

Spring 2023 Westside Water Newsletter

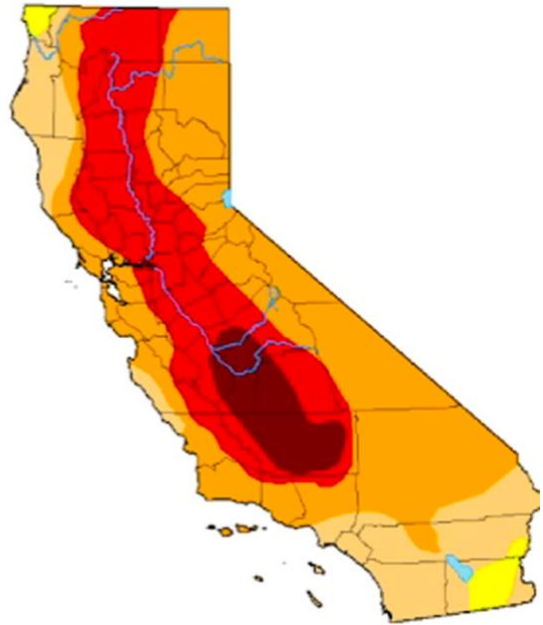
Save the date: The 2023 WWA Annual meeting will be held on Thursday evening May 19th. Details will be forthcoming.

As we transition from one of the coldest late winters in Pacific Northwest history there are intrepid crocuses, daffodils and camelias starting to bloom (and to cheer us up). Go blossoms! Our water year starts October 1st and our current period has not only been cool but also drier than normal. The jet stream has stayed south soaking California to the point that their recent drought condition has been dramatically improved.

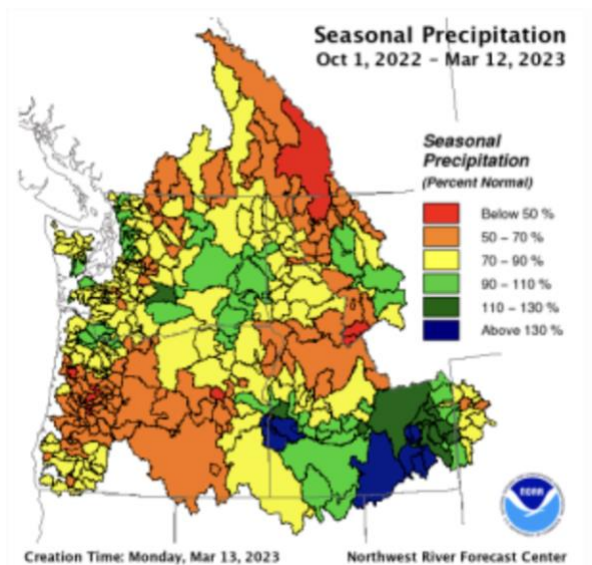
Now



December 2022

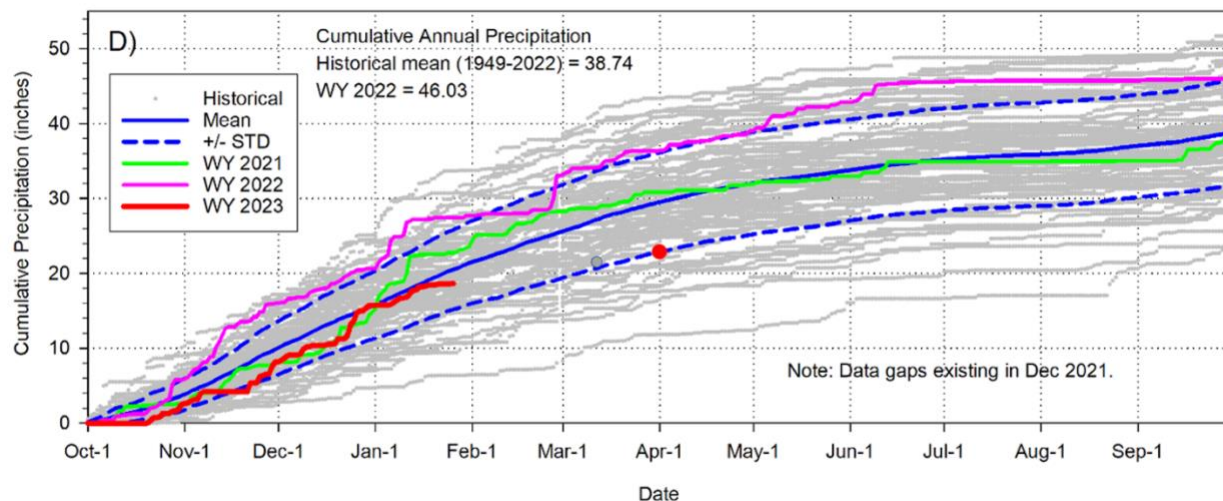


Contrast these maps with the Washington map for this water year:

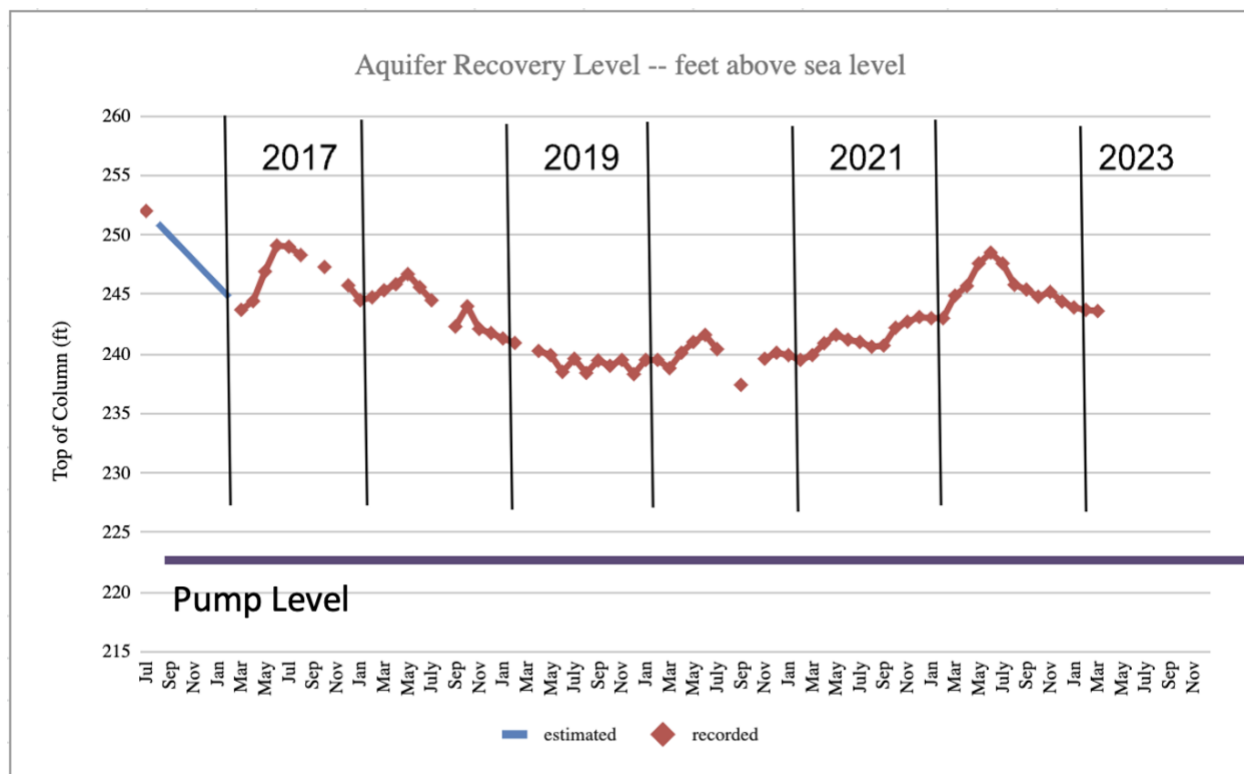


Not the green (wet) map we are used to.

Our rainfall has been 75% of normal for the water year; down over 7" from a normal value of 30" through the first two weeks in March. The red dot in the graph below shows where we currently are.



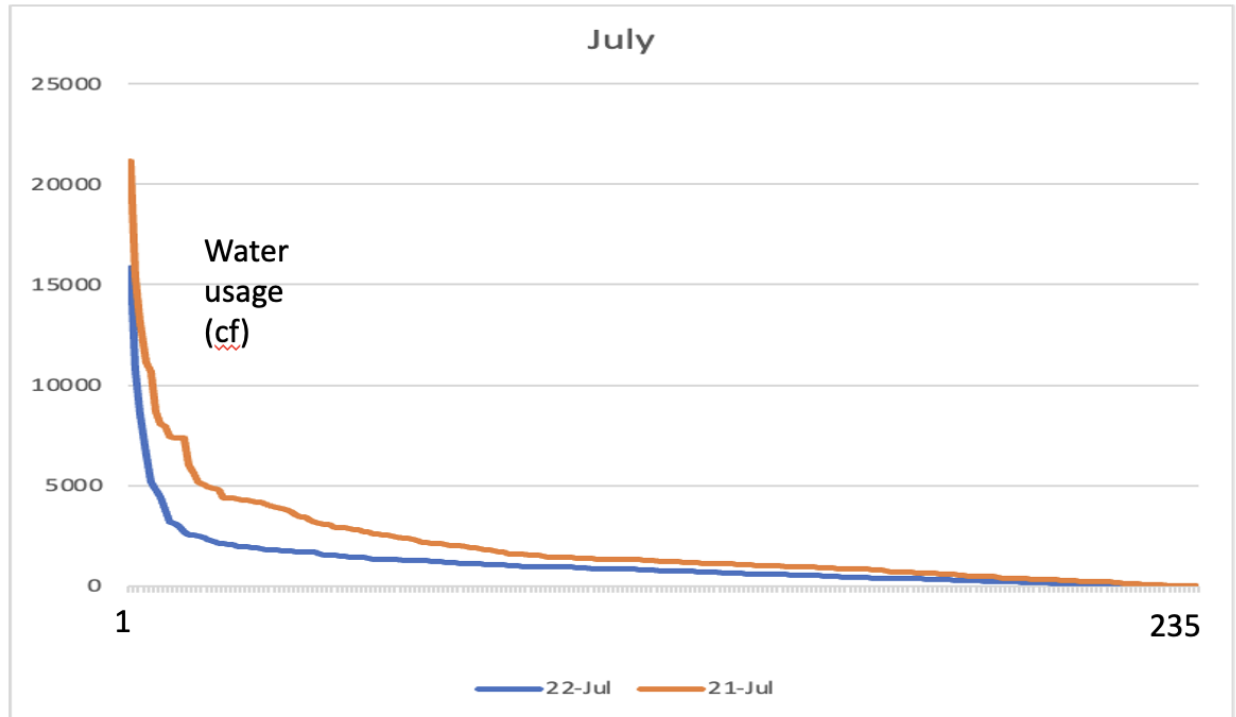
This condition is not something that we are panicked over but we do want to keep our eyes closely on our sources as we move into the time of year when we begin watering our gardens. We are monitoring all of our wells monthly and from the graph below of the Recovery Level for the Anderson 2 well we see that this aquifer continues to be stable (each data point is the elevation of the top of the water table after shutting off the pump for 24 hours).



We see similar recovery for the Anderson 1 well. The Back40 and Canyon wells which are not currently in regular use show stable water levels. The Well Points in the Canyon have not been producing as strongly this year (average of 22 gpm vs last year when we had closer to 30 gpm) as last year and we continue to work on them. They operate on a siphon principle and maintaining that system requires vigilance. This fact plus elevated leakage rates this winter (see below) means that we have not been able to rest the Anderson well field as much as we were able to do last winter.

Fiscal Year Water Sales Status

You may recall that last spring and early summer we had a very wet period. So wet in fact that people were referring to it as “January”. This wet period coincided with our heaviest typical water usage time of the year: when members with gardens water them extensively. Watering wasn’t really necessary through June of last summer and thus our water usage was substantially lower than normal. In fact about 2 million gallons lower than normal or about 15% lower. The difference between 2022 and 2021 May/June water usage (July billing) is seen in the following graph (where water usage is sorted by account – largest usage to the left). The drop in usage is across all accounts.



That coincides with lower than projected water sales (revenue) – down that same percentage or about \$15K from our budgeted amount. This situation is not a crisis (the Association is in a strong financial position) but it is causing the board to react to this shortfall. You can expect that we will need to raise rates a bit more than we have recently done in order to correct the situation. How much, you ask? For rough planning purposes let's assume that we will want to make up half of the 2022/23 shortfall (\$10K). That would mean an average increase of about \$40 per member for the next fiscal year or about \$3.50 per month. (We will spare you the comparison to a 16-ounce latte)

Fiscal Year 2023 Water Share Sales

As announced last fall Westside Water Association sold its first shares in over 30 years this February. A call for interest was issued January 1, 2023 and 5 members responded as part of the Tier 1 (existing members with parcels) sales (we also had one Tier 5 application which was not considered since we did not go through Tiers 2 through 4 on this occasion). A blind drawing was held on 2/8/2023 to select the 4 shares to be awarded for this year. One of those 4 "winners" has subsequently decided not to purchase a share this year and this share has now been offered to the fifth applicant from Tier 1. The Association has collected \$51K for the three awarded shares which is being added to the Capital Asset Replacement fund.

Leaks, Leaks and more Leaks

Our fiscal year performance regarding Distribution System Loss (DSL or in a more common term, leakage) has continued not to be where we want it to be (we strive for DSL under 10% and we have been averaging about 20% over recent months). We are currently chasing leaks in the vicinity of the Cove Road tank. This leak has been apparent for at least a couple of months and at around 10K gallons per day one would

think that its location would be apparent (but it is not). We have had Evergreen Rural Water over a couple of times to “listen” for the leak so theories abound. Work starts soon to find and fix this leak.

Capital Asset Replacement projects

Cove Road

In November we installed the rest of the mains replacement line from 115th Ave to 121st Ave on the North shoulder of Cove Road. This year’s portion of the project was for the west 600’ of that line. Work remains to connect the new line and the members along that section to it. Current estimate for project completion is \$60K which is somewhat higher than the original project estimate (from 2015) of \$44K. Considering inflation from 2015 to 2023 (~26%) the project comes in about \$5K over original budget.

153rd

One of our goals for this fiscal year is to replace the 3” steel line running through an easement over private property between 119th Ave and Westside Highway. We have decided to install a line down 153rd St (private road) and have obtained the necessary permissions from the residents/owners along that route. We are installing a 6” C900 PVC line which will maintain excellent pressure for customers on the South end of the system along Westside Highway. We will also add a fireflow hydrant at the west end of this new line. We expect completion of the line installation by early summer.

Back40 Surcharge Status

As of the April billing period we have collected the amount of surcharge that we originally planned to collect for the Back40 project. So starting with the June billing you will not see this line item in your bill. However we still have about \$5K left over on our first generator acquisition and installation costs and are expecting to buy and install another generator (see below) so we will be defining a separate surcharge for these two items. This new surcharge will be flat across all users whereas the Back40 surcharge was weighted towards larger water users. Expect details for the new surcharge at the Annual Meeting.

New Capital Project: 2nd Generator

Since we need to induce pressure in the upper system (115th Ave and Cove Road sections) if we lose power some customers at higher elevations within this zone suffer from drastically reduced water pressure (in the worst cases basically no pressure). In order to address this situation we are looking into adding a second generator to the system. Installation and cost are still under discussion, but the project is something we hope to have accomplished during 2023.

Who wants dirt?

Many of our pipe replacement projects generate extra dirt. In some cases King County requires us to remove the original material and replace with a specific grade of fill and these cases generate a LOT of extra dirt. "Dirt" generally means mineral soil - heavy in clay particles. We have to find places to dispose of this extra material. If you would like to be on the list to receive this mineral soil bounty please let Doug Dolstad know. Either at (206) 715-3805 or iwm.1@juno.com.

A New Person you might be contacting...

We're pleased to introduce Paul Huss who Doug has hired to take over the operations division of Island Water Management, Inc (IWM, Inc provides services to several island utilities) Some of you have already met or know about Paul from his activity as a beekeeper. He has lived with a local family off Westside Hwy going on 5 years now and is very happy to have the opportunity to get to know and serve the Westside Water community. See next section to see how to reach Paul.

Contact Information

Some of you remember the "old" Westside Water number? That number, 206-567-4568 has been retained and augmented to include a voice menu for contacting people involved with keeping Westside going. We encourage you to post 206-567-4568 where you can easily access it. Once you dial that number and select from the list and your call will be forwarded to the number you selected.

- "1" Doug, Management issues, general questions about Westside Water and the number to select if you think Doug can be particularly helpful to the reason you called.
- "2" Ken, Bookkeeper, Billing, account help
- "3" Paul, Operator/Emergency response

Reminders:

Payment Options

- Check
- Zelle (send to "billing@westsidewater.org")
- Credit Card (register via the billing program. Call 800-657-0880 to get help registering

Register to view your account

Call 800-657-0880 to get help. Super useful for viewing your account, water usage and lots more

Visit the Westside Water Website

If you haven't wandered around on the Westside Water website, you'll find it full of useful information. www.westsidewater.org

Annual Meeting coming up, May 19th,

Keep the date!

Board positions are open

If interested contact Doug Dolstad at iwm.1@juno.com.