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FWA WELCOMES NEW BOARD OFFICERS FOR THE 2023-2024 TERM

Lindsay, CA – Three new Board Officers will assume leadership roles during the January 30 Friant Water Authority (FWA) Board of Directors meeting. Jim Erickson of Madera Irrigation District, who just finished a term as Board Secretary/Treasurer, was elected Chairman; Rick Borges of Tulare Irrigation District and Josh Pitigliano of Lower Tule River Irrigation District will serve as Vice Chair and Secretary/Treasurer, respectively. Their terms will continue through the end of 2024.

“As a director representing farmers who receive their Friant Division water supplies from the Madera Canal, I’m moved by the Board’s decision to elect me Chairman,” said Chairman Erickson. “Their confidence in my ability to provide leadership on behalf of all Friant Contractors, regardless of how they receive their supply from Millerton Lake, underscores the strength and unity of the Friant family.”

Director Erickson was born, raised, and still lives on the original home ranch his great-grandfather bought in 1924 in Madera. He has more than 40 years of experience in the agricultural field and currently runs his family’s farming operations with his sons. He is also a second-generation director for the Madera Irrigation District.

Director Borges is a fourth-generation farmer in Tulare, and his son Greg is the fifth generation working on the family’s farm. He also previously served as a director for the Friant Water Users Authority, FWA’s predecessor, and serves as a director for the Tulare Irrigation Company, Kaweah and St. Johns Rivers Association, and Kaweah Basin Water Quality Association.

Director Pitigliano is a fourth-generation farmer and works alongside his father and two brothers. Their diversified farm and farm management business is spread across multiple irrigation districts. He previously served as chairman of the Tulare County Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee and later as a director on the Tulare County Farm Bureau board.

In addition to Director Erickson’s change in office, two other 2022/2023 Board officers – Chairman Cliff Loeffler of Lindsay-Strathmore Irrigation District, and Vice Chair Edwin Camp of Arvin-Edison Water Storage District – will remain in an advisory role on the Board and as members of its Executive Committee.

“Directors Loeffler and Camp presided over some of the most exciting but tumultuous times in the Friant Division’s history,” said Chief Executive Officer Jason Phillips. “There’s no question that their leadership was crucial to the success of the Friant-Kern Canal Middle Reach Capacity Correction Project and also kept us united during the ‘calls’ on water stored in Millerton Lake by the Exchange Contractors. We were also fortunate to have Director Erickson as part of that leadership group, and are likewise grateful that he’ll serve as Chairman.”

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FWA is a joint-powers authority formed in 2004 by a majority of the public agencies receiving water from the Friant Division of the Central Valley Project. Its primary purposes are to operate and maintain the Friant-Kern Canal and to serve the information and representation needs of its member agencies.