



Around Tulare County

DELIVERING INFORMATION ABOUT TULARE COUNTY – DECEMBER 2013

Supervisor's Message: Water Storage Needed



There are three necessities to sustain life. In order of importance, they are - water, food, and shelter.

Water has been one of the most important policy issues I have focused on during my career as a County Supervisor. In the past year, I have focused my efforts on ground and surface water storage issues. Particularly, the need for additional water storage.

Why have I made this such a priority?

You do not have to be an expert to understand the importance of water. If you have ever watched a survivor reality show, you will notice that securing a clean source of water is the participant's primary goal. Without water a human being will not survive.

On a larger scale, water is also the key element to raising the crops we use for food. Without water and food, there is no point in building shelter.

In the 1930s the Central Valley Project was implemented to provide

irrigation and municipal water to most of the San Joaquin Valley by regulating and storing water in reservoirs. Once the water is captured, it is sent to the Valley through a series of canals, pump plants, and aqueducts such as the Friant-Kern Canal.

The City of Lindsay is a good example of why water and ground and surface storage are important. Before the Friant-Kern Canal was built, the City of Lindsay was on the verge of disappearing because of the depletion of ground water. The Friant-Kern Canal provided more water for local farmers, which allowed the groundwater around Lindsay – and many other towns in Fresno, Tulare, and Kern counties – to recover. Allowing groundwater recharge allows cities to use the water consumer consumption. In addition, because of new drinking water regulations, cities like Lindsay, Strathmore, and Orange Cove are dependent on surface water for their residents.

While the Friant Dam and Friant-Kern Canal were valuable projects, they will not be able to provide enough water supplies in the future to this region.

Since the building of Friant Dam and the Friant-Kern Canal, there has not been a major water project in the three counties to provide for the population growth that we have experienced since

the late 1940s. Lindsay's population has doubled, Porterville has tripled and Visalia has quadrupled. We desperately need addition surface water storage to provide for our growing population, but also to provide many of our disadvantaged communities with clean safe drinking water. (As a side note Lake Kaweah and Lake Success were built for flood control.)

There is no question that we need additional ground and surface water storage to preserve life in the San Joaquin Valley. However, legislators in Sacramento are doing a poor job in addressing our needs. California has just released a statewide water plan which does not give us a concrete plan on how to solve our water issues. There are currently two competing \$5 billion dollar water bond proposals being vetted in the State Legislature. Both of these bond measures do not have one cent in them to actually build or improve a water project. There was to be a statewide vote on a water bond in 2014, which now may be moved to 2016. This will be the third time this vote has been delayed. Does the State really want to solve our water problem? In my opinion, no.

Allen Ishida, District One Board of Supervisors

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“A team of trained people to assist us in providing support to the survivors in these most tragic of situations is absolutely critical.”
Tulare County Coroner Sgt. Tom Wright.

LOSS Team Formed to Assist Those Impacted by Suicide

The Tulare & Kings Counties Suicide Prevention Task Force, in partnership with the Kings County and Tulare County Sheriff's Department Coroner's Offices and the Police Chiefs' Association of Tulare County, announced on November 23rd the launch of the LOSS Team to assist those impacted by suicide deaths. November 23 is International Survivors of Suicide Day.

The Local Outreach to Suicide Survivors, or LOSS Team, was developed by Dr. Frank Campbell of Baton Rouge, Louisiana and is comprised of volunteers who serve as a primary support and referral resource to local survivors of suicide loss. The team will function around-the-clock and respond immediately to the scene of suspected suicide deaths. Team members will interact with loss survivors and provide them with resources and support so that they do not have to feel alone as they seek to deal with the emotions that accompany losing someone to suicide.

In this year alone, Tulare County has lost 41 people and Kings County has lost 14 people to suicide: Law enforcement has long noted the need to support those who are impacted by suicide loss.

“It is often difficult to leave suicide loss survivors without additional support and resources,” said Kings County Coroner, Sgt. Tom Edmonds.

“A team of trained people to assist us in providing support to the survivors in these most tragic of situations is absolutely critical,” said Tulare County Coroner, Sgt. Tom Wright.

Six years ago, Carla Sawyer, a Public Health Nurse with Tulare County Health & Human Services Agency, lost her son Bo to suicide and began a monthly support group for suicide loss survivors. That support group was supplemented by the development of a free grief and bereavement counseling program to provide therapeutic services to those struggling with loss. The advent of the LOSS Team to proactively reach out to the newly bereaved means a comprehensive range of services are now available to help interrupt the cycle of generational suicide.

“The development of a local LOSS Team by myriad community partners, including local Law Enforcement, represents the next logical step in meeting the mission and vision of the Tulare and Kings Counties Suicide

Prevention Task Force” said Cheryl Duerksen, Ph.D., Director of Tulare County Health & Human Resources Agency. “The provision of comprehensive services by trained and dedicated volunteers not only meets our public health mandate to broadly intervene in all cases of suicide, but embraces the best of our humanity as we collectively extend open arms of support during times of community tragedy.”

For more information about local suicide prevention efforts, please visit www.sptf.org and www.facebook.com/hope.sptf. For more information about International Survivors of Suicide Day, visit <http://www.afsp.org/coping-with-suicide/international-survivors-of-suicide-day>

Tulare & Kings Counties Suicide Prevention Task Force, a joint effort by Kings County and Tulare County, in conjunction with numerous collaborative partners, is funded by California's Proposition 63, the Mental Health Services Act. If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, please call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at [1-800-273-8255](tel:1-800-273-8255).

Probation Receives Grant to Prevent Repeat DUIs



The Tulare County Probation Department has been awarded a \$77,882 traffic safety grant for a year-long program aimed at preventing deaths and injuries resulting from Driving Under the Influence, or DUI.

The grant will allow County Probation to conduct special

supervision of felony and repeat DUI offenders in Tulare County. Probation will also work with other law enforcement agencies on anti-DUI efforts as part of an ongoing commitment to keep roadways safe through both enforcement and education.

Funded activities include

increased monitoring, warrant sweeps, unannounced residence searches, and random alcohol/drug testing to ensure compliance with court-ordered terms of probation.

Employee Spotlight: Bryce Howard



On November 12, the Tulare County Board of Supervisors appointed Bryce Howard as the County's new Solid Waste Director.

Howard has over 30 years of Solid Waste experience and has held management positions throughout California. Most recently, Howard served as Landfill Development Manager for the Ratto Group/Earthworks, Inc. with offices in Santa Rosa, CA and Vancouver, BC.

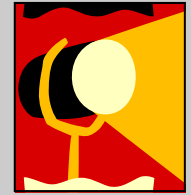
Chairman of the Board of Supervisors Pete Vander Poel said the Board was pleased to appoint Howard out of a pool of 22 applicants.

"Bryce will bring a lot of knowledge to the County's solid waste system with his experience in finance, engineering, and personnel management," Chairman Vander Poel said. "With this knowledge and experience, we are confident that Bryce will continue to improve our landfill and hauling system to provide the most efficient and effective service to our County residents."

As the Solid Waste Director, some of Howard's duties include: manage personnel operations that include 52 positions, administer the County Integrated Waste Management Plan, oversee the operation and maintenance of the County's landfills, ensure regulation of solid waste collection services, and collaborate with a wide variety of haulers, cities, and other entities.

Howard holds two degrees, a Bachelor of Arts in Social Ecology and a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from the University of California, Irvine. Howard started on November 13, 2013 and will earn \$105,000 annually.

Howard will replace Brooks Sayer, who left to take a position with the Merced County Regional Waste Management Authority.



There are many County employees who are doing outstanding things for their community outside of their job.

Do you know a County employee who should be in the spotlight? Let us know at:

newsletter@co.tulare.ca.us

Program Spotlight: Library's Food for Fines a Success

On December 3rd the Tulare County Library gave more than 150 boxes of food items to Foodlink for Tulare County. The donations were the results of the month-long November 'Food for Fines' program held in all 15 branches of the county library.

Last month, anyone who brought in non-perishable food items to any branch of the Tulare County Library had their fines reduced or eliminated. The library forgave \$2405.60 in fines for donors to the program. In addition, library patrons donated more than \$1,500 without having fines on their library accounts.

"Our generous Tulare County residents did not have to contribute to us," said County Librarian Jeff Scott. "They made this program more than a success. They made it a holiday spirit success."

The book boxes filled with food were picked up by Foodlink for Tulare County, who will restock the pantries of food banks throughout the county. Items collected from the fifteen branches will be distributed in each branch's local community and surrounding areas. "Food for Fines" is a new team effort sponsored by the library and Foodlink. It will be held

semi-annually in the months of November and April.

FoodLink for Tulare County is a non-profit agency that has been working to end hunger in Tulare County since 1978. FoodLink staff distributes millions of pounds of food annually to a network of more than 80 local non-profit agencies, which directly feed needy families.

To contact FoodLink, please call 559/651-3663 or visit www.foodlinktc.org



Want your program to be in the spotlight? Please send suggestions to:

newsletter@co.tulare.ca.us

Digital Photography Contest Underway



Pictured Above: Winning photo from last year submitted by Troy Robinson.

Tulare County's Information & Communications Technology Department (TCICT) is hosting its Second Annual Digital Photography Contest.

The purpose of the contest is to ask the public to help showcase the beauty of Tulare County in a variety of ways. Photographers of all ages and skill levels are eligible to participate.

There are four different classes of photography: City, Agriculture, Mountains, and new this year, Instagram. The photos must be images of Tulare County. Contestants may submit up to five (5) photos total. The purpose of the contest is to involve any and all citizens of Tulare County and any interested parties in capturing images that best depict the County of Tulare.

A panel comprised of

community members and County staff will select images that best depict the County of Tulare in four categories and award 1st place (best overall), 2nd place, and 3rd place. Judging is based on creativity, photo quality, representation of Tulare County and relevancy to its category. First Place photos in each category will be featured on the County website and County social media and the Board of Supervisors will honor all winners at a County Board meeting. All photos may be featured electronically on County websites and social media channels with name and photo credit.

If you or someone you know enjoys digital photography, then make sure to enter the Tulare County Digital Photo Contest. Information and downloadable entry forms

are available on the [TCICT Website](http://www.tularecounty.ca.gov/tcict/index.cfm/digital-photography-contest-2013/) (<http://www.tularecounty.ca.gov/tcict/index.cfm/digital-photography-contest-2013/>). Entries may be submitted by mail, e-mail or drop off. Specific instructions and guidelines are detailed on the entry form. Photos, entry forms, and signed agreement must be submitted by Friday, January 3, 2014. If you are hand-delivering your form it must be in the County of Tulare, ICT office no later than 5 p.m. on January 3, 2014. The TCiCT office is located at 221 S. Mooney Blvd., Room 9E, Visalia California.

Any questions, please contact Megan Flynn at [559-636-4806](tel:559-636-4806).

AROUND TULARE COUNTY

Around Tulare County is published once a month as a service to the public. Unless otherwise noted, articles are written by County staff. For additional information, contact Jed Chernabaeff.

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DECEMBER COUNTY ACTIVITIES, DEADLINES, EVENTS, MEETINGS

Meeting: (Date/Time)

Board of Supervisors' Meeting: 9 a.m. Dec. 3, 10, 17.
Tulare County Association of Governments: 1 p.m., Dec. 9.
Tulare County Planning Commission: 9 a.m. Dec. 11.
Deadline for Digital Photography Contest: Jan. 3, 2014

More Information:

559/636-5000
559/624-7274
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Places to Go Play: Three Rivers is the gateway community to Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. The town's namesake is the three forks of the Kaweah River - Middle, North, and South, which converge in Three Rivers. Three Rivers offers fine or casual dining, lodging in both town or riverside, and has an active arts and music community. There's also hiking, biking, camping, rock-climbing, and more. Learn more about Three Rivers and other places to "Go Play" at www.tularecountymap.com.