

You're invited to our
100 Year Celebration!

Saturday, September 9, 2023

10am-1pm

District Headquarters

1391 Engineer St, Vista, CA 92081

**Food - Children's Activities - Information Booths
 Commemorative Items - Scavenger Hunt and more!**



1391 Engineer Street
 Vista, CA 92081
 (760) 597-3100
 FAX (760) 598-8757
www.vidwater.org

District's office hours:
 Monday through Friday
 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Vista Irrigation District
Board of Directors:

- Div. 1 Marty Miller
- Div. 2 Richard L. Vásquez
- Div. 3 Peter Kuchinsky II
- Div. 4 Patrick H. Sanchez
- Div. 5 Jo MacKenzie, President

General Manager:
 Brett Hodgkiss

Board meetings are generally held the first and third Wednesdays of each month at 9:00 a.m. at the District's office located at 1391 Engineer Street in Vista.

Vista Irrigation District is a public agency, proudly serving the City of Vista and portions of San Marcos, Escondido, Oceanside and San Diego County.

Reflections is published by Vista Irrigation District in the interest of keeping customers informed. We welcome your input.

Reflections

of Vista Irrigation District
 Summer 2023



Tunnel Bench along Vista Main Canal, 1920's and 2022

TODAY, Vista Irrigation District (also known as VID) serves water to over 134,000 customers; a century ago, it served a population of only 337 people with the majority of water going to the land. VID's first annual report, for the year 1927, tells us that after the installation of the new water tanks, planting of citrus and avocados increased so rapidly that there was danger of running out of water. This crisis coincided with the building of Henshaw Dam in 1923, which constructed in just seven months with minimal power equipment use, by the San Diego County Water Company. Completion of the dam made it possible for the Vista community to receive a reliable source of water, instead of relying on wells in the area.

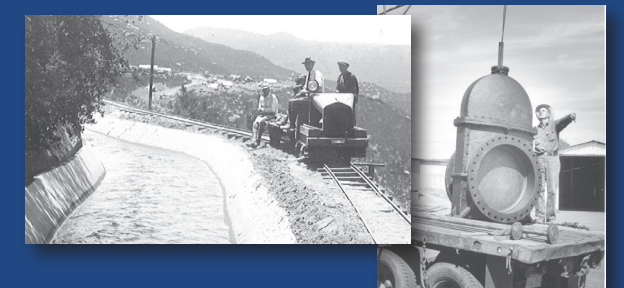
Considerable time and effort were spent in convincing some reluctant owners of the advantages and advisability of forming a district so that outside water could be obtained. An election was held on August 28, 1923, and 100% of the eligible

voters participated; the outcome of the election was 104 votes for and 4 votes against formation of VID. The San Diego County Board of Supervisors voted to officially form VID on September 11, 1923.

At its inaugural meeting on September 18, 1923, VID's Board of Directors (Board) agreed to enter into a perpetual agreement with the San Diego Water County Company to purchase water from the Lake Henshaw. Water released from Lake Henshaw had to be conveyed to and stored in Lake Wohlford, located northeast of Escondido. VID contracted with the Escondido Mutual Water Company to store water in the reservoir. From Lake Wohlford, the water still needed to be delivered to the community of Vista, and year later, in October 1924, VID's Board voted unanimously to issue \$1.7 million of bonds to finance the construction of a 12-mile long concrete flume to complete the connection between Lake Henshaw and Vista.

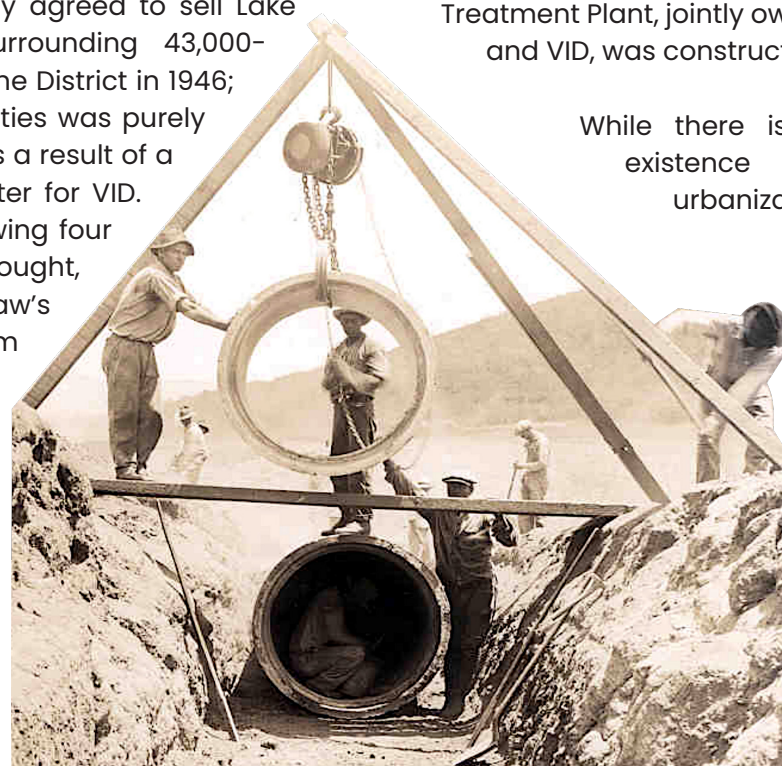
**Join us in celebrating
 100 year anniversary
 September 9th**

See details on back page



IN 1925, construction began on not only the flume, but also Pechstein Dam, five concrete reservoirs, and major pipelines that would make up the foundation of VID's water distribution network. The first water through the VID's new facilities was delivered on February 27, 1926 and people came from miles around to celebrate its arrival. This celebration also marked the start of a population boom in the Vista area, as the population doubled in size from 1927 to 1928; orange, lemon and avocados groves flourished along rolling hills and by the mid-1940s, the Vista area was renowned as the "Avocado Capital of the World", and its population had grown to well over 5,000.

After years of negotiation, the San Diego County Water Company agreed to sell Lake Henshaw and the surrounding 43,000-acre Warner Ranch to the District in 1946; purchase of these facilities was purely economic, in that, it was a result of a search for cheaper water for VID. Unfortunately, the following four years saw severe drought, reducing Lake Henshaw's storage level from 120,000 acre feet to less than 200 acre feet, and rationing was imposed for a short time. VID's Board authorized the immediate drilling of a series of wells to pump water stored in the Henshaw basin, and by 1951, 38 wells were actively



Installing Flume, 1925

pumping water into Lake Henshaw to replenish lake levels.

Drought conditions and population growth eventually caused VID to look for other sources of water. On February 16, 1954, VID became a member of the San Diego County Water Authority to take advantage of water imported from the Colorado River and Northern California.

From the 1950s to the 1970s, the community's agricultural land gave way to suburban development. The year 1955 saw a breakthrough in this agricultural community, when the first city-type, mass-built

subdivisions were started. The year 1955 also was the beginning of the decline of Vista as an avocado producing and packing center, due primarily to the collapse of the price structure (and the drought) which would continue well into the 1960's. Many groves were split into parcels, and the building of homes on these parcels and in subdivisions continued throughout this period.

In order to supply enough high quality water to meet the demands of this rapid suburban growth, VID constructed a number of substantial infrastructure projects, replacing more than 50 miles of pipeline in the 1950's and constructing three covered reservoirs in the 1960's and 1970's. The Escondido-Vista Water Treatment Plant, jointly owned by the City of Escondido and VID, was constructed in 1976.

While there is still some agriculture in existence today, since the 1970s, urbanization has overwhelmingly remained the main driver of potable water delivery in VID's service area. Current and future upgrades VID's infrastructure include mainline replacements, new reservoir construction and reservoir rehabilitations and replacing the nearly 100 year-old, 12-mile long flume. Investment in these substantial infrastructure projects will allow VID to continue to deliver a reliable supply of high quality water to its customers.

The vote of the people in 1923 revolutionized this small rural settlement inhibited by the lack of water. VID's century of service and stewardship has transformed this community from cattle grazing and dry farming to an agricultural wonderland and now into what it is today: a thriving community with a substantial business park, a professional theater production, a burgeoning micro-brew industry, and a revitalized downtown. VID has demonstrated its ability to adapt with these ever-changing landscapes over time. VID is proud of its track record over the last century and looks forward to many more successful years of service.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF VISTA IRRIGATION DISTRICT

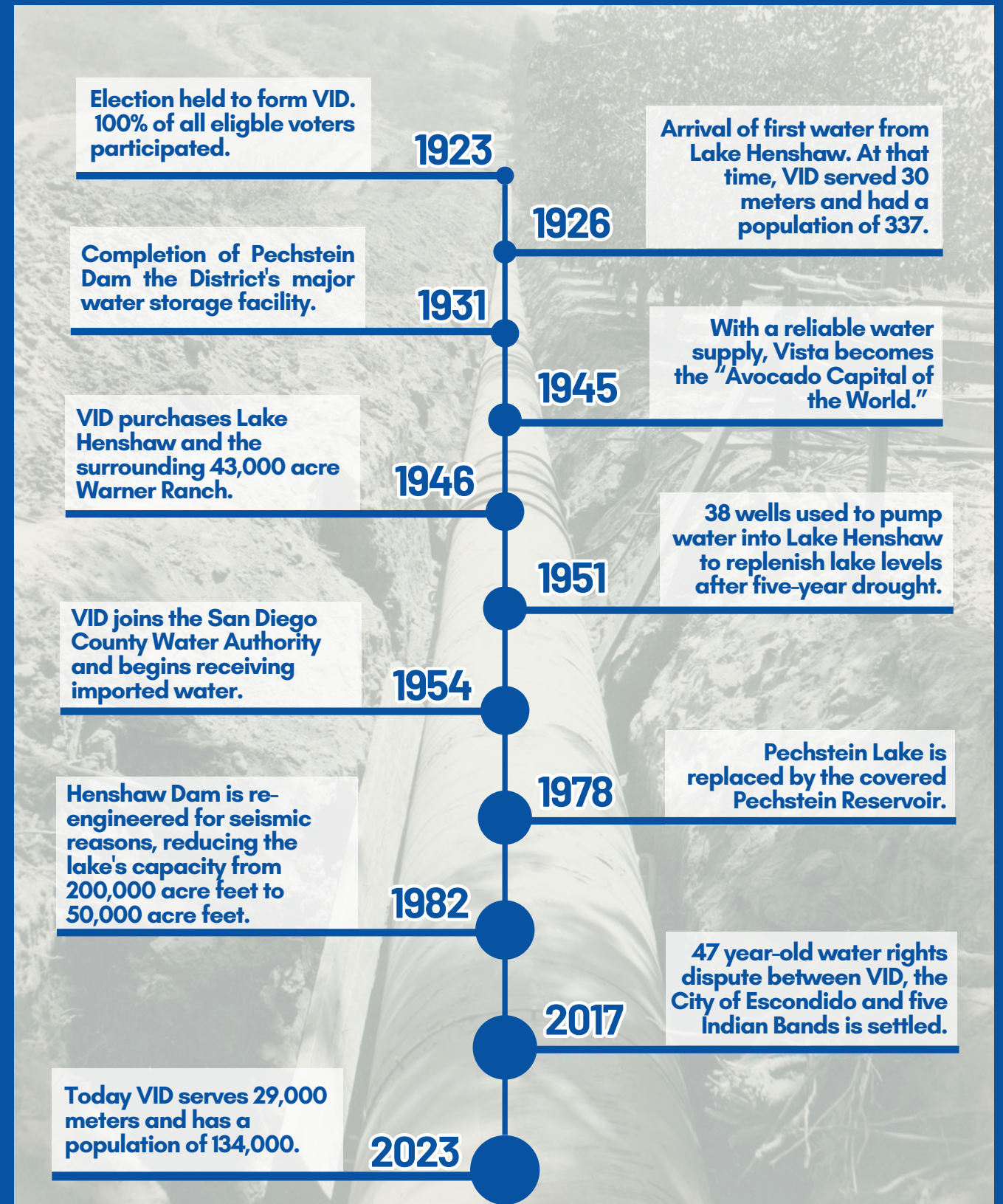


Photo of Pleasant Valley Siphon along Vista Main Canal, 1925