

## Water

## Talent Irrigation District faces short season

By HOLLY DILLEMUTH  
For the Capital Press

TALENT, Ore. — Water deliveries are “more than likely” for patrons of the Talent Irrigation District in Southern Oregon this season, but with the potential for a much shorter period than usual, according to Mike Winters, president of the district board of directors.

The district has 13,155 acre-feet in storage, but due to the unprecedented megadrought, has yet to decide on water deliveries for this season.

About one dozen patrons filled the small meeting room and spilled out into the hallway in the district office in Talent on April 5.

There to share their concerns and ask questions about the drought and its impact, all attendees were given the opportunity to share their thoughts on the upcoming irrigation season. Some aired concerns about how to keep their farming and orchard operations going this spring and summer.

“More than likely we’ll be able to turn it on, it’ll just be a (for a) restricted amount of time,” Winters told Capital Press following the meeting. “It’s the worst drought in

1,200 years, is what they’re saying ... on the West Coast or across the Midwest, too.

“If the decision is to open it up for 25 or 30 days, whatever the number ends up being ... it’s going to be a rat race,” Winters added later in the meeting.

TID is 3,300 acre-feet below the total storage on hand at this time last year, Wanda Derry, district manager, said. In 2021, that was about 15,000 acre-feet on April 1. According to a chart on the district website, in an average year there would be more than 80,000 acre-feet of water on hand.

Derry said it usually takes between 50,000 and 55,000 acre-feet to run a full irrigation season.

The district is fed by three reservoirs: Hyatt Lake, Howard Prairie Lake, and Emigrant, all of which are extremely low for this time of year. Levels were at 14, 11 and 12% of capacity, respectively, as of April 5.

“This rain helped,” Derry said. About a half-inch of rain fell on the area April 4. “We gained like 350 acre-feet in all three reservoirs (combined) from yesterday to today, but we still need it to keep coming.”

The district hopes more



Holly Dillemuth/For the Capital Press

**Talent Irrigation District board members, from left, Jeff Hogan, Jeff Bohn and TID board President Mike Winters at a board meeting April 5.**

water accumulates this month before a vote is taken to consider whether and when to start deliveries.

#### Irrigators speak out

Winters and fellow district board members Jeff Hogan and Jeff Bohn, along with Derry and assistant manager Bo Bergren, heard from a room full of attendees on the prospective impact of having no water at all this summer, or not enough to satisfy their crops.

One patron, the term the district uses for its customers, asked about the option of keeping some water now and saving the rest for next year, but wondered about losing water to evaporation in the meantime.

“I’m not a scientist, but the

weather plays into it,” Winters responded. “It depends on how many 90-degree days and 100-degree days (we have).”

The patron said, “if it’s going to go anyways (to evaporation), then you might as well run the canals.” Winters responded affirmatively.

Other patrons expressed concern about patrons who they believe have taken more water than they were allowed in prior years.

The district emphasized its ditch riders, who patrol water usage, are not tasked with enforcing water theft, which they anticipate. The area watermaster, who works for the Oregon Water Resources Department, is tasked with handling such situations, along with the Jack-

son County Sheriff’s Office.

“You’re going to still deal with people that can come out there with a water truck and throw a hose in the canal,” Winters said. “You still deal with people ... that’ll cut off the chains on the headgates and turn it on. This is kind of new territory because in the past, there’s been some short years ... by being short, that was whether you turned the water off on Oct. 5 or whether you turned it off maybe second week of September.

“There hasn’t ever been a time where we’ve dealt with 25 to 30 days of water and you’re trying to meter it out to all these folks and the different crops that they grow,” Winters added.

“And so it’s like a feeding frenzy when you turn those canals on and then you’ve got people who are going to want to grab all the water they can ... you’re going to deal with theft.”

Patrons are asked to call the district office if they see excess water being used, and TID will pass along the report to the watermaster’s office.

John Casad of Talent shared his concerns about whether the district would turn on, then turn off, then

turn on the water supply as it did in 2021, as well as whether the district might store water for next year.

“If you’ve got it, use it, and we’ll deal with next year when next year comes,” Casad said. “I think we should plan for next year to be dry, too.”

Matt Borman, orchard operations manager of Bear Creek Orchards in Medford, shared concerns about the impact of another dry year on pear crops.

Borman said the orchards navigated 2021 in “survival mode,” with the loss of the majority of the pear crop.

“If the canal was piped and we had a little water throughout the season, that would be ideal,” he said. “Unless you’re talking four, five, six weeks of water, I’m not sure the survival equation changes drastically.”

Winters told Ashland news following the meeting that he and board members would be processing patron comments in coming days and weeks.

“The point of asking those questions is to try to get a ‘flavor’ because there’s such a wide diversity of crops from hay and cow people that want water in May and June,” Winters said.

## Yakima irrigators face small cut in water supply

By DON JENKINS  
Capital Press

Yakima River Basin irrigators with junior water rights will receive 94% of their full allotments this year, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation forecast April 7.

The forecast was down slightly from last month and could change again by early May, said Chris Lynch, the agency’s river operations engineer.

“We still have quite a bit ahead of us to determine what the pro-rationing rates will be this summer,” he said.

The bureau manages five reservoirs and a system that supplies water to irrigate about 464,000 acres in south-central Washington. Senior water-right holders will receive full allotments. Irrigators with junior rights are cut back equally in water-short years.

In March, the first forecast of the season, the bureau predicted 96% of full allotments for junior water-right holders.

Roza Irrigation District Manager Scott Revell said Thursday’s forecast presents no problems for the district’s irrigators. “If we’re in the 90s, we’re fine,” he said.

Junior water-right holders could still receive their full allotments, depending on the spring weather, the reclamation bureau projected. On the other hand, allotments could fall as low as 77% if conditions worsen, according to the bureau.

Currently, the reservoirs are up and look good. On April 7, they were 89% full and held 132% of the average volume of water for the date.

However, the snowpacks that will melt and run into the reservoirs are below average. The Upper Yakima Basin snowpack was 81% of normal, while the Naches Basin snowpack was 83% of normal on April 7.

If the snowpack melts early, the reservoirs could peak sooner in June than usual and start falling, a setback for the summer irrigation season.

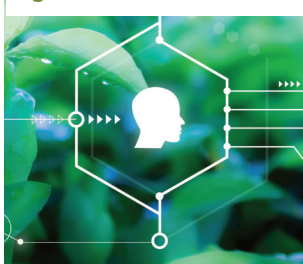
The bureau based its outlook April 7 on conditions as of April 1. Snow and fell in the region in early April. The reservoirs had received more than half their usual rainfall for the month by April 7.

Lynch said precipitation has been fickle in the past several months. Although the first week of April was promising, the rain and snow could shut off, he said.

Revell said he expects the early April rain and snow to improve the outlook. “I think that will bump it up a little bit,” he said.

### AG EDUCATION PUBLISHING MAY 6, 2022

A guide to the universities, colleges, community colleges, trade schools etc. that have programs available for students that are interested in pursuing careers related to agriculture.



#### NOTICE OF TALL FESCUE COMMISSION BUDGET HEARING

TO: ALL OREGON TALL FESCUE GROWERS  
Notice is hereby given that a public hearing will be held pursuant to ORS 576.416 (5), on Thursday, May 26, 2022, at 6:00 p.m., at the Cascade Grill Restaurant, 110 Opal St. NE, Albany, Oregon, upon a proposed budget for operation of the Oregon Tall Fescue Commission during the fiscal year July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. At this hearing any producer of Oregon-grown Tall Fescue seed has a right to be heard with respect to the proposed budget, a copy of which is available for public inspection, under reasonable circumstances, in the office of each County Extension Agent in Oregon. For further information, contact the Tall Fescue Commission business office, P.O. Box 3366, Salem, Oregon 97302, telephone 503-364-2944. The meeting location is accessible to persons with disabilities. Please make any requests for an interpreter for the hearing impaired or for other accommodation for persons with disabilities at least 48 hours before the meeting by contacting the Commission office at 503-364-2944.

## California drought deepens as wet season is anything but

By KATHLEEN RONAYNE  
Associated Press

SACRAMENTO — California is experiencing one of the driest starts to spring in decades, data showed Friday, and absent a heavy dose of April and May showers the state’s drought will deepen and that could lead to stricter rules on water use and another devastating wildfire season.

New readings showed the water in California’s mountain snowpack sat at 38% of average. That’s the lowest mark since the end of the last drought in 2015; only twice since 1988 has the level been lower.

State officials highlighted the severity of the dismal water numbers as they stood at a snow measuring station south of Lake Tahoe, where the landscape included more grass than snow. At the deepest point measured there,



California Water Resources Board

**Aerial view of the intertie constructed by the state Department of Water Resources between the Delta-Mendota Canal and the Aqueduct near Tracy, Calif. State officials say winter precipitation has been less than usual.**

there was just 2.5 inches of snow.

“You need no more evidence than standing here on this very dry landscape to understand some of the challenges we’re facing here in California,” said Karla Nemeth, director of the California Department of Water Resources. “All Californians

need to do their part.”

Nearly all of California and much of the U.S. West is in severe to extreme drought, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor. Last July, California Gov. Gavin Newsom asked people to cut their water use by 15% compared to 2020 levels, but so far consumption is down just

6%. State reservoirs are filled far below normal levels.

About a third of California’s water supply comes from melted snow that trickles into rivers and reservoirs. April 1 is when the snowpack typically is at its peak and the date is used as a benchmark to predict the state’s water supply in the drier, hotter spring and summer months. The next few weeks will be critical to understanding how much of the melting snow is ending up in state reservoirs instead of evaporating or seeping into parched ground.

The nearly 11 inches worth of water sitting in snow in the Sierra Nevada along California’s eastern edge is the lowest reading since the depth of the last drought seven years ago, when California ended winter with just 5% of the normal water levels in the mountains, according to the department.

## Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer recharge total lower than usual

By BRAD CARLSON  
Capital Press

Idaho’s efforts to recharge the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer have fallen short of the annual target this year.

About 158,293 acre-feet of water was added to the aquifer between Oct. 20 and April 4. The goal is 250,000 acre-feet.

Wesley Hipke, who manages the recharge program for the Idaho Water Resource

Board, said the annual average recharge is now about 248,000 acre-feet.

The region’s snowpack was about average in 2020-21, but water supplies dwindled quickly amid prolonged dry, hot weather.

The state and cooperating agencies started the recharge effort in 2014. They had two dry years followed by four wet years. This year is predicted to be dry, as was last year.

“This last year it went

down, and what’s predictable is that it probably will go down this year,” Hipke said. In the aquifer that lies beneath much of eastern and south-central Idaho, “Mother Nature is by far the biggest player.”

With recharge, “we are increasing what would’ve been there if we hadn’t done anything,” Hipke said.

Recharging more than the annual target when water supplies are higher helps the aquifer during low-water years.

A goal is to build more recharge capacity to take fur-

ther advantage of high-water years, Hipke said. The board has added nearly 4,200 acre-feet of daily capacity since 2014.

In low-water years, recharge helps keep the aquifer from falling farther behind. All water added back can help increase availability.

Drought years illustrate “why we recharge as much as we can during those wet years,” Hipke said.

Of the 1.98 million acre-feet put into the aquifer since 2014, about 1.2 million remains, he said.

#### LEGAL PURSUANT TO ORS CHAPTER 819

Notice is hereby given that the following vehicle will be sold, for cash to the highest bidder, on 04/18/2022. The sale will be held at 10:00am by  
PREMIER TOWING & RECOVERY  
305 JEFFERSON ST SILVERTON, OR  
2015 TOYT TUNDRA PK  
VIN = 5TFDW5F1XFX454219  
Amount due on lien \$3950.00  
Reputed owner(s) ROBERT E SNOW  
MARKE HERRALL  
TOYOTA MOTOR CREDIT CORP

#### LEGAL PURSUANT TO ORS CHAPTER 87

Notice is hereby given that the following vehicle will be sold, for cash to the highest bidder, on 04/18/2022. The sale will be held at 10:00am by  
COPART OF WASHINGTON INC  
2885 NATIONAL WAY WOODBURN, OR  
2019 GMC SIERRA PK  
VIN = 3GTU9AEF1KG289933  
Amount due on lien \$1395.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
WEST COAST FEED AND SEED LLC

#### LEGAL PURSUANT TO ORS CHAPTER 87

Notice is hereby given that the following vehicle will be sold, for cash to the highest bidder, on 04/18/2022. The sale will be held at 10:00am by  
COPART OF WASHINGTON INC  
2885 NATIONAL WAY WOODBURN, OR  
2013 BMW 328 4DR  
VIN = WBA3B5G56DNS04779  
Amount due on lien \$1395.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
CHRISTIAN & LUCIE MACIOCCO  
BMW BANK OF NORTH AMERICA

#### LEGAL

#### NOTICE OF FINE FESCUE COMMISSION BUDGET HEARING

TO: ALL OREGON FINE FESCUE GROWERS  
Notice is hereby given that a public hearing will be held pursuant to ORS 576.416 (5), on Monday, May 9, 2022, at 7:00 a.m., at West Salem Roth’s Events Center, Founder’s Room “O,” 1130 Wallace Road, Salem, Oregon, and via Zoom, upon a proposed budget for operation of the Fine Fescue Commission during the fiscal year July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. At this hearing any producer of Oregon-grown Fine Fescue or Highland Bentgrass seed has a right to be heard with respect to the proposed budget, a copy of which is available for public inspection, under reasonable circumstances, in the office of each County Extension Agent in Oregon. For further information, contact the Fine Fescue Commission business office, P.O. Box 3366, Salem, Oregon 97302, telephone 503-364-2944. The meeting location is accessible to persons with disabilities. Please make any requests for an interpreter for the hearing impaired or for other accommodation for persons with disabilities at least 48 hours before the meeting by contacting the Commission office at 503-364-2944.

#### LEGAL

#### PURSUANT TO ORS CHAPTER 819

Notice is hereby given that the following vehicle will be sold, for cash to the highest bidder, on 04/27/2022. The sale will be held at 10:00am by  
PREMIER TOWING & RECOVERY  
305 JEFFERSON ST SILVERTON, OR  
2016 MERZ 4DR  
VIN = 55SWF4JB2GU121087  
Amount due on lien \$3712.00  
Reputed owner(s)  
PAUL JOSEPH RUGGLES  
ONPOINT COMM CU

#### LEGAL

#### Notice of Oregon Strawberry Commission Public Budget Hearing

The Oregon Strawberry Commission will hold a public hearing to approve the proposed 2022-2023 fiscal budget. The hearing starts at 11:00 a.m. May 3, 2022 and will be held via Zoom Video Conferencing. Any person wishing to comment on the budget is welcome to do so either orally or in writing. A copy of the proposed budget is available for public inspection at [www.oregon-strawberries.org](http://www.oregon-strawberries.org). Contact [oregonstrawberries@gmail.com](mailto:oregonstrawberries@gmail.com) by 5:00pm May 2, 2022 to request a link for the video meeting and/or to submit a written comment. Please include your name and farm in your emailed requests.