

Susan River Watermaster Service

Spring 2024 News and Updates

- 1) Preparing for Irrigation Season
- 2) System Improvement and Maintenance Projects
 - Old Channel Project
 - Johnstonville Dam Project
- 3) Deputy Watermaster Position
- 4) WAC Representatives
 - Meeting Dates for 2024
 - Members Include
 - Vacancies
- 5) Technology
 - Interactive Mapping
 - Website
 - Trail Cameras
 - Drone Imagery

Preparing for Irrigation Season

The 2024 irrigation season is shaping up to be better than average and as irrigation season begins, the Deputy Watermaster is working for you. The Susan River Watermaster Service entails multiple waterways, points of diversion, points of storage, various distribution methods, and schedules of usage. However, this entire system uses an extensive conveyance system designed to deliver available water to the many points of diversion. Maintenance of the conveyance system is the responsibility of each water user. Ensuring your ditches, channels, culverts, and headgates are clear of vegetation overgrowth, debris, and silt buildup ensures the available water is deliverable, for you and your neighbor.

The Deputy Watermaster may notify you of maintenance concerns/issues of your portion of the conveyance system. The Deputy Watermaster and the Watermaster Advisory Committee (WAC) can be contacted for advice or suggestions on conveyance maintenance issues. However, the maintenance, upkeep, repairs, servicing, cleaning, or any other task needed to ensure serviceability of any type of diversion, dam, headgate, ditch, culvert, pipe, stream, or channel needed for the deliverability, measuring, or diversion of water, is not a function of or the responsibility of the Deputy Watermaster, WAC, or the Water Board.

A blatant disregard of maintenance, upkeep, or repairs that hinders the deliverability of otherwise available water to the next downstream user, is a violation of Paragraph 58 of the Decree¹.

¹ Paragraph 58. That each and every party to this action, his or her agents, successors, grantees and assigns, be and they are hereby perpetually enjoined and restrained from doing anything in violation of the terms or provisions of this decree, or diverting any water from said Susan River and its tributaries, at any time in violation of the terms hereof, or from doing anything that will obstruct or interfere with any other right in this decree adjudged and decreed.



System Improvement and Maintenance Projects

The Honey Lake Valley Resource Conservation District received \$3,970,000 in grant funding through the California Department of Water Resources Urban and Multi-Benefit Drought Relief Program to pipe a segment of the Old Channel. The project is near completion and will result in better management of the available water resources including capturing and removing contaminants from over one hundred acres of hard surface (streets, parking lots, roof tops, sidewalks etc.) runoff that drains into the Old Channel.

The Honey Lake Valley Resource Conservation District also received \$1,088,581 in grant funding from CA DWR's Proposition 1 Round 2 Integrated Regional Water Management Implementation program to assist City of Susanville and Lassen Irrigation Company (LIC) with necessary upgrades to the Johnstonville Dam. City of Susanville and Lassen Irrigation Company were previously awarded \$1,100,000 from the Proposition 1 Round 1 funds for the project, however, due to capacity issues and inflation, the District has agreed to help manage both awards simultaneously to expedite the project. Once complete, the upgraded dam will allow the Deputy Watermaster and LIC enhanced control when administering the flows of the Susan River to aid in reducing flood water impact and ensure consistent distribution.



Deputy Watermaster Position

The Deputy Watermaster is a unique and demanding position, requiring an extremely diverse skill set. The Water Board has been diligently reviewing the needs and concerns of the water users, requirements of the Superior Court relating to the decree, state and federal laws, and input from stakeholders. The goal is to implement policies, procedures, and best practice solutions to make the Deputy Watermaster effective, successful, and stable.

Currently, the Water Board, through the RCD District Manager, is seeking to recruit an individual with the education, experience, temperament, and integrity needed to fulfill the duties of the Deputy Watermaster.

The administration of the SRWMA, including the responsibilities of the Deputy Watermaster will be uninterrupted and achieved through the combined efforts of the RCD District Manager and members of the Water Board.

Watermaster Advisory Committee

The Watermaster Advisory Committee (WAC) is available to assist with questions or concerns regarding the decree or Watermaster Service. In addition, the WAC reviews the proposed annual budget, conducts an annual Deputy Watermaster evaluation review, and offers recommendations on various issues affecting the administration of the SRWMS to the Water Board. The WAC meets every second Thursday of each odd-numbered month. The 2024 meeting dates are as follows:

January 11th, 2024

March 14th, 2024

May 9th, 2024

July 11th, 2024

September 12th, 2024

November 14th, 2024

Current WAC Representatives:

- Representative of the Water (RCD) Board – Wayne Langston
- Representative of the Farm Bureau – Jesse Midgley
- Upper Susan River – **VACANT**
- Lower Susan River – Todd Swickard
- Baxter Creek – **VACANT**
- Willow Creek – Darren Hagata
- Lassen Irrigation Company – Ramsey Wood

The WAC needs two more representatives, one from the Upper Susan River and one from Baxter Creek. If you are interested in representing your area on the WAC, please reach out to the current members of the WAC, the RCD Board of Directors, the Deputy Watermaster, or the RCD District Manager.



Technology

The Watermaster Service is incorporating technology to aid in data collection, identify maintenance concerns, enhance monitoring, and support the Deputy Watermaster's effectiveness.

Interactive mapping of the SRWMSA is available on the RCD's website (honeylakevalleyrcd.us). This mapping shows the points of diversion, and the different waterways within the Service Area. Our website can also be used to contact the RCD or the Watermaster. On the website, you will find meeting dates, agendas, minutes, and loads of other helpful information regarding both RCD and Watermaster business.

The Deputy Watermaster also utilizes trail cameras, drone imagery, and data loggers to monitor and effectively distribute water.

Please reach out if you have any questions or need any further information. The Watermaster Service can be reached by phone at (530) 260-1690 or by email at watermaster@honeylakevalleyrcd.us.