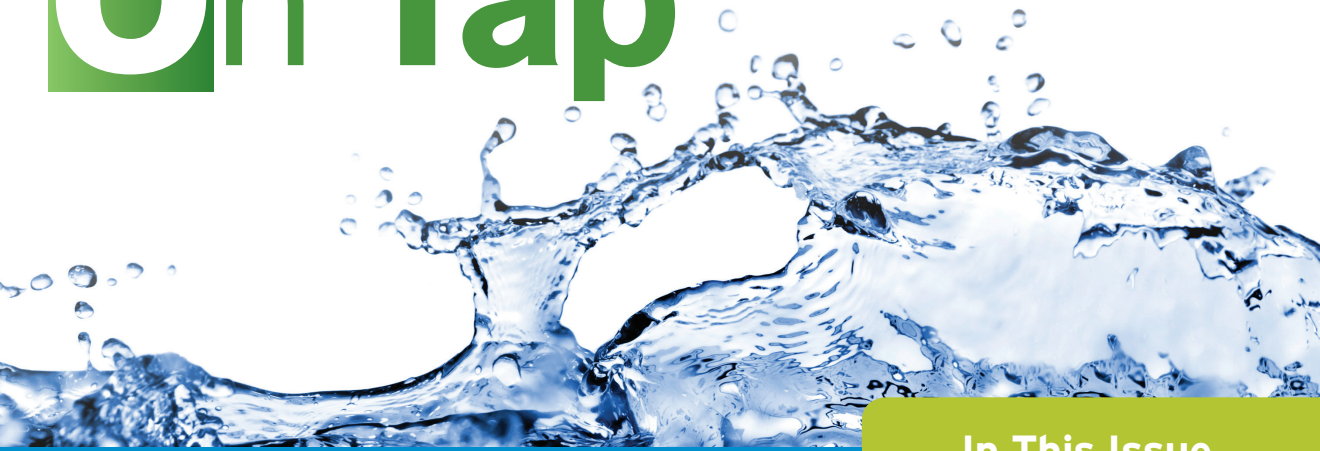


On Tap



The District will soon begin implementation for its Lyons-South Fork Watershed Forest Resiliency Project. In a joint collaborative partnership, Tuolumne Utilities District, as the project applicant, was awarded \$496,000 in grant funding in December from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) to implement a critical fuel break along the Tuolumne Main Canal which conveys water from Lyons Reservoir.

The Lyons-South Fork Watershed Forest Resiliency (LSFWFR) project is a collaborative effort to increase forest health, resiliency to wildfires and beetle outbreaks, and protect adjacent communities. This collaborative project will provide protection to critical sections of the South Fork (SF) Stanislaus River and infrastructure that would benefit Tuolumne County and the ecoregion. The LSFWFR project area encompasses 733 acres of multiple-ownership forestland within the SF Stanislaus River watershed between Lyons Reservoir and the communities of Twain Harte and Mi-Wuk Village, covering a large swath of the southern canyon that spans 3,900 to 4,500 feet in elevation. In anticipation of a wildfire potentially jumping the river, the project's eastern end includes the north side of the SF Stanislaus River below Lyons Reservoir to address the high fuel loading on these extremely steep slopes.

The main collaborative partners on this project are the Stanislaus National Forest, Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI), Highway 108 FireSafe Council and Tuolumne Utilities District (TUD)

Thomas Haglund, General Manager for TUD stated, "Our Board of Directors identified fire protection for the water flume system as a high priority during the 2016 strategic planning and annual goal setting session. When the District looked at the grant application offered through the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's Proposition 1 Watershed Improvement Program, we thought this would be an ideal opportunity to seek grant funding for a fuel break project along the Tuolumne Main Canal. The flume and ditch system originating at Lyons Reservoir are susceptible to wildfire. This grant will help to greatly reduce the threat of wildfire to this area. The District had many cooperative partners working on this grant application and we are thankful for their time, support and dedication to have this project recognized and funded by the SNC organization."

The District is coordinating with the Stanislaus National Forest, PG&E, CalFire and the FireSafe Council on project fuel break activities which are scheduled to begin by April 2017.

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Photo courtesy of PG&E – Flume of the Tuolumne Main Canal

Every Drop Counts Artwork



Becky Miller-Cripps visiting a third grade classroom

Did you know that each year the District contacts third grade classrooms throughout the County to participate in our water conservation program? The goal of this program is to educate youth on water, the water cycle, water conservation and future water needs. Many parents may have heard about our classroom visit to your school from your children.

Our program leader this year is Becky Miller-Cripps, a Tuolumne County Master Gardener who visits the classrooms from February through March. Last year we visited 19 classrooms which impacted nearly 500 students about the importance of water.

At the end of the program the District holds an “Every Drop Counts” poster contest and displays the artwork at the Home and Garden Show. The students are very creative and artistic in their poster drawings to display the importance that “Every Drop Counts.”

Home and Garden Show

Stop by and visit the TUD staff and Board members at the 36th Annual Home and Garden Show located at the Mother Lode Fairgrounds in Sonora on Saturday, April 8th and Sunday, April, 9th.

At the TUD booth you will have the opportunity to view the colorful third grade water conservation artwork from our local schools, find information about TUD's latest projects, learn more about water conservation, and find out the latest update on our water supply. We look forward to visiting with you at the Home and Garden Show.

Are Those Wipes Really Flushable?

Although a package may be marked as “flushable”, that is not the case in most instances when it comes to traveling through a sewer system. The highly marketable premoistened personal wipes are causing problems for wastewater plant managers throughout the United States, including TUD's Regional Wastewater Treatment facility in Sonora.

David Boatright, Wastewater Superintendent at TUD, states “These flushable wipes can cause havoc and back-ups within the sewer system leading to sanitary sewer overflows, clogs at lift stations, and disruption within the treatment plant. It's been a challenge for our collection system and treatment plant dealing with this issue. We encourage all of our customers not to throw any type of wipe into the toilet.” Unlike toilet paper, which is usually made from natural or recycled cellulose fibers, a wet wipe may be made from cellulosic or synthetic fibers, depending on its intended use. Many studies have concluded that after 24 hours, most “flushable” wipes do not dissolve and remain in the sewer system.



Are Those Wipes Really Flushable?

TUD asks all of our sewer customers to avoid flushing any type of wipe, so-called “flushable” or otherwise, down the toilet. This will prevent clogs and environmentally damaging overflows that increase operating costs and contribute to upward pressure on sewer rates.

Build a Seed Starting Grow Light Stand

By UCCE Master Gardener Wendy Weidenman of Tuolumne County

This is a good time to start thinking about your vegetable garden. Getting a head start on your vegetable garden will ensure having all your vegetables in the ground when Mother Nature allows. Many vegetable seeds can be directly planted as soon as the soil is warm enough. However, some of the more popular vegetables such as tomatoes, peppers, and eggplant need to be started indoors. Not only is it cost effective to start your own vegetables from seed, you also have the opportunity for earlier harvests along with stronger healthier plants. Additionally, there is something to be said for the satisfaction in seeing them sprout and a great learning experience for the kids.

No need for a greenhouse to start your own veggies indoors. However, warmth and light are a must, two elements that are not readily available this time of year. Basically, you need a structure that will hold a 4 foot double bulb fluorescent light fixture. Using PVC makes this a very easy task. PVC is inexpensive, and anyone can assemble this with minimal effort and tools. This light stand can be very simple or you can get more detailed with its functions. You can build your light standard for a tabletop or freestanding. Either way, the seedling starting trays need to be on some type of table. There are plenty of

different designs to be found on YouTube, along with detailed instructions. I used 1 ½ inch PVC tubing and couplers, making the stand strong enough to do the job and not so pricey to inhibit your pocketbook. Tools needed for the job are a hacksaw to cut the PVC and a drill if you want to get fancy with hanging your light fixture. No need to glue. Once the seedlings are started and on their way out to the garden, the stand can be dismantled for easy storage. The light fixture needs to be adjustable. When the seedlings start growing taller the light needs to be raised. This can either be done by adjusting the chain on the light fixture, or making the light stand adjustable. The project should cost a minimum of \$35.

Next you'll need to provide warmth to your seedlings. Just the warmth of your inside air temperature is not enough. Most seedlings need the soil to be around 65 degrees to germinate. There are heat pads specially made for starting seedlings. I found a nice size heat pad on Amazon.com for \$13. If you can, try to designate an area inside your house for your seed starting project. While your seedlings are sprouting you'll be misting them, so protect your floor from the overspray.

Get your structure ready now. May is right around the corner.



General Manager's Corner

By Thomas J. Haglund, thaglund@tudwater.com

State Water Board Approves Resolution Continuing Emergency Regulation Mandating Conservation

On February 8, 2017, the five member State Water Resources Control Board ("State Water Board") approved a 270 day extension of California's drought designation indicating that while the start of the water year has been promising, it is not uncommon for dry weather to take hold in California as the winter months progress.

Water districts and purveyors from across the state urged the State Water Board to take stock of Sierra snowpack totals, the historically high water levels in reservoirs and water storage outlooks and allow the Emergency Regulations, under which the state has mandated conservation levels, to expire. TUD advocated at hearing for the State Water Board to end the emergency regulations and instead concentrate on assisting local water purveyors on implementing longer term conservation programs that reinforce water as a precious resource.

In adopting the resolution continuing the Emergency Regulations the State Water Board added language that the matter is to come back to them for reconsideration the earlier of Governor Brown declaring an end to the drought or in May after the rainy season ends.

TUD Board of Directors Holds Strategic Planning Session – Sets Goals

On January 23 & 24, 2017, the TUD Board of Directors ("Board") held its annual strategic planning session to set policy goals for the year. The Board first reaffirmed its commitment to the following overarching goals:

1. Top Quality Utility Services
2. High Performing Organization
3. Financially Responsible Organization
4. Upgraded Infrastructure

The Board then defined a 2017 Policy Agenda that set forth the top and high priority projects/programs that the District will work on in pursuit of its over arching goals:

TOP Priority

- Regionalization Plan for Water Treatment Plants
- Identify Long Term Water Supply Options
- Identify Long Term Water Storage Options
- Phoenix Lake Plan Funding for Phase III
- Review and Analysis of the 1983 PG&E Water Contract
- Fire Draft Point Advocacy

HIGH Priority

- Tuolumne County Water Policy Advisory Committee: Strategy & Actions
- Develop a Program for Electronic Mapping / Work Orders
- Develop Water Tank / In-ground Storage Master Plan
- Sonora Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant Study
- Fire Protection Coordination – Office of Emergency Services
- Association of California Water Agency Involvement

Based on the Board's actions, an Action Agenda is being developed to identify the steps to be taken in 2017 to work towards completion of the Policy Agenda. The Board's goals are to further the ability of TUD to provide top quality services to our customers and provide for long-term water security by working with federal, state and local partners to improve infrastructure and water availability.

Two Ways to Stay Informed

Get Involved – TUD Board Meetings

TUD's Regular Board meetings generally occur on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month.

Check our website regularly at

<http://www.tudwater.com/board-meetings/>
for the latest Board meeting dates.



Stay up to date with the latest activities at TUD by following us on Facebook. We post weekly updates on traffic alerts, projects, tips from our local Master Gardeners, weather updates and other interesting topics. Follow us today!

<https://www.facebook.com/TUDWater/>



On Tap is published to keep Tuolumne Utilities District customers informed about issues and upcoming events. If you have any story ideas or suggestions, please mail them to Lisa Westbrook, at 18885 Nugget Blvd., Sonora, CA 95370 or email at lisaw@tuolumneutilities.com.