



MID Appoints New District Counsel

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Merced, CA – Phillip R. McMurray has been appointed as the staff General Counsel at Merced Irrigation District (MID).

He will begin work at the end of July.

A resident of Los Banos, Mr. McMurray brings years of experience providing legal representation for a variety of public agencies and water districts involved in agricultural and water resource issues.

“We are incredibly fortunate to have Mr. McMurray join the District. His legal expertise and knowledge of California water and agriculture issues make him ideal for this position,” said General Manager John Sweigard. “Our customers and our community will be well served by his experience.”

MID is a unique and diverse local public agency. The District is comprised of irrigation and drainage operations, electric services, a hydroelectric project and parks and recreation. The district maintains 800 miles of canals providing irrigation supplies to 2,200 growers. More than 7,300 residential and business customers are served by the District. Additionally, MID operates recreation facilities on Lake McClure and Lake McSwain, including 600 campsites, six boat launches and several floating marinas.

Mr. McMurray’s services to MID will include providing the legal guidance needed to protect MID’s resources held in trust for its water users and ratepayers. Mr. McMurray will further represent the District at administrative law hearings, regulatory law hearings and judicial proceedings. Mr. McMurray will also be responsible for managing special and outside counsel, and maintaining a working knowledge of local, state and federal resource issues.

“Given all the issues MID deals with on a day-to-day basis, it will be a welcome addition to have an in-house legal expert for our senior managers to work with and interact with on a daily basis,” said Deputy General Manager Hicham El Tal. “MID’s valuable resources and various established rights are continually – and more than before – being challenged or undermined on multiple fronts. With Mr. McMurray’s

caliber and expertise, MID will be in a better position in facing the ever mounting challenges to ensure maintaining the District's entrusted mission and commitment toward its customers and the community at large."

"I am excited and very appreciative of the opportunity to work for the Merced Irrigation District," said Mr. McMurray. "MID has a long history of developing and preserving important natural resources that benefit the Central Valley. From the staff to the management team and Board of Directors, the organization represents a significant pool of creative and talented people committed to protecting and sustaining MID's resources. I am and eager to begin my work on the MID team and take on the important issues faced by the District."

Mr. McMurray graduated from California State University, Fresno Magna Cum Laude in 2000. He holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Agriculture Business and a minor in Plant Science. He received his Juris Doctorate from Sacramento's Lincoln Law School in 2004 and was admitted to the California State Bar in June of 2005.

Since 2006, he has been an associate attorney with Linneman, Burgess, Telles, Van Atta, Vierra, Rathmann, Whitehurst & Keene of Dos Palos. Additionally, since 2007 he has served as an adjunct faculty member at Merced College teaching business and law oriented classes.

Among his experience working on Valley water issues is his involvement with the Delta Habitat Conservation and Conveyance Program, San Joaquin River Restoration Program and the Grassland Bypass Project.

"We are all pleased to welcome Mr. McMurray to the District," said General Manager Sweigard. "This is one more significant step in helping to prepare MID for a very bright future."

MID's long-time outside General Counsel Kenneth Robbins will continue to work with MID on water related matters, including water rights, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), Sac Joaquin Delta and river issues.

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