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January 27, 2022

MID and TID seek additional waters rights to benefit customers, communities and environment

The Districts submit first water rights application since 1951 to divert wet-year water

Responding to the impacts of climate change and other stressors, Modesto Irrigation District and Turlock Irrigation District filed a water rights application with the State Water Resources Control Board to capture unappropriated flood waters from the Tuolumne River and put them to beneficial use.

The joint application petitions the state to permit the Districts to appropriate up to 2.7 million acre-feet (AF) of water Nov. 1 through June 14 annually, when the Tuolumne River is not classified as a fully appropriated stream. An initial analysis indicates that since 1998 there have been thirteen years when water would be available averaging approximately 840,000 AF annually.

Each agency's respective Board of Directors authorized the action at meetings on Tuesday, Jan. 25. The right would be considered junior to all current water rights to appropriate water from the Tuolumne and would complement the Districts' existing water rights portfolio. A multi-year procedural process now ensues before any water right is issued or flood waters are diverted.

"This historic action demonstrates our forward thinking in seeking all avenues of available water to sustain our customers, communities and environment," said MID Board President John Mensinger. "These water rights can provide us the flexibility and opportunities to collaborate on projects – large and small – to utilize additional water for beneficial use in line with the changing demands of our region."

This filing is consistent with the Governor's Water Resilience Portfolio while also showing a proactive effort to respond to calls to action for water districts to maintain, increase and diversify water supplies and ensure long-term water availability and reliability. In addition to climate change, state and federal regulatory efforts (e.g. state's Bay-Delta Plan and federal relicensing of the Don Pedro Project) could likely decrease water supply availability. Implementation of Groundwater Sustainability Plans in response to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act will also require additional water sources for needed sustainability projects.

"Today's filing builds on our 135 year legacy of stewardship on the Tuolumne River, we're constantly on the lookout for regional solutions to regional challenges," said TID Board President Michael Frantz. "The

watershed is so volatile year to year because of the impacts of climate change, this is a prudent decision that can benefit ag water users, drinking water supplies, the fishery and flood risk management for the next century.”

The last time the Districts applied for water rights was in 1951 for the Don Pedro Reservoir. Since that time, countless new water management stressors have presented challenges to the Districts’ ongoing resource stewardship. Climate change has significantly impacted precipitation and runoff, making the hydrology of the Tuolumne watershed highly variable, especially in recent years.

Additional water captured from flood flows could also benefit the Tuolumne River fishery, flood plain habitat, flood risk mitigation, groundwater recharge and the provision of drinking water.

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About the Modesto Irrigation District (MID)

The Modesto Irrigation District, established in 1887 is a vertically integrated public utility located in California’s Central Valley. MID provides irrigation water to approximately 2,300 agricultural accounts irrigating close to 60,000 acres and electricity to more than 128,000 residential, commercial and agricultural accounts in Modesto, Empire, Salida, Waterford and Mountain House as well as parts of Escalon, Oakdale, Ripon and Riverbank. MID also treats, delivers and wholesales up to approximately 67,000 acre-feet of drinking water per year to the City of Modesto. For more information about MID visit www.mid.org and follow [@mod_irrigation](https://twitter.com/mod_irrigation) on Twitter.

About the Turlock Irrigation District (TID)

The Turlock Irrigation District, located in Turlock CA, is the first publicly owned Irrigation District and is one of only four today that provides irrigation water and power to residential, commercial, industrial and agricultural customers within its service area. TID has been in the retail electric business since 1923. TID provides safe, low-cost, reliable energy to a growing customer base that today exceeds 103,000 home, farm, business, industrial and municipal accounts. TID also serves 4,700 irrigation customers covering approximately 150,000 acres of farmland. For more information about TID visit www.tid.com and follow [@TurlockID](https://twitter.com/TurlockID) on Twitter.