

# THE FOOTHILL INQUIRER

*THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE*

www.fhinqurer.net

Monday May 9, 2011

Volume 4, Issue 9

## History and Opinion on Foresthill Public Utility District Rate Increase

By Tamra West

This article is being written to give our readers a little history and reasons why our water rates were raised in July 2010 by the Foresthill Public Utility District (FPUD).

The FPUD was formed in 1950 pursuant to the provisions act of Section 15501 et. seq. of California Public Utilities Act for the purpose of operating a water system. The FPUD's service area comprises the unincorporated community of Foresthill.

The FPUD is governed by a five member Board of Directors and currently employes 9 (1 field position is open) full time employees. The FPUD boundaries include an area of approximately 13,000 acres and contains primarily residential development. The FPUD has a population of approximately 5,800 and as of April 2011 provided 1,972 water service connections.

As with numerous other agencies, the FPUD was experiencing increased costs over which it had little or no control.

The rising and unstable costs of fuel, materials, transportation, chemicals and un-reimbursed costs of federal and state regulations have contributed to budget impacts. As an example: costs for Department of Health Services (drinking water), Department of Dam Safety (dam compliance), Water Quality Control Board (water rights), have all significantly increased their fees to the FPUD (in some cases 200%) due to the state fiscal situation.

As part of the Sugar Pine transfer legislation, the FPUD pays \$18.00 per acre foot towards the Central Valley Improvement Act Restoration Fund. This charge is subject to annual revision.

Due to climate and economic factors, FPUD water sales were reduced in 2008, 2009 and 2010. Said reduction in usage (14%) amounts to over \$100,000 in revenue reduction.

See History on page 4

---

## Vote NO on Measure B!

Opinion piece by Tamra West

Measure B will be on the June 21st, 2011 ballot to repeal the 2010 rate increase by the Foresthill Public Utility District (FPUD). According to the Elections Department, this special election could cost the ratepayers approximately \$28,000. There are 1,950+/- meters in the district so Measure B will cost each ratepayer \$14.35 to pay for this special election.

A Committee Against Measure B has been formed to help the community of Foresthill to understand why it is so important to vote NO on Measure B.

If Measure B passes, the revenue to run the water district will be reduced to 2010 levels, employee layoffs are almost certain (FPUD has 6 field employees to maintain Sugar Pine Dam, the treatment plant, conveyance system, reservoir and approximately 160 miles of pipe of which they perform all repairs on).

If Measure B passes and we do not have enough employees to take care of everything, our water service and water quality will be affected.

Even the 3 board members elected in November 2010, (Bill Angerer, Stan Cantrell and Brad Reeves), who ran on the platform of rolling the rates back, have all stated that we need this rate increase or the district will be in bad shape.

Even their campaign manager, Cynthia Wardleigh, who actively protested the rate increase, stated at the March 24th Special Meeting "You are facing this [rate increase] roll back and it's going to hurt you financially. I'm sorry, I'm in the middle. People came to me and asked me to put a sign out there (at Everybody's Inn). I tell people, it, [Measure B] is going to hurt our water agency".

The interim-general manager, Glen Carnahan has also stated that the district will be in trouble if Measure B passes.

The aforementioned committee against Measure B has created a website: [www.measureb.net](http://www.measureb.net)

If you want to find out more about the issues, come to the meetings, the next meeting is Wed. May 11, 2011 at the Foresthill Fire Protection Conference Room.

**Community Briefs**

The Foresthill PUD and Fire Protection District board meetings are filmed by the *FhInquirer*. Copies of these meetings can be rented from the Foresthill Library or can be purchased from the *Inquirer*. Contact *fhinquirer@ftcnet.net*

**The Foothill Inquirer**  
fhinquirer@ftcnet.net

The Foothill Inquirer is an independent newspaper/newsletter that covers news-of-interest mostly dealing with the foothill area but also covering State and national issues.

Our goal is to provide current and accurate news for the foothill area.

The FhI is now available only on the web or by email. There are also hard copies at the Foresthill Library for reference. If you would like to be placed on the e-mail loop, email fhinquirer@ftcnet.net and request that you be placed on our email loop. If you would like to place an advertisement the price is \$12.00 for one month's worth of advertising, plus your ad is on our website.

Contact us at our email address to place an advertisement.

If you have a community notice of an event or lecture it will be put in the 'Community briefs' section free of charge.

Meeting	Date	Time	Place
<b>FPUD Board meeting</b>	Wednesday May 11	7:00 p.m.	FPUD District office 24540 Main St. Foresthill
<b>Foresthill Fire Safe Council</b>	Tuesday May 17	5:30 p.m.	Foresthill Fire District office 24320 Main St. Foresthill
<b>WAC MAC</b>	Wednesday May 18	6:00 p.m.	Colfax Memorial Hall, 22 Sunset Circle, Colfax
<b>West Placer MAC</b>	Thursday May 12	7:00 p.m.	Dry Creek Elementry School 2955 PFE Rd.
<b>Planning Commission</b>	Thursday's May 12 & 26	10:00 a.m.	Planning Commission Chambers 3091 County Center Dr. Auburn

**2nd Annual Iowa Hill Chili Cook-Off**

On Saturday May 14, the Iowa Hill Fire Department will hold it's second annual Chili Cook-Off. The festivities will start at 1:00 p.m. at the Iowa Hill Firehouse at 3350 Iowa Hill Road.

Events will include live music all day, an apple pie contest at 4:00 p.m. and of course the chili contest.

All proceeds of the event will go to the Iowa Hill Fire Department.

If you would like to make a chili or pie entry contact Chase Dowling at (530)-613-2537 or Cathy Morgan at (530)-367-6181.

**A LITTLE HISTORY**

**Winter Of Deep Snows - 93 years Ago**

By Peg Presba, Gazette Historian, May 11, 1983

Back in 1889 and 1890, there were deep snows in Placer and El Dorado Counties, and from them have come many tales. Here is a yarn spun for the Knave by the veteran Ed Rains of Foresthill: "When I got up this morning the ground was white with snow. It made me think of one of the heavy winters, when the snow was as deep as it was long - the Winter of 1889-90. The snow was 16 feet deep at Damascus, 22 at the Fork's House, and 26 at Westville. I remember going up to the Fork's House on skis and packing 15 pounds of potatoes on my back. I thought I was some pumpkins.

The winter of 1888-89, when it started to snow, was very mild and warm, with only a few rains; so the next year, everybody in the mountains got careless and put off getting in their winter provisions early. Then came the heavy snow early in November and kept it up until March.

It caught most people in the high mountains with only part of their winter groceries in. I knew one fellow, Jack McCall. He was superintendent of the Hogsback Mine. He got caught with his pants down, you might say. He was trying to operate the mine, and surely was kept busy with men packing groceries on skis, cutting wood for steam, and getting in through all the snow. Uncle George McCall was there driving a team of horses drawing wood in. He was about 18 years old then.

**HORSES ON SNOWSHOES**

"Well, the snow settled," Rains continues, "and they started to drive horses on snowshoes from Baker Ranch to Westville (about 15 miles), and got a good deal of freight that way. The horses had iron plates on each foot about one

foot square, with a piece of belting on the bottom to help keep them from slipping, then the heels and toes came through this plate. Iron clamps over the horses' hooves clamped on with a bolt and everything would go alright 'till Mr. Horse would fall over on his side, and then there would be trouble in getting him up on all four feet again. They made quite a number of trips with horses on snowshoes as far up as Hogsback Mine. When the snow began to melt, everybody was glad to see the ground again.

"I remember the 22nd of February that winter - it was my sister's birthday, and there was a party on. My mother had a large square piano, and she was a good player. Then there was A.B. Campbell, who played the violin, and Mr. Wallace Bird, who played the piccolo. They surely made nice music, or that is the way I remember it. We had a very nice time that night, with plenty to eat. The next morning my sister said to a neighbor, Jo Mercer, "Why didn't you come to the party?" He said it was no time to have a party when there had been four men killed at the Red Point Mine that night. There had been a cave-in, and George Patrick and three Chinese workers were killed.

**HAZARDOUS AND TRAGIC**

"A few days later," the story goes on, "they took George Patrick and one of the Chinese to Iowa Hill (a distance of about 12 miles) for burial. The snow was deep and they put each man in a cowhide and slid them along the top of the snow. Anyone who has knocked around these mountains on skis like I have will understand what an undertaking this was.

See History page 6



**CYNTHIA THOMPSON**  
**530-367-3141**  
**CALL FOR A FREE**  
**MARKET ANALYSIS ON**  
**YOUR HOME OR LAND**  
 Stop Foreclosure!!  
 You have Options!!  
 I can help!  
  
**RE/MAX GOLD**

**PJ's COLLECTIBLES**

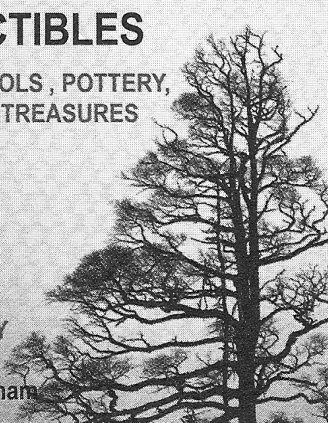
ANTIQUES, VINTAGE TOYS, TOOLS, POTTERY,  
 BOTTLES & 2nd HAND TREASURES

BUY, SELL, & TRADE

24381 FORESTHILL RD.  
 FORESTHILL, CALIF. 95631

**530-367-3330**

OPEN 10-6 CLOSED TUESDAY  
 ninilouise@ftcnet.net  
 Pam Covell & Jeanne Cunningham



## FPUD History and Opinion

Continued from page 1

(If a home is foreclosed on, no one is paying for water).

When the FPUD acquired the Sugar Pine Project from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, the accompanying facilities increased the FPUD's depreciation costs (currently at \$371,184 per year) which represents the aging or replacement value that year (2009) of held assets. GASB (Government Accounting Standards Board) Rule 34 stipulates that agencies should fund depreciation or develop an asset replacement and funding plan. The FPUD did implement a Repair and Replacement program starting at \$3.32 per month, which represents 25% of the required depreciation funding amount of +/- \$13.28. This charge, (\$3.32) scheduled for annual 25% increases to the full amount was not increased in 2009 due to economic conditions. The FPUD proposed to continue the previously established Repair and Replacement charge and its schedule for annual increases (over four years) in its proposed rate increase. (Note: the pipes from the treatment plant to the town of Foresthill were surplus from WWII and are well past their expected service life. The holding tanks at the treatment plant were surplus left over from Vietnam and were trucked up here by American Forest Products and installed by local contractors - they too need to be replaced due to leakage).

The FPUD's board of directors have established funding for Repair and Replacement of existing aging infrastructure on a "pay as you go" basis instead of more costly debt issuances, which include multi-year interest streams plus repayment of principle. (Placer County Water Agency rate payers have been paying \$13.28 per month for Repair and Replacement since 2001).

The FPUD secured a grant to fund a water rate study, which was the basis for the proposed water rate increase. Minimum gallonages were proposed to be reduced from 10,000 gallons per month to 7,500 gallons per month. When we had 10,000 gallons per month, any overages over that amount were charged at \$2.24 per 1,000 gallons. Now at 7,500 gallons per month any overages are charged at \$1.50 per 1,000 gallons.

### Assessment 715 District #1

This assessment, commonly referred to as the "Filtration Assessment" was in the amount of \$25.00 per year (paid via your tax bills each year). This debt, (\$1,040,000) was authorized by our community in 1981 to construct the water treatment facility. Through prudent fiscal management and interest received via invested bond funds, the FPUD was able to retire this debt twelve (12) years early. This will

save interest costs associated with the debt and remove the \$25.00 per year from property tax statements.

### Assessment 708 District #2

FPUD customers authorized this assessment, referred to as the fire flow rehabilitation project in 1996. This assessment appears on your tax bill in the amount of \$46.25 per year. The FPUD pledged \$100,000 per year from existing revenues (reserves and capital improvement funds) to assessment #2 annual debt service. This contribution assured that the assessment amount would not be more costly but would in fact remain less than \$50.00 year.

As outlined in the FPUD's 2010 Water Rate Study, the FPUD proposed that this cost be formalized within the water rate structure and amounts of +/- \$3.60 per month, per customer. It is intended that this proposed action would help alleviate the serious decline in FPUD reserve funds.

### Sugar Pine Purchase — Certificates of Participation

FPUD acquired ownership of the former U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Sugar Pine Project consisting of the dam, reservoir, conveyance facilities, treatment plant (building), terminating reservoir, transmission system, and various lands and rights of way. This debt (\$3.3 million) is repaid via a pledge of revenues to secure repayment. This repayment currently appears on your monthly bills as the \$6.50 per month Sugar Pine surcharge. This surcharge generates +/- \$180,000 of the required \$230,000 annual debt. The debt inequity (\$50,000) has been derived from District reserve funds. New customer growth, which has averaged about 40 connections a year, to steadily reduce reliance on reserves over time, has been seriously affected by economic conditions, therefore, the full amount of the debt (an increase of \$1.82 per month) was proposed within the new rate structure. (In other words, we should have been paying \$8.50 per month instead of \$6.50 per month since we purchased Sugar Pine).

In conclusion: If Measure B passes, the FPUD will not have sufficient revenue to adequately maintain its water distribution system.

Please Vote **NO** on Measure B.

**EXERCISING THE RIGHT.** Re-printed from The New American , May 9, 2011

“...the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.”

**DELIVERING LEAD**

On Friday, March 11, a Kentucky “Wing Zone delivery driver” pulled up to the curb behind an apartment complex, expecting to deliver pizza to customers within. Unbeknownst to him, four men were waiting behind a nearby dumpster and sprang up as he exited his vehicle. Two of the men cornered the driver, and one was armed. The armed assailant pointed his gun at the hard-working victim and demanded all his cash. The driver, aware that similar robberies of pizza delivery men had occurred in the area, was prepared. He dashed back into his car and retrieved his pistol, which was “legally stored” inside. He fired at the would-be robbers as he tried to make his escape. Everything that occurred is not clear, but authorities suspect the robber fired back - a total of six shell casings were recovered at the scene. The driver escaped from the scene in his car and alerted the police. One of the four conspirators suffered a gunshot wound to the chest and collapsed. The other three fled in fear of their lives. The suspected robber who was shot was taken to a nearby hospital, and his condition was not immediately available.

**ATF “ANTI-GUN ZEALOT”**

When President Obama nominated Andrew Traver, who is currently the Special Agent in Charge of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) Chicago Field Division, to be the new Director of the ATF, a firestorm was touched off among gun-rights activists, who described Traver as an “anti-gun zealot.” On the other hand, gun-controllers like the Brady Campaign were enthused when Traver was nominated by President Obama to be the head of the ATF. Those looking to preserve Americans’ God-given right to armed self-defense have much to be concerned about. Dave Kopel of the Colorado-based Indepen-

dence Institute told the Christain Science Monitor, “This is a demonstration that Obama has...the same attitudes about Second Amendment rights now as he did [when he was an Illinois state Senator], which is quite hostile...He’s picked a strong anti-Second Amendment person for an administrative job that has far more influence over the practical exercise of Second Amendment rights than any other job in the country.”

Conservative pundit Michelle Malkin wrote that “Traver allied with the progressive Joyce Foundation to lobby for tighter federal restrictions of Second Amendment freedoms. He..opposes privacy protections for gun owners. He has also compared automatic black-market weapons to legal semiautomatic assault weapons.” Such criticisms have stalled Traver’s nomination and, at the time of this writing, it hasn’t yet come up to a vote by the U.S. Senate.

**VOTE NO  
ON  
MEASURE B!**

Please Visit [www.measureb.net](http://www.measureb.net)

By Committee Against Measure B

**ROY WEST**

Specializing in Residential Improvements,  
Custom Homes and Remodels Since 1987

License #594004-B                      Office: **530-367-3414**  
 General Building Contractor        Cell: **530-368-2715**  
 E-Mail: [rwest@ftcnet.net](mailto:rwest@ftcnet.net) P.O. Box 292, Auburn, CA 95604

**www.roywest.biz**

**Foresthill Joe's**

24482 Main Street  
Foresthill CA 95631  
530-367-6539



Coffee, Espresso Drinks, Pastries & Breakfast Sandwiches  
Whole & Ground Beans Available

**Sara Schnuck**  
Owner

Free WiFi  
Gift Shop

## History

Continued from page 3

After a heavy snowstorm, the snow will gather in big lumps on the flat limbs of big trees, sometimes two or three feet deep and four or five feet across. This is apt to fall off as you are going through the timber. If a large lump falls from the top of a high tree, it will come down like a spray through the limbs. But if it falls from one of the lower limbs, it will come down in a big chunk, sometimes 100 pounds in a piece. Whenever a big lump like that falls close to you, it certainly scares you. There are still marks high up on the trees showing where the snow came that year. That was the worst winter we ever had in this country."

### THE PARAGON PIT CAVE IN 1935

By Mike Oreno, married to Miriam Rains, of the Edward E. Rains Family. This slide occurred on May 29, 1935.

The evening of the cave-in the Paragon Pit, I was the night shift foreman. I had been down at the Pit that day with Miriam (my wife) to see the Pit and find out what to do on the night shift. The men were working cleaning the gold in the head boxes. The bank, a long ways from them, was caving-rocks coming down the bank.

Miriam was afraid and begged me to get out and go home. I told her to take the car and I would come up later. I walked home.

That evening Edward Rains, my brother-in-law, and Riley stopped at the house as we lived close to the Pit. Miriam begged me not go to work that night. She said, "You will be killed." Kidding, Riley said, "If Mike is killed I will marry you." My wife said, "You won't be here, you will be dead too."

We went down to the Pit and it looked bad. I told the boys we were going home, no work tonight. Moe Macari, one of the boys was cleaning the change room, he said "Wait until I get this place cleaned out." Riley was standing in the door and said, "I would like to see that big pine tree that is on the top of the Pit come down," Edward Rains had gone outside to fill his lamp with water, Joe and I were inside the change room. The evening was misty and some fog coming in. It had been raining for several days previous. Riley, at the door, saw a bank give way and hollered, "There she goes!" He led the way up the hill in back of the change room. We followed. There was a great noise and when it was over I had fallen in a stump hole. I called to each of the boys. Riley did not answer. The material from the slide was 3 feet behind me, Ed and Joe were up ahead. We looked and couldn't find Riley. I ran a

1/4 of a mile up to the house, got in the car and drove to Foresthill to get help and to report the accident. We looked and couldn't find Riley. They found him the next day about 5 PM, not too far from the edge of the slide. He was lying on his back, facing the top of the hill where the big tree had been that he wanted to see come down. If he had not stopped to turn around he would have made it out, as he was ahead of all of us.

I am just estimating that the bank was 400-500 feet or more high, 400 feet wide and approximately 800-1000 feet or more from the change room.

The slide buried the change room, blacksmith shop, retort room and office, which were in a group.

NOTE: If we had not followed Riley, and had gone up the road that led to the Pit we would have all been killed.

The slide had such a force that it moved a huge rock that was in back of the buildings, broke the rock in 2 pieces. I am estimating the rock to have weighed 100 tons, more or less.

I had seen a slide come down before when the bank was not so high. I was the only one in the Pit when it came. The weather was nice and dry, it came to the center of the Pit and stopped. I ran to hell out, and when I looked, it had settled. I felt foolish that I had run, but there was no one to see me, so I felt better.

NOTE: Years before, before 1900, a John Reily and Morehead, and someone else were killed in a slide in the same Pit. John Reiley was the brother of Mrs. Bart Finning.

This slide occurred on May 29, 1935, the Riley was Noel Morton Riley from the east, Mehtuen, Mass. Friends here, arranged for his burial in Foresthill.

**FOR SALE**

**FRESH EGGS  
\$3.50 A DOZEN  
CALL  
530-367-3414**