

MOUNTAIN COUNTIES WATER RESOURCES ASSOCIATION

TUOLUMNE COUNTY
TUOLUMNE UTILITIES DISTRICT**PRELIMINARY****DESCRIPTION**

The service area of the Tuolumne Utilities District (TUD) contains nearly 80 percent of the population, permanent and seasonal, in Tuolumne County. The Middle Fork and South Fork Stanislaus and North Fork Tuolumne rivers run through TUD, and the Tuolumne River forms its south boundary.

The majority of TUD's raw water supply is conveyed through nearly 90 miles of ditches that were, to a large extent, constructed during the mining era and were acquired from the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E).

EXISTING WATER SUPPLY

TUD obtains its water from the South Fork Stanislaus River through agreements with PG&E. PG&E owns and operates Lyons and Strawberry reservoirs, which have storage capacities of 6,300 and 18,312 acre-feet, respectively.

WATER DEMAND

Treated water service represents approximately 50 percent of TUD's delivery with the remaining 50 percent being delivered for agricultural and industrial use and golf courses. Treated water service is expected to comprise a greater percent of TUD's service in the future, although the water use for agriculture, industry, and golf courses is expected to increase as well. TUD's demand of approximately 17,000 acre-feet in 1995, is projected to increase to nearly 27,000 acre-feet by 2020.

SUPPLEMENTAL WATER SUPPLIES

The supplemental water to meet increasing water demands will be derived from a reduction in conveyance losses and water purchases from PG&E and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation from New Melones Reservoir. TUD has investigated the development of New Lyons Reservoir with a capacity of up to 50,000 acre-feet, to satisfy its long-term water needs.

PROBLEMS/CONSTRAINTS

The problems or constraints for TUD to meet its increased water demands are as follows:

1. **Environmental** -- Environmental constraints are anticipated in implementing water conservation measures to reduce losses along existing ditches. The reduction of seepage may be an issue in areas where the seepage has created wetlands. Environmental issues may emerge with the construction of a New Lyons Reservoir as well.
2. **Legal** -- Developing New Lyons Reservoir will involve contract negotiations with PG&E, as it may affect operations under existing agreements.
3. **Financial** -- The cost to implement measures to reduce losses along TUD's ditch system have been estimated to cost from \$6 to \$25 million, depending upon the extent to which the existing ditches are lined or replaced with pipe.