

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



Jason Phillips
Chief Executive Officer

If you have walked or driven by the Friant-Kern Canal (FKC) in the past few days, you have probably noticed something strange. For most of 2023, the

FKC, which is the most important artery that carries the lifeblood of the east side of the valley from Friant Dam down to Bakersfield, was full. Which, after several years of drought, was more than just a welcomed sight. Lately, however, it looks much, much different.

Every three years or so, the Friant Water Authority (FWA) spends about three months over the winter to maintain, or take special care, of the decades-old facility. Just like other infrastructure, like houses, roads, or bridges, with age and wear and tear, comes the need for maintenance, repair, and a little bit of creativity. To do all that work, we have to de-water, or drain, the canal.

The repair or replacement of entire concrete panels, painting and coating radial gates, and other critical metal structures, and treating sections of the canal that are prone to aquatic growth are very common tasks that the talented and dedicated FWA crew undertake during this process. Often times in the rain and cold weather working very long hours to get a tremendous amount of work done in a very short period of time. They are pros.

All of this is done, not just because it is our obligation to do so under the agreement we have with the Bureau of Reclamation, but also to ensure that when the water is running through the canal, that it runs as efficiently and problem free as possible.

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FWA CELEBRATES HALLOWEEN WITH A SPECIAL TEAM AND FAMILY EVENT

Friant Water Authority hosted a Halloween gathering for team members and their families on October 13 at Hobbs Grove in Sanger, CA. Attendees enjoyed custom candy bags, food, fun, and camaraderie.



UPCOMING EVENTS

NOV 23

NO FWA Board of Directors Meeting
Visalia, CA

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DEC 1

Friant Division Manager's Group Meeting
Lindsay, CA

CLICK FOR INFO

DEC 5

FWA Finance Committee Meeting
Lindsay, CA

CLICK FOR INFO

DEC 8

FWA Board of Directors Meeting
Visalia, CA

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This year, however, there is some additional work being done. Many times over the last three years I've written about the Friant Kern Canal Middle Reach Capacity Correction Project. As you know, decades of groundwater overdraft and severe subsidence that's taken place between the cities of Porterville and Delano, has reduced the carrying capacity of the FKC by more than 60%. Given the importance of a reliable and abundant water supply for the farms and communities on the east side of the valley, FWA and our project partners at the Bureau of Reclamation quickly planned, designed, and began construction on a project to address the problem.

We broke ground on this important project in January 2022, and I am pleased to say we are nearing completion of Phase 1 of the project. I raise this information now, because over the course of the next three months, the contractor working on the project will also be performing critical tasks in order to complete the tie in of the new canal by January 26, 2024. The schedule and timeline for completion of the work, both by the FWA team, and the contractor, is critically important. Not just for the farmers, who rely on the surface water, but also for the communities on the east side that rely on groundwater for their drinking water needs.

The FWA team performing routine maintenance, and the construction crews working on the Middle Reach Project are professionals who know how to work and get the job done in all kinds of conditions. Cold, heat, rain, and wind are realities that come with the territory in the Central Valley. And much will be expected of both crews, understandably. So, as you begin your yearly chant to pray for rain, let's make sure to pray for the kind that doesn't interfere with the important work that is going to get done between now and January 26, 2024.



MEET THE FRIANT FAMILY

KOLE UPTON

FWA Board of Directors Member

President of Chowchilla Water District's Board of Directors

Kole Upton currently serves as President of the Chowchilla Water District Board of Directors and is also a member of FWA's Board of Directors. He graduated from Stanford University in 1965 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Engineering. He went on to receive a Masters in Aerospace Operations and Management in the University of Southern California in 1970.

He resides on his family farm where he grows crops such as: wheat, oats, cotton, almonds, pistachios, and corn. He has been married for 49 years and has three children.



KOLE UPTON

BRANDON TOMLINSON

General Manager

Chowchilla Water District

Born in 1975, Brandon Tomlinson was raised in Chowchilla where he attended Chowchilla High School and went on to earn a Science Degree in Plant Science from Fresno State University in 2006. Brandon began his career with Chowchilla Water District in 1994 helping the positions of Ditchtender, Maintenance, and Superintendent of Operations and Maintenance before being promoted to Assistant General Manager in 2007. In 2015, he was promoted to General Manager.



BRANDON TOMLINSON

JOHN ROBINSON

Canal Maintenance Foreman

Friant Water Authority

John Robinson is currently the Maintenance Foreman in the Lindsay yard for Friant Water Authority. Employed at FWA since 2009, he has held multiple positions including Canal Maintenance Worker, Canal Systems Operator, and Instrument Technician. John has also served on the Friant Retirement Committee for most of his tenure.

John was born and raised in the Porterville area where he lives with his wife of 11 years, Stephanie, and their six children. They enjoy spending time on the lake in their boat and share a passion for cooking. John earned his CAPM (Certified Associate in Project Management) through the Project Management Institute in 2017. He enjoys a strong relationship with his church family at Westfield Christian Church in Porterville where he serves as a Deacon and plays drums in the worship band. John and Stephanie plan to retire in Wyoming where they own several properties including a 90-acre hunting property in Sundance and a 40-acre hay farm and homestead ranch in Gillette. John's sister, Shannon, and her husband Roger live near the ranch and care for his home while he is in California.



JOHN ROBINSON

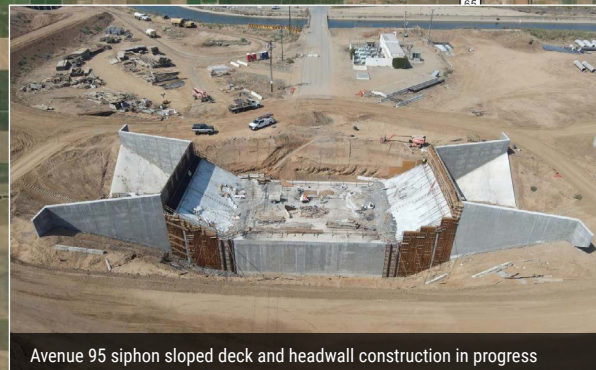
FRIANT-KERN CANAL MIDDLE REACH CAPACITY CORRECTION CONSTRUCTION PROGRESS UPDATE

The weather was clear and sunny the entire month. Canal embankment was placed between Avenue 128 and 112, and between Deer Creek and Road 192, mostly excavating down in the canal invert and backfilling adjacent to siphons. Most embankments are currently over 95% complete. Canal trimming and lining operations continued on the west side of the excavated canal prism. Trimming and concrete paving were completed from Avenue 128 to south of Avenue 120. Due to the hot temperatures, canal lining concrete is placed at night.

Deer Creek check structure: wall formwork and reinforcing bars installed for check middle walls, siphon deck sections, and transition/weir wall, and six concrete pours were made at those locations. **Road 192 siphon:** formwork removed. **Terra Bella Avenue siphon:** formwork and reinforcing bars installed for sloped deck sections and headwalls, and concrete was poured; with the overall concrete structure completed this month (4th siphon to be completed.) **Avenue 128 siphon:** structural backfill placed and compacted. **Road 208 siphon:** falsework for the sloping deck section installed. **Avenue 88 siphon:** no work conducted. **Avenue 80 siphon:** installed formwork and reinforcing bars for wall and deck sections and poured concrete for wall sections. **Turnouts:** work conducted at Teapot Dome, SID-S2, SID-S3, SID-S4, Deer Creek Wasteway, and Terra Bella ID included installing formwork, installing reinforcing bars, placing concrete, and placing structural backfill and pipe backfill. Formwork and reinforcing bars were placed at the Terra Bella weir and concrete was poured. Electrical and instrumentation work was conducted at the TBID turnout and Deer Creek. Southern California Electric completed their inspection at Deer Creek.



Avenue 80 siphon wall construction in progress



Avenue 95 siphon sloped deck and headwall construction in progress



Canal trimming south of Avenue 112; hand paving complete next to the siphon



Road 208 siphon deck for the flat section completed; formwork removal in progress

"FKC Middle Reach Capacity Correction Construction Progress Update" Continued



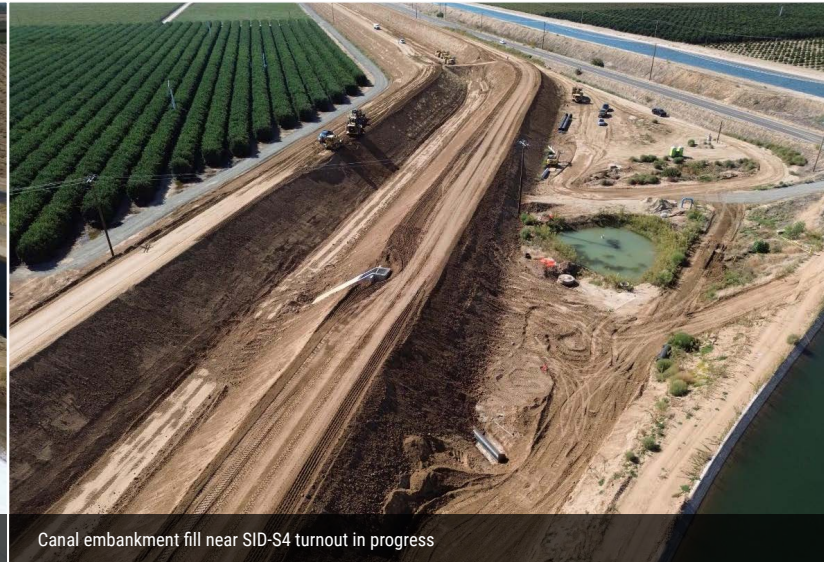
Deer Creek northeast transition and weir wall concrete placements



Deer Creek siphon north headwall and south deck section formwork/reinforcement in progress



Canal right paving in progress near SID-S1 turnout



Canal embankment fill near SID-S4 turnout in progress

IN THE NEWS

"Stark divisions as California outlines Delta water options," LA Times, October 8, 2023.

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"Strategic decision making for dam removal planning," California Water Blog, October 15, 2023.

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"California has new plan for the Delta but old water conflicts remain," CalMatters, October 8, 2023.

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"California drought update shows full reservoirs after wet water year," Sacramento Bee, October 6, 2023.

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