

RAISIN CITY WATER DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2021

Board Focuses on Infrastructure, Water Supply Projects

In the last several years, the Raisin City Water District (RCWD) has undergone a significant transition to position landowners for water resource management changes in the region and State due to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. The RCWD Board is working on addressing a combination of supply and demand issues at the District level and through their leadership role as Board members of the McMullin Area Groundwater Sustainability Agency (MAGSA). The RCWD Board is focused on three immediate objectives:

- Working with MAGSA on the McMullin Expansion Project
- Partnering with neighboring agencies on water supply projects
- Developing water distribution infrastructure to bring water to RCWD farms

These objectives, in tandem with efforts to implement MAGSA's Groundwater Sustainability Plan, are focused on stabilizing groundwater levels to achieve sustainability. To move these objectives forward, the Board has formed the following working committees:

Fresno Irrigation District - committee members Don Cameron, Jonathon DeGroot

Consolidated Irrigation District - committee members Jonathon DeGroot, Geri Gunlund

Grantland/Stinson - committee members Geri Gunlund, John Verwey

James Irrigation District - committee members Gagan Batth, Don Cameron

The Board's goal through every project, partnership and committee is to provide landowners with the ability to continue to farm by developing a reliable water supply.

Board Adopts 75 Cent Landowner Assessment

The RCWD serves approximately 51,719 acres. The primary source of funding for operations comes from assessments billed to the properties within the service area. At the July 20 meeting, the Board approved an assessment of 75 cents per acre for Fiscal Year 2021-22. This means if a landowner owns 100 acres, the amount due to RCWD is \$75. The assessment will be included on Fresno County tax bills beginning fall 2021.

Based on the assessable acres, \$38,560 of projected revenue is generated for RCWD. The Board is also actively pursuing grant opportunities and partnerships to offset costs. To view the Fiscal Year 2021-22 budget visit RCWD's website, www.rcwd.ca.gov.

The 75-cent assessment rate has not increased since RCWD was formed in 1962. To consider future infrastructure and water supply projects, the Board will need to raise the assessment rate. Any rate increase will need to be approved by a majority of landowners in RCWD.

McMullin On-Farm Flood Capture Expansion Project Reaches Milestone

The McMullin Expansion Project reached a milestone in July with the completion of the 30-day public scoping session. Part of the environmental review process, the session provided the first opportunity for the public to submit comments on the proposed project.

The Expansion Project will divert flood flows from the Kings River when they are available for distribution to participating farmlands within the RCWD using an approach termed On-Farm Recharge (OFR). Farmlands employed for OFR are managed for multiple uses including farming and groundwater recharge. The RCWD service area is a prime location for OFR as mapping based on soil types shows about a quarter of the land is suitable for recharge.

Phase 1 of the Expansion Project was constructed in 2018. Phase 2 is currently under design and when constructed, will increase water diversions and recharge capacity. It will also increase the potential farmland acreage for receiving flood flows through OFR by about 15,000 acres, doubling the total Kings River diversion rate and acreage.

The Project will be operated as a partnership between RCWD and MAGSA. MAGSA was awarded a \$10 million grant by the State Water Resources Control Board, and RCWD is providing matching funds through a U.S. Department of Agriculture grant. By leveraging both grants, RCWD landowners will benefit from more water for recharge and a \$22 million direct economic benefit. This project will also significantly contribute to the joint effort by RCWD and MAGSA to implement the Groundwater Sustainability Plan to offset groundwater overdraft in the MAGSA area.

Visit www.mcmullinarea.org/OFR for more details on the Expansion Project and additional updates as they become available.



RCWD Board Member Don Cameron addressing guests during a recent visit by US Secretary of Ag Tom Vilsack, CA Department of Food and Ag Secretary Karen Ross, and Congressmen Costa and Valadao to Terranova Ranch in the RCWD service area.

Meet Jonathon DeGroot, RCWD Farmer and Board Member



Tell us about yourself? I am 37 years old, married 16 years, (Kara) 4 kids (14-12-9-7). We are dairy farmers. We are partners with my parents (Pete and Carolyn) and my brother and his wife (Charlie and Jamie). The DeGroot family has been in the Raisin City area since 1973. We farm alfalfa, corn, triticale and almonds.

Why did you choose to serve on the RCWD Board? Farming is a legacy, and my hope is to pass that on to the next generation. The water situation is going to be an uphill battle, and it was time to get in the trenches. I also hope to be a voice for the farmers in Raisin City and to help come up with solutions that benefit the entire district, not just a select few.

What do you believe is the role of the RCWD? RCWD sits in a unique area and has so much potential for water recharge. I feel that as a district we need to be pushing hard to bring water into the district and prevent water curtailments in the future. Being in MAGSA, which is part of the Kings

Basin, we need to work cooperatively with our basin partners, specifically Fresno Irrigation District, Consolidated Irrigation District, and James Irrigation District to procure water recharge solutions that benefit the entire basin. I hope to see RCWD develop an infrastructure system that will allow us to partner with these surrounding districts to bring recharge water into RCWD. We also need to work alongside MAGSA, while maintaining our unique identity.

What do you like to do when you are not farming? I enjoy water sports, snow skiing, watching my kids play sports and Rodeo.

What is your favorite food? I'm a meat and potatoes kind of guy.

What is the best farming advice you have ever received? A local farmer, friend and mentor, Mike Botasso once told me, "Don't base your decisions on how 10% of the field looks, base it on what's best for the other 90%." I believe this is very appropriate in regards to the work that needs to be done in the RCWD.

Raisin City Water District
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**Important updates enclosed for Raisin City
Water District landowners.**



Email Manager Randy Hopkins
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Call us at **559.449.2700**



Visit our website
www.rcwd.ca.gov

Board Initiates Landowner Newsletter

The RCWD Board has started a quarterly newsletter to keep landowners updated on important projects taking place in the District. "The Raisin City Water District Board is actively involved in several groundwater and surface water projects that will change the physical landscape of the area and provide additional water supply options for our landowners," stated Board President Gere Gunlund. "It is important that our landowners are kept informed on the progress being made. This newsletter is one of the ways to provide our landowners updates." This Summer 2021 newsletter is the first one to be sent to landowners. Keep an eye out for the next issue coming in the fall.

RCWD Board Meeting September 21, 1:30 PM

To receive updates on RCWD activities, join RCWD landowners at the upcoming Board meeting. The Board meets on the third Tuesday of every month at 1:30 pm. Meetings are held online via Microsoft Teams and at the Raisin City Water District Office located at 455 W. Fir Ave., Clovis 93611. For meeting agendas go to www.rcwd.ca.gov.

Raisin City Water District Board of Directors

R. Gere Gunlund, President

Jonathon DeGroot, Vice-President

Gagan Batth

Don Cameron

John Verwey