



MID approves water rate and full allocation for 2019 season

For Immediate Release: March 6, 2019

At its March 5, 2019 meeting, the Merced Irrigation District Board of Directors approved the budget for the upcoming fiscal year and set the water rate for in-District customers for the season.

“We’ve had a healthy winter this year in terms of snow and precipitation,” said MID General Manager John Sweigard. “Lake McClure is in good shape and we want to be as responsive as possible to our growers. It is critical that we use our surface water supply while we have it and preserve local groundwater for future use.”

There will be no restrictions on surface-water allocations this year, and water transfers to lands within MID’s Sphere of Influence (SOI) were approved. Those are lands just outside the District boundaries but still within the eastern Merced groundwater basin.

The in-District water rate for the coming season was set at \$40 per acre foot for all MID growers. (Growers within MID’s SOI may execute water transfer agreements and receive MID surface water for \$100 per acre foot.)

MID is currently accepting water orders and began charging the conveyance system around March 1. Water deliveries will begin soon and may vary depending on demand and location within the system.

Yesterday’s decisions were made after nearly two hours of open discussion between the MID Board of Directors, the MID Advisory Committee and other interested members of the public. This was the fourth public meeting regarding the District’s FY 2020 budget occurring over the past few months.

Options for ordering water include:

- Orders may be placed anytime online at www.mercedid.org.
- Orders may be placed anytime using MID’s automated water ordering system at (866) 825-2475.

- During weekday business hours, orders may be placed by calling MID Customer Service at (209) 722-2720 or toll-free at (800) 750-2720.
- Orders may be placed in person during weekday business hours at MID's main office, located at 744 W. 20th Street in Merced.

GROUNDWATER BENEFITS

Delivering surface water from Lake McClure to area growers provides a crucial benefit to area groundwater. MID's operations result each year in up to 140,000 acre feet of groundwater replenishment as water flows through unlined waterways, canals and MID-operated groundwater recharge basins. Conjunctive groundwater management has become a top priority in the region since the state approved the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. MID is one of multiple urban and rural partners working jointly to address groundwater challenges in eastern Merced County.

NEW BUDGET

For the upcoming fiscal year, the MID Board of Directors has adopted a total consolidated budget of \$112.8 million. This includes expected revenues of approximately \$27 million from the Water Resources Department, \$16.2 million from the Hydroelectric Department and approximately \$66.5 million from the Energy Resources Department. MID will continue meeting all its bond covenant requirements and cash reserve guidelines for fiscal year 2020.

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