MID Parks Director James "J" Mills.

During the course of this four- to five-hour event, the CHP will be controlling traffic. There will be a brief road closure along Lake McClure Road. There will also be traffic delays and diversions along Merced Falls Road. Traffic control will likely begin around 9:30 a.m. on March 3 and end about 2:30 p.m.

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