

Palomino Lakes Water Newsletter

March 2015

Open Board Meeting: March 29, 1:00 pm

The next Palomino Lakes Mutual Water Company Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for 1:00 PM, Sunday March 29 at our new water treatment facility (26858 River Road).

New Well and Treatment Plant Celebration: March 29, 2:00 pm

We will celebrate the completion of our new well and treatment building project after the Board of Directors meeting at 2:00 PM, Sunday March 29 at our new water treatment facility (26858 River Road). Please carpool if possible, as parking will be limited at the treatment building. After the party, for those interested, we will take an approximately mile-long hike to visit the new well and control platform.

Annual Meeting: May 16, 11:00 am

The Palomino Lakes Annual Meeting is scheduled for Saturday May 16 at the Old Crocker Inn. There are important issues to discuss and officers to elect. Please plan to attend.

Water System Improvement Project Status

Below is a quote from the April 2008 newsletter:

Many of you have asked when the new well will finally become a reality especially in view of the Russian River flow cutbacks and water restrictions ordered by the State last year...

Well, (pardon the pun) seven years later, we can finally say that this long adventure is nearly at an end. Not only are we almost ready to cutover from the old well to the new well, but the new treatment building is in place, the new controls are being tested, and other improvements have been made. Following is a description of the work and a status update by system.

Well

Below is the 2008 photo of our old well and controls platform that includes the old water treatment system.



A number of years ago, our old well was reclassified from “Groundwater” to “Groundwater under the influence of surface water”. Due to this reclassification, the State Public Health Department, specifically, the group responsible for safe drinking water, required that we either build a new well or install a new multimillion-dollar treatment facility. For a number of reasons, a new well was chosen and work began in earnest to obtain various contracts, easements, and a new loan through the USDA.

Rick Corriea spearheaded and performed most of this work and our community will forever (well, for at least the next 40 years) be indebted to him for his perseverance in securing these critical documents.



Brelje and Race was selected as our engineer due to their long-term relationship with the Water Company and their reputation for engineering excellence. Under their guidance, a new 70-foot well was drilled and tested for water quality and the test results were excellent. Below is a picture of the new well prior to addition of the piping:



Brelje and Race then developed the construction documents that were carefully and repeatedly reviewed by the Board and, most importantly, by our system operator, Lee Tolbert. The construction documents were put out to bid, but unfortunately, the bids came in higher than expected, and a second USDA Loan was obtained (for about \$80,000). Piazza Construction was selected as the General Contractor and the work began in earnest.

Below is a picture of the new well and well control platform:



The new well was tested a second time and the results were once again excellent. Cutover from the old well to the new well is expected to occur in mid-March.

New Treatment Building

The new Treatment building off of River Road contains a state-of-the-art chlorine analysis and injection system and is currently being tested extensively. The building and controls represent a huge leap in technology, reliability and cost efficiency.

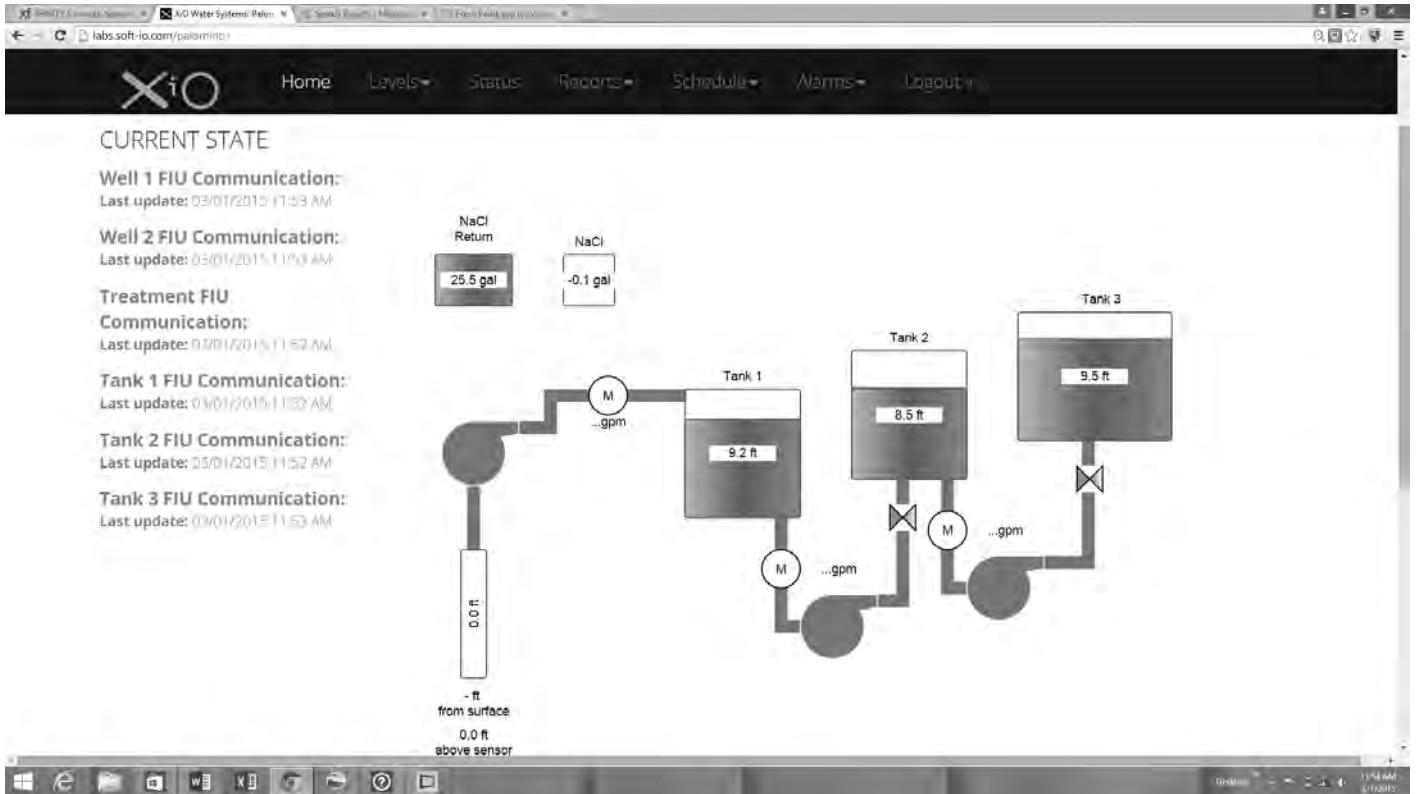


New Controls

As part of the water system improvement project, a new controls system has been installed at the new well, treatment building, and the three tank sites to replace our aged and failing system. Our old system served us for many years but the controls manufacturing company went out of business, and replacement parts and reprogramming are expensive, unreliable, and very difficult to obtain.

Very few people in our community understand the level of effort that has been required to keep our old system limping along over the last few years. However, through creative work-arounds and thinking out-of-the-box, water delivery failures were averted, thanks to the efforts of Rick Corriea, Lee Tolbert and others.

The new controls system, manufactured by XiO and installed by Bartley Pump, will revolutionize our ability to monitor the system, adjust parameters, and efficiently implement programming changes. Below is a screenshot of our new control system's home page:



Other Improvements

In addition to the work discussed above, piping improvements were made at Tank 1 to improve the flow of water down the hill in case of fire, and new piping was installed along River Road, from our existing main line to the new treatment building and then back to the main line. This new piping is notable, as an oversized pipe was specified to be installed back to the main line. This larger diameter pipe slows down the flow of water, and therefore increases the amount of time the water interacts with the injected chlorine. By increasing the contact time, the amount of chlorine can be reduced, and in fact we have already reduced the chlorine from around 4 ppm (parts per million) to 1.5 ppm. Your plants should be much happier.

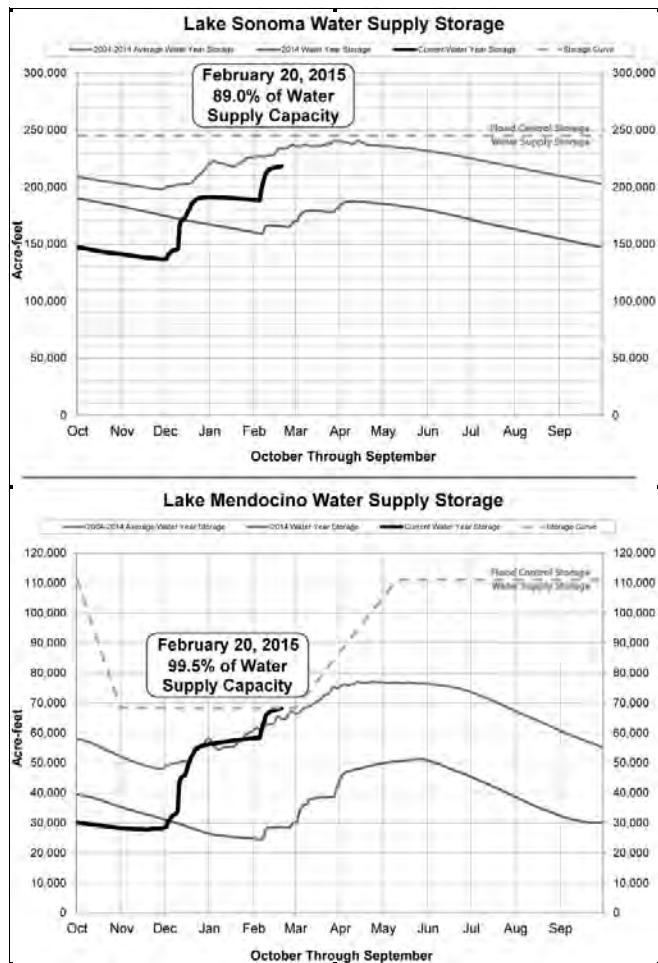
When complete (final bugs are being worked out at the time of this writing), The Water Company and our community will have at our disposal a world-class \$1.8 million well and water treatment system. We should all be very proud of the financial contributions of our community and grateful for the time invested by the Board of Directors over the past few years to get to this point. A job well done by all.

Work Party

A big thank you to the Palomino Lakes property owners who volunteered to plant the seven olive trees at the new PLMWC treatment plant site. Vegetation screening along this scenic corridor was a requirement of the Sonoma County Planning Department to secure a building final.

Drought Update

More good news! Though we have not been notified by the State Water Resources Control Board of any changes to our curtailment status, the water level in Lake Mendocino has greatly improved since last year.



We will continue with our voluntary maximum use of 275 gallons per household until we hear otherwise from the State. The community should take pride in our water saving efforts as all community members have dropped their water consumption and, with the exception of a very few, all have reduced usage to a point below the voluntary limit. A heart-felt thank you for your efforts from the Board.

We are also preparing a Source Capacity Plan as required by the State Water Resources Control Board.

Elections

Please be on the lookout for elections materials that will be sent soon; key dates are:

April 1st: Nominations Closed (they are currently open)

April 5th: Ballots Mailed

May 10th: Ballots Due

May 16th: Annual Meeting and Vote Counting

Power Supply

Please note that the Board chose to go with Sonoma Clean Power for the service to our new treatment building. We will monitor the costs over the next year and then decide whether to move our existing (well) account to Sonoma Clean Power, or opt out and have both accounts through PG&E.

Special Thank You

The Board of Directors would also like to send a special thank you to the community for the timely payment of water bills. For the third straight quarter we are showing all properties paid up to date within a few weeks of the bills being sent out. We can't overstate how grateful we are for your prompt payments; it helps a lot.



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