

WATERWORKS

TEHAMA-COLUSA CANAL AUTHORITY



FALL EDITION
November 2025



Irrigation Season Ends

Irrigation season has ended and we are rapidly moving into “recharge and repair” season within the TCCA service area. Most of you are familiar with the formal shutdown of the canal from December 1st through February 15th, but many of you aren’t aware that the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) actually allows the use of the canal in this period. It is clear the SOP was written before the Pumping Plant was constructed, when the water was diverted by using the dam at Red Bluff. The concern at that time was that water would be diverted from the river in Red Bluff and then enter Funks Reservoir and contribute to flooding issues downstream in Funks Creek. It is also clearly stated that flows from Funks Creek shall be passed through the reservoir and not into the canal.

So, in accordance with the SOP we will be lowering the reservoir when storms are forecast. However, we will keep the level up when there is no runoff, or forecasted storms, so that districts like Dunnigan, Colusa County and Westside can do their recharge projects.

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Meet the TCCA Family

Don Babb - TCCA O&M Chief

Don oversees all water operations and maintenance to the TC and Corning Canals. Upon graduation from high school, he worked in the logging industry, operating equipment. He then went into the Ag community, running equipment and eventually crews for all different types of harvest. In 2000, he came to the water industry. He worked for Kanawha Water District for 10 years before coming to the TCCA.

Don likes the outdoors where he camps with friends. He also enjoys stream fishing, hunting, and trap shooting.



Don with NASCAR driver
Tyler Reddick

Big projects happen here at the TCCA

Evans Road Drainage Tubes

These drainage tubes measure 16 inches in diameter and run for 165 feet. We found one tube fully plugged, and the remaining three partially plugged. In Don's 15 years with the TCCA these have never been flushed. The work took nearly 2 months, interspersed among other projects, to complete. After the tubes were cleared we hauled rock upstream to prevent this issue in the future.



Removing a motor for servicing is no small task.



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Simultaneously, we will be conducting concrete repairs in the checks above Funks Reservoir. As we dewater checks to do the repairs, we will move that water downstream to the checks where recharge is being conducted. We have 200 cfs capacity in the pumping plant, even during the maintenance closure, because we never fully close off the forebay with blanks. As the rechargers use water, we can shuttle and replenish the water in checks not being worked on. We plan to have two crews working on the concrete repairs, and this will help speed up the process. We will focus on concrete repairs downstream of Funks Reservoir in the maintenance season of 2026/2027.

Corning Canal explicitly functions as a flood control feature and that prevents us from being able to keep it filled during the winter, so unfortunately for those seeking to do recharge from it, the potential is more limited than on the main canal. However, we are willing to work with districts and do what we can to seek alternatives and enable recharge when possible.

Please feel free to reach out to Manager Vanderwaal at wvanderwaal@tccanal.com or 530.943.0575.

*December 2, 2025 marks 90 years of the
Central Valley Project*



Shelly with her grandchildren
Zaden (3mo) and Topanga (2)



Every winter season the TCCA reduces the flow of water into the canal by removing a majority of the fish screens at the pumping plant and replacing them with blanks. The blanks prevent river water from flowing into the forebay when it isn't needed. This also prevents sediment from entering the forebay, and prevents debris from damaging screens.

Fish Screen Removal for
the Winter Season



Meet the TCCA Family

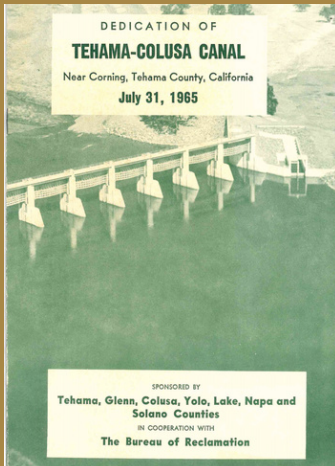
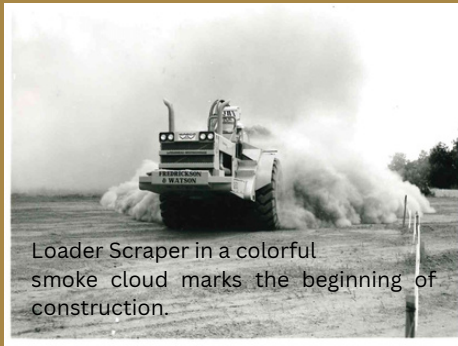
Shelly Murphy– General Manager, Colusa County Water District

Shelly has served as the General Manager of Colusa County Water District (CCWD) since 2008. Prior to stepping into this leadership role, she was the District's Comptroller/Treasurer, where her strong background in accounting laid the foundation for her continued impact.

A graduate of CSU, Chico, Shelly moved to Arbuckle in 2001 after meeting her husband, Hank. Her professional journey with CCWD began soon after, when her financial expertise and attention to detail made her a natural fit for the District. Shelly has been instrumental in modernizing CCWD operations. She led the implementation of new accounting systems, introduced SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) technology to improve system monitoring. She is currently spearheading both a capital improvement program and groundwater recharge initiatives aimed at ensuring long-term sustainability.

Originally from the Lake Tahoe area, Shelly is an avid skier and outdoor enthusiast. She enjoys spending time with her family hiking, fishing, camping, or simply hosting game nights at home. She is a proud mother of four and grandmother of two—with a third on the way. At home, life is lively thanks to what she lovingly refers to as her “self-proclaimed zoo,” which includes eight dogs, three cats, and four chickens—a legacy of the four children who have since “flown the coop.”

Happy Anniversary! 60 years since breaking ground!



“Water projects usually are thought of in terms of concrete, steel, earth movers, surveyors, valves and H₂O. They are all of these things, but they are also land and people. Especially people.” (William M. Carah, Executive Secretary of the California Water Commission, 1965)

The need for a water delivery canal along the west side of the Sacramento River can be traced back to 1873 when Lt. Colonel B.S. Anderson reported to President Grant the possibility of constructing irrigation canals “including two diverting from the Sacramento River near Red Bluff.” But the idea went nowhere.

Near the turn of the 20th Century the idea grew again, in the fertile mind of Will S. Green, a Colusa editor. Comprehensive studies were undertaken by the Bureau of Reclamation between 1905 and 1925. But it still remained only an idea. Finally, in 1948 the Sacramento Valley Irrigation Committee was formed in Tehama, Glenn, Butte and Colusa Counties to seek congressional authorization of a canal unit. That approval came a mere 2 years later, signed by President Truman in 1950.

Fifteen more years passed, but not idly. Plans were laid, engineers worked their science, details were hashed out, and contracts signed. The Corning Canal was completed in 1961 and the Red Bluff Diversion Dam in 1968.

July 31, 1965 the day finally came to break ground on the Tehama-Colusa Canal. This auspicious event took place 3 miles southeast of Corning, at the intersection of Marguerite Avenue and Fournoy Road. The first of eight planned reaches would traverse the distance between Thomes Creek and Stony Creek.

60 years later the TCCA operates and maintains the 140-miles of the Tehama-Colusa and Corning canals, servicing approximately 156,000 acres, and contributing more than \$1 billion to the regional economy annually.

05/05



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