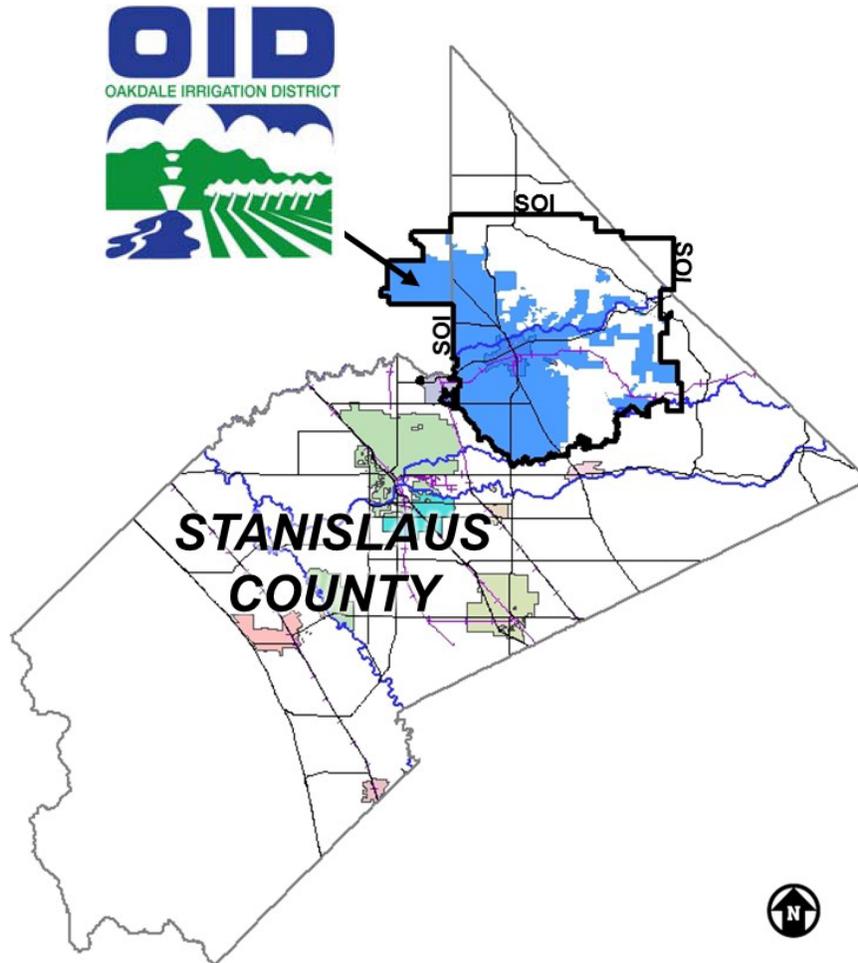


**MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW AND  
SPHERE OF INFLUENCE UPDATE FOR THE:**



**OAKDALE IRRIGATION DISTRICT**

*Prepared By:*

**Stanislaus Local Agency Formation Commission  
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**Adopted: September 27, 2023**

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# **STANISLAUS**

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# **Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence Update For the Oakdale Irrigation District**

## **Introduction**

The Cortese/Knox/Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 Act (CKH Act) requires the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) to update the spheres of influence (SOI) for all applicable jurisdictions in the County. A sphere of influence is defined by Government Code 56076 as "...a plan for the probable physical boundary and service area of a local agency, as determined by the Commission." The Act further requires that a municipal service review (MSR) be conducted prior to or, in conjunction with, the update of a sphere of influence (SOI).

The legislative authority for conducting a municipal service review is provided in Government Code Section 56430 of the CKH Act. The Act states, that "in order to prepare and to update spheres of influence in accordance with Section 56425, the commission shall conduct a service review of the municipal services provided in the county or other appropriate area..." MSRs must have written determinations that address the following factors in order to update a Sphere of Influence. These factors were recently amended to include identification of disadvantaged unincorporated communities within or contiguous to the sphere of influence of an agency.

## **Municipal Service Review Factors to be Addressed**

1. Growth and population projections for the affected area
2. The location and characteristics of any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within or contiguous to the sphere of influence
3. Present and planned capacity of public facilities, adequacy of public services, and infrastructure needs or deficiencies including needs or deficiencies related to sewers, municipal and industrial water, and structural fire protection in any disadvantaged, unincorporated communities within or contiguous to the sphere of influence
4. Financial ability of agencies to provide services
5. Status of, and opportunities for, shared facilities
6. Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies
7. Any other matter related to effective or efficient service delivery, as required by commission policy

State Guidelines and Commission policies encourage cooperation among a variety of stakeholders involved in the preparation of a municipal service review. This MSR will analyze the existing and future services for the Oakdale Irrigation District, located in the northeastern portion of the County. The current update serves to comply with Government Code Section 56425 and will reaffirm the SOI for the District.

## **Sphere of Influence Update Process**

A special district is a government agency that is required to have an adopted and updated sphere of influence. Section 56425(g) of the CKH Act calls for spheres of influence to be reviewed and updated every five years, as necessary. Stanislaus LAFCO processes municipal service reviews and sphere of influence updates concurrently to ensure efficient use of resources. For rural special districts, which do not have the typical municipal-level services to review, this document will be used to determine what type of services each district is expected to provide and the extent to which they are able to do so. For these special districts, the spheres will delineate the service capability and expansion capacity of the agency, if applicable.

# **Municipal Service Review – Oakdale Irrigation District**

## **Authority**

The Oakdale Irrigation District was organized under the Wright Act and operates under Irrigation District Law, Division 11 of the Water Code, Section 20500 et. seq. In addition, the District is considered to be a “registered voter district”, as the board of directors is elected by registered voters from five geographical divisions within the District’s boundaries.

## **Background**

Throughout the years, water and California have been linked. No resource is more vital to California than water, from the agricultural areas, urban centers, and industrial plants to open space and recreational areas, the distribution of water has been critical to all land uses.

In California, there are hundreds of special water districts with a great diversity of purposes, governance structures, and financing mechanisms. Some districts are responsible for one type of specific duty, while other districts provide multiple public services, as is the case for the Oakdale Irrigation District.

## **Purpose**

Irrigation districts are formed for the provision of sufficient water in the district for any beneficial use. An irrigation district has the power to control, distribute, store, spread, sink, treat, purify, recapture, and salvage any water including, but not limited to, sewage waters for beneficial use of users of the district or its inhabitants. A district may also provide for flood control and can engage in the generation, transmission, distribution, sale and lease of electric power (Water Code Section 22075-22186).

## **Formation**

The Oakdale Irrigation District (OID) was formed on November 1, 1909.

## **Governance**

A five-member Board of Directors governs the District. Registered voters within a geographical area or “Division”, elect the board members. Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of every month at 9:00 a.m. in the District office located at 1205 East “F” Street in Oakdale. All meetings are open to the public. Agendas are prepared and posted 72-hours prior to the board meeting and posted on the bulletin board at the District office and on the District website ([www.oakdaleirrigation.com](http://www.oakdaleirrigation.com)). Information such as the history of the District, current Board agendas, water updates, and quarterly newsletters is readily available on the District’s website as well.

## **Location and Size**

The majority of the District is located in northeastern Stanislaus County. The District also covers territory in San Joaquin County. The District boundaries comprise approximately 82,000 acres. The District maintains more than 330 miles of laterals, pipelines, and tunnels, 25 production wells, and 41 reclamation pumps.

## **Sphere of Influence**

The District's existing Sphere of Influence incorporates approximately 160,800 acres (or 78,800 acres beyond the existing District boundaries). The city limits of Oakdale and the unincorporated communities of Knights Ferry and Valley Home are located within the District's Sphere of Influence. However, the city limits of Riverbank are excluded from the westerly portion of the District's SOI, as these areas were detached upon annexation to the City. A map outlining the District's boundaries and SOI is attached under Appendix "B". This Service Review is intended to cover the District's existing boundary and Sphere of Influence area.

## **Personnel**

The District currently has 80 full-time employees.

## **Classification of Services**

The District is authorized to provide the functions or classes of services (e.g. irrigation, domestic water, and electrical power) as identified in this report. Due to recent changes in the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act, the District would have to seek LAFCO approval to exercise other latent powers (i.e. services) not currently provided by the District.

## **Services**

OID currently provides agricultural irrigation and domestic water services to its customers. The District's water supply comes from the Stanislaus River (under well-established water rights), recapture of drainage water, and pumping from deep groundwater wells. The District's distribution systems include the Goodwin Diversion Dam on the Stanislaus River below the Tulloch Dam, at which point water is diverted into the District's main canal systems.

The District is also a wholesale power distributor through its Tri-Dam Project. The Oakdale Irrigation District and the South San Joaquin Irrigation District (SSJID) jointly own and operate storage reserves (Tri-Dam Project) and have storage rights in the federally-owned New Melones Reservoir. The two Districts, under the Tri-Dam Project, own, operate, and maintain three hydro-electrical power facilities: one each at Donnell's Reservoir, Beardsley Lake, and Tulloch Lake. The Tri-Dam Project's principal activities are the storage and delivery of water to each District and the hydraulic generation of power.

Starting in January 1, 2014, the Districts entered into a power purchase and sale agreement with the City of Santa Clara, California, through its municipal electric utility, Silicon Valley Power. Under the agreement, the Districts agreed to sell the net electrical output and installed capacity of its power generating facilities to the City of Santa Clara through December 31, 2023. A new agreement was recently executed with the City of Santa Clara for an additional 5 year term ending December 31, 2028.

Additionally, through the Tri-Dam Power Authority (Authority), the two Districts own, operate, and maintain the Sand Bar Project, a hydro-electric facility downstream of Beardsley Lake which became operational in 1986. The Authority, on January 1, 2017, entered into a power purchase and sale agreement with the City of Santa Clara, California as well through its municipal electric utility, Silicon Valley Power.

The District also manages several domestic water systems, which are part of six private and publicly-owned systems that exist in an unincorporated area east of the City of Oakdale. One of the systems is owned by OID, while five of the systems are owned by homeowner groups who have entered into an “improvement district” arrangement with OID to manage their water systems for State compliance.

### **Support Agencies**

The District maintains positive and collaborative relationships with other agencies, such as: South San Joaquin, Merced, Modesto, and Turlock Irrigation Districts, Stockton East Water District, Stanislaus County, City of Oakdale, Oakdale Rural Fire Protection District, City of Riverbank, Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E), State Water Resources Board, Bureau of Reclamation, California Department of Water Resources (DWR), Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA), California Special Districts Association (CSDA), the Stanislaus and Tuolumne Rivers Groundwater Basin Association Groundwater Sustainability Agency, and the Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority.

### **Funding Sources**

The majority of the District’s revenue is from power sales as a result of OID and South San Joaquin Irrigation District’s Tri-Dam Project and Tri-Dam Power Authority. Other sources include income from water transfers, irrigation water sales, County property tax appropriations, interest revenue, and domestic water revenue.

## **Service Review Categories & Determinations**

The following provides an analysis of the seven categories or components required by Section 56430 for a Service Review for the Oakdale Irrigation District:

### **1. Growth and Population Projections for the Affected Area**

The Oakdale Irrigation District currently serves over 2,900 customers with irrigation water for agricultural purposes and approximately 767 customers with domestic water for residential purposes. For many years, the District has provided irrigation water on an annual basis for 20 to 30 out-of-district agreements, depending on interest and water availability. After completing the environmental analysis (CEQA) in January 2023, a 10-Year Out-of-District Water Sales Program (Program) was initiated. Approximately 10,000 irrigated acres have enrolled in the Program to be delivered surface water from the District when water is available under its pre-1914 water rights without any impact to OID's in-district constituents.

The District updates its customer records as necessary for billing purposes. Part of that update includes parcel size, location, and crop type on lands served with OID water. As land use conversions take place, the water needs of OID's customer base can substantially change. This information, combined with data from the Department of Water Resources, the Department of Finance, and the U.S. Census Bureau allows the District to develop land use trends and forecasts. While irrigated lands will continue to be lost due to urbanization by the City of Oakdale, the City may be interested in surface water as a source of supply in the future and the increase in irrigated agriculture outside the current District boundaries provides opportunity for District expansion.

### **2. The Location and Characteristics of Any Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities Within or Contiguous to the Sphere of Influence**

Under Government Code Section 56033.5, "disadvantaged unincorporated community" is defined as an inhabited territory (12 or more registered voters), or as determined by commission policy, with an annual median household income that is less than 80% of the statewide annual median household income. Upon review of available Census data, and identified communities in the County, no disadvantaged unincorporated communities were found within or contiguous to the District's Sphere of Influence.

### **3. Present and Planned Capacity of Public Facilities, Adequacy of Public Services, and Infrastructure Needs or Deficiencies Including Needs or Deficiencies Related to Sewers, Municipal and Industrial Water, and Structural Fire Protection to Any Disadvantaged, Unincorporated Communities Within or Contiguous to the Sphere of Influence**

OID's existing and planned public facilities and services are designed to supply irrigation and related drainage with the priority of serving those properties within District boundaries prior to out-of-district approvals. In 2007, the District completed a Water Resources Plan (WRP). The WRP evaluated the District's water resources, facilities, and operations. It provides specific, prioritized recommendations for OID physical and operational improvements as well as a plan to phase the implementation of improvements consistent with available financial resources.

In accordance with the requirements of the Water Conservation Act of 2009 (SBx7-7) and the Governor's Executive Order B-29-15, OID prepared a 2015 Agricultural Water Management Plan (AWMP). A Water Resources Plan Report Card section was added to OID's 2015 AWMP to provide a review of improvement actions identified under the WRP, a summary of actions completed and projections of near- and long-term actions to be completed.

As indicated previously, there are no disadvantaged unincorporated communities within or contiguous to the City's Sphere of Influence.

#### **4. Financial Ability of Agencies to Provide Services**

In 2021, power generation from both the Tri-Dam Power Project and the Tri-Dam Power Authority accounted for approximately 50 percent of the District's total revenue. Water transfer agreements and agricultural water delivery charges contributed approximately 24 percent of the net revenue, while County property tax appropriations accounted for 19 percent. Domestic water charges provide only a slight contribution to the District's total revenue.

The District's adopted Water Resources Plan (WRP) includes a financial plan to achieve infrastructure and modernization needs currently identified by the District. The District has completed more than \$100 million of improvements and annexed +/-10,500 acres since the start of implementation of the WRP. Total project costs by implementation category through 2019 are summarized in OID's 2020 AWMP. Annexation provides additional funding to finance various infrastructure and operational improvements under the WRP while providing additional benefits of decreased reliance on groundwater for irrigation and increased groundwater recharge from deep percolation of surface water used for irrigation. The WRP identified a goal for annexation of approximately 4,250 acres within the OID sphere of influence by 2020 as part of preferred alternative. The District's WRP annexation goals have already been surpassed.

OID appears to be financially sound with strong and stable sources of revenue, substantial reserves, and a superior credit rating. The District's long-range planning programs allow the District to plan and budget for needed improvements to services and facilities in a balanced way that is consistent with its anticipated revenue. The District's budget process is designed to screen out unnecessary costs and is submitted to the Board of Directors for review and approval.

#### **5. Status of, and Opportunities for, Shared Facilities**

The District and the South San Joaquin Irrigation District jointly own and operate three storage reservoirs (Tulloch, Beardsley, and Donnells). The District also jointly owns, operates, and maintains the Donnells, Beardsley, and Tulloch power plants along with a separate power facility (Sand Bar Project) with the South San Joaquin Irrigation District. In addition, both Districts own, operate and maintain the Joint Main Canal running along the north side of the Stanislaus River Canyon. This canal carries 100% of South San Joaquin Irrigation District's water to its service area and provides 40% of OID's deliveries for those lands within its boundaries north of the Stanislaus River.

The District has also contributed funding to the City of Oakdale for water safety and water conservation programs; to the Oakdale Fire Department for water rescue training and materials; and to the Oakdale Rural Fire Protection District for a new water rescue boat. Under a development agreement, the District shares eight water wells with the Oakdale Rural Fire Protection District, which allows the fire district to refill their fire trucks during emergencies. The District also has a joint easement with the City of Oakdale for the Burchell Hills Specific Plan Area Bike Path. Additionally, OID is working with the City of Oakdale to utilize surface water to irrigate City parks as well as evaluating options for and the feasibility of recycling tertiary treated M&I discharge from the City in OID's system for agricultural irrigation and groundwater recharge.

## **6. Accountability for Community Service Needs, Including Governmental Structure and Operational Efficiencies**

A five-member Board of Directors governs the District. Registered voters within a geographical area or "Division", elect the board members. The Board conforms to the provisions of the Brown Act requiring open meetings. The District also has established a website ([www.oakdaleirrigation.com](http://www.oakdaleirrigation.com)) that is user-friendly and provides information such as the history of the District, current Board agendas, water updates, and newsletters.

The District has the necessary resources and staffing levels to operate in a cost-efficient and professional manner. It is reasonable to conclude that the District has the organizational capability to adequately serve the areas under its jurisdiction.

## **7. Any Other Matter Related to Effective or Efficient Service Delivery, as Required by Commission Policy**

Improvements under the WRP include canal maintenance and rehabilitation, flow control and measurement, groundwater well replacement, pipeline replacement, regulating reservoir construction, turnout maintenance and replacement, outflow management projects (i.e. spillage and runoff reduction and reuse), reclamation projects, Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system expansion and annexation. A few current projects to note include the District's Phase 1 Total Channel Control (TCC) Modernization Project and the Two-Mile Bar Tunnel Project. The \$6.5 million project Phase 1 TCC Modernization Project, with up to \$3 million in matching funds from the Department of Water Resources through the Proposition 1 Water Quality, Supply and Infrastructure Act of 2014, provides the complete automation of approximately 18 miles of OID's open canal system. The District's Two-Mile Bar Tunnel Project, a new 5,949 linear foot tunnel for water conveyance, was completed and operational before the 2019 irrigation season (+/-March 2019). The tunnel alignment bypasses roughly 7,200 linear feet of high hazard rock fall and canal creep failure sections of the OID's existing South Main Canal.

Consistent with the goals of the WRP, these projects along with the rest of the \$100 million of improvements since the start of its implementation, improve water supply reliability while also improving operability and operation of the system. The quality of water delivery services to customers continues to improve with OID's ability to offer greater flexibility in the frequency of deliveries along with a steadily maintained flow rate at the water delivery point.

## **Sphere of Influence Update**

In determining a sphere of influence (SOI) of each local agency, the Commission shall consider and prepare determinations with respect to each of the following factors, pursuant to Government Code Section 56425:

1. The present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open-space lands.
2. The present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area.
3. The present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide.
4. The existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the commission determines that they are relevant to the agency.
5. For an update of a sphere of influence of a city or special district that provides public facilities or services related to sewers, municipal and industrial water, or structural fire protection, the present and probable need for those public facilities and services of any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within the existing sphere of influence.

The following determinations for the Oakdale Irrigation District's Sphere of Influence update are made in conformance with Government Code Section 56425 and local Commission policy.

### **Determinations:**

#### **1. Present and Planned Land Uses in the Area, Including Agricultural and Open-Space Lands**

The Oakdale Irrigation District's current boundary is comprised of approximately 82,000 acres, with a Sphere of Influence (SOI) area that encompasses 160,800 acres (78,800+/- acres beyond the existing District boundary). The land uses within the District's existing boundaries and Sphere of Influence consist of agricultural, rural residential, suburban and urban land use areas. These uses are not expected to change, except in the Spheres of Influence of the cities of Oakdale and Riverbank. In addition, the District does not have the authority to make land use decisions, nor does it have authority over present or planned land uses within its boundaries. The responsibility for land use decisions within the District boundaries is retained by Stanislaus, Calaveras, San Joaquin counties, and the cities of Oakdale and Riverbank.

#### **2. Present and Probable Need for Public Facilities and Services in the Area**

The District has developed a Water Resources Plan (WRP) to address the District's water resource needs into the future. Components of the Plan include: public outreach, resource inventory (surface, groundwater), water balance, infrastructure plan, and water rights portfolio. The WRP also projects the reasonable number of acres within the SOI that could be annexed to OID's boundaries while maintaining service levels to existing lands within the District's boundaries.

The present and probable need for the District's ability to continue to provide public facilities and services in the area is affected by the fact that the cities of Oakdale and Riverbank's Spheres of Influence overlap into the District. In addition, the District has a diminishing Sphere of Influence in that as territory annexes to the City of Riverbank, it detaches from the District.

The District's Sphere of Influence excludes some territory within the current city limits of Riverbank. Back in 2004 OID was advised by the State of California Department of Health Service of the legal requirements (CCR Title 17). The cross-contamination compliance responsibility under the law (CCR 17, Article VII, Sec 35-50(a)) rested with the City providing the domestic water services. Upon contacting the City of Riverbank, and through discussions with them, it was agreed to discontinue raw water services of OID within the City limits of Riverbank. Later a policy was developed by OID to curtail raw water services to any territory annexed by a City.

Development of lands not currently in the OID service area may lead to future annexations within the Sphere of Influence as appropriate. Consistent with LAFCO policies, in order to annex additional territory, the District must provide and/or demonstrate that there are sufficient quantities of water to serve additional territory without affecting the present service area and/or existing customers. The availability of current water supplies each year is affected by numerous factors, including annual rainfall and snowfall, and environmental factors such as: climate demand, water conservation efforts, crop changes, contractual obligations for water transfers, etc.

### **3. Present Capacity of Public Facilities and Adequacy of Public Services that the Agency Provides or is Authorized to Provide**

The District has strong surface water rights, including annual diversion rights from the Stanislaus River of 300,000 acre-feet (normal year). The District utilizes a Surface Water Shortage Policy in order to address service delivery issues during times when the quantity of water right available to the District is insufficient to meet the water demands of the crops grown.

As part of the Water Resources Plan (WRP), the District selected an alternative which focuses on maximizing improvements in the District and provides for moderate expansion in the SOI. Since the WRP's adoption in 2007, the District has been actively investing in its canal system based on improvement needs, as prioritized in the WRP. The improvements are intended to enhance customer service, use water more efficiently, increase reliability and drought protection, and reduce the amount of water leaving the District without benefit to OID customers.

### **4. The Existence of Any Social or Economic Communities of Interest in the Area if the Commission Determines That They are Relevant to the Agency**

The following jurisdictions can be categorized as communities of interest in the area: the cities of Oakdale and Riverbank, and the unincorporated communities of Knights Ferry, Valley Home, and the rural residential area known as East Oakdale. The Spheres of Influence for both the City of Oakdale and Riverbank overlap into the District's boundaries, which may affect the District's ability to provide services to these areas as urbanization occurs.

**5. For an Update of a Sphere of Influence of a City or Special District That Provides Public Facilities or Services Related to Sewers, Municipal and Industrial Water, or Structural Fire Protection, the Present and Probable Need for Those Public Facilities and Services of Any Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities Within the Existing Sphere of Influence**

The District manages several domestic water systems, which are part of six private and publicly-owned systems that exist in an unincorporated area east of the City of Oakdale. However, as discussed in the District's Municipal Service Review, there are no identified disadvantaged unincorporated communities within the existing Sphere of Influence or the proposed expansion area.

**APPENDIX “A”**  
**DISTRICT SUMMARY PROFILE**



District: **OAKDALE IRRIGATION DISTRICT**

Formation: November 1, 1909

Location: Majority of the District is located in northeastern Stanislaus County. The District also covers territory in San Joaquin County, with portions of its Sphere of Influence also extending into Calaveras, and Tuolumne Counties

Boundary: 82,000+/- acres

Sphere of Influence: 160,800+/- acres total (or 78,800 acres beyond the District boundary)

Customers: 2,900+ agricultural,  
767+ domestic accounts

Land Use: Agricultural, rural residential,  
suburban and urban

District Services: Irrigation water, domestic  
water, and wholesale  
electrical power

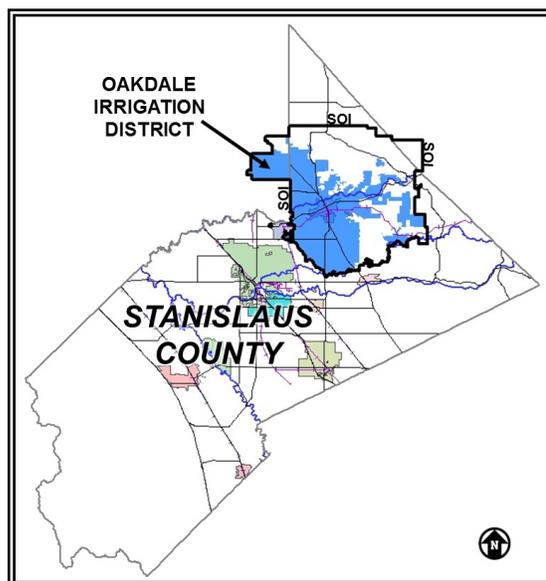
Enabling Act: California Water Code,  
Division 11, Irrigation  
Districts, §20500-29978

Governing Body: Five Board of Directors, elected by registered voters within five divisions  
of the District boundaries

Administration: 80 full-time employees

Budget: Calendar Year 2023  
 Revenues: \$19 million  
 Expenditures: \$19 million  
 Capital Improvements: \$22.5 million (Including the \$19 million in one-  
 time capital expenses paid from reserves)

Revenue Sources: Wholesale power, irrigation water sales, water transfers, County property  
tax appropriations, and domestic water sales



## APPENDIX “B”

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### REFERENCES

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- U.S. Bureau of Reclamation ([www.usbr.gov](http://www.usbr.gov)).

# OAKDALE IRRIGATION DISTRICT BOUNDARY AND SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

