Are We No Better Off in California?

Problems, Few Solutions

Rick Massa, Manager
Orland Unit Water Users' Association
Orland, California
Orland Project History

- Authorized Under Reclamation Act of 1902
- Orland Unit Water Users’ Association Incorporated in 1907
- Construction of First Dam Commenced in 1910
- Canal Construction Began in 1908
- Project Owned, Operated and Maintained by U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Until 1954
- Operation and Maintenance Contracted By Orland Unit Water Users’ Association in 1954
Project Features

- Water Rights Held on Stony Creek
- Two Major Dams/Reservoirs--Combined Storage 100,000 acre-feet
- Two Diversion Dams on Stony Creek
- 140 Miles of Canals and Laterals In, And Around, Orland, California
- Project Serves 20,000 Acres
Orland, California

- Population in 1910 = 800
- Population in 1912 = 1,200
- Population in 1990 = 5,050
- Population in 2000 = 5,875
- Population in 2002 = 6,325
- Recent Growth Influenced by that of Chico, California located 20 Miles to the East
Chico, California

- Regional Center
- Home to California State University, Chico
- New Jobs Are Outpacing New Homes
- New Home Cost in 1999--Range from $115,000 to $125,000
- New Home Cost in 2002--Range from $175,000 to $200,000
Home Costs in Orland

- **Medium Home Price in 2001** -- $90,000 to $125,000
- **Medium Home Price in 2003** -- $135,000 to $175,000
Trends and Results

- Land Being Subdivided (600 lots tentatively mapped in, and around City)
- Encroachment on Canals & Rights-of-Way
- Canals and Laterals Deemed Health & Safety Risks by City of Orland in 1990
- Need for Solutions!
Subdivided Lands

- 747 Shareholders in **1960**
- 1,122 Shareholders in **2003** on 1,514 Parcels (13.24 acres per landowner)
- Subdivided Lands That Don’t or Can’t Take Water
Offered at $30,000 per Acre
Policies & Practices in Addressing Growth

- OUWUA’s ‘79 Resolution
- City of Orland’s 1990 General Plan
- City of Orland’s 2003 General Plan
- Glenn County Planning
OUWUA’s ‘79 Resolution

- Affects Subdivisions of Land Resulting in Parcels of 5 or Less Acres
- Imposes Severance of Water Rights from the Land
- Charge of $300 per Acre or Any Portion Thereof
- Loss of 413 Acres Since 1987
- Financial Burden to Remaining Landowner’s
City of Orland’s 1990 General Plan

- Required Developer of Land Adjacent to Orland Project Canal or Lateral to Place the Ditch in Underground Pipeline
- OUWUA and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Agreed to Allow the City to Place Ditches in Underground Pipeline--Conditioned Upon the City Providing a Hydrological Study of Underground Facilities
City of Orland’s 1990 General Plan (Continued)

- Hydrological Study Yet to be Undertaken
- OUWUA Allowed Portions of Canals to be Placed in Pipeline
- In 2000 OUWUA Ceased Allowing City to Pipeline Open Ditches Until Study is Complete
- In 2003 City Abandoned Policy
City of Orland’s 2003 General Plan

- Placement of OUWUA Ditches in Pipeline Will Be Addressed on a Case-by-Case Basis
- Recently-Approved Subdivisions not Required to “Underground” Open Ditches
- City is Still Committed to Complete the Hydrological Study as Future Road Extensions Will Require Crossing Orland Project Ditches in an Underground Fashion
Glenn County Planning

- Has Approved Subdivisions With Questionable Access
Encroachments

- Bridges
- Structures
- Turnouts
- Community Ditches
Bridges
Structures
Turnouts
Community Ditches
Problems!

- Complaints--Dust, Noise, Smell, Mosquitoes, Unsightliness, Public Access to Backyards
- Trash Dumping
- Water Disappearing
- Maintenance
- Flooding & Drainage
Solutions Are Few

- Re-direct Project Growth
- Become an M & I Supplier
- Consider Water Transfers
Questions?