



PROPOSITION 218 ELECTION FAQs

1. WHY IS FID DOING A PROPOSITION 218 ELECTION?

Investing in FID through increased assessments is critical to continue the legacy of exceptional water rights, effective water conveyance, and excellent customer service to our growers and partners in the area.

2. WHAT AM I BEING ASKED TO DO?

Prop 218 elections require the support of voters – FID landowners – to invest in activities that increase water supply capture and delivery efficiency, make us drought resilient, and protect local water rights. You are being asked to vote in a special mail election to increase your investment in FID through an assessment increase.

3. WHERE WILL THE ASSESSMENT DOLLARS BE INVESTED?

Benefits of the assessment will come back into the hands of FID landowners through three key areas:

- **Surface water infrastructure projects (43%):** this includes new projects and maintenance activities on aging infrastructure to make sure water gets where it needs to go – to farms and businesses – with maximized efficiency.
- **Groundwater sustainability (40%):** this includes building new recharge basins and participation in Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) programs to keep local control over our groundwater supply and help create sustainable conditions.
- **Legal and water rights defense (17%):** this will enable FID to continue to defend our precious surface water supplies against active threats.

4. WHAT IS THE PROPOSED ASSESSMENT RATE?

FID is proposing an initial \$/acre increase in 2024 for the Water Service, Underground Water Service, Pump from Ditch, Lift Pump, and Freewater District rate classifications, with increases over time to reach a maximum in 2028. Each landowner falls into one of the rate classifications depending on how they receive their water from FID. Majority of parcels fall under the classification of “Water Service”.

RATE CLASSIFICATION		2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Water Service	Landowner receives gravity flow surface water	\$ 89.00	\$ 99.00	\$ 109.00	\$ 119.00	\$ 128.75
Underground Water Service	Landowner does not receive surface water, but benefits from District surface water recharge that offsets groundwater use	\$ 64.20	\$ 71.41	\$ 78.63	\$ 85.84	\$ 92.87
Pump from Ditch	Landowner must pump from FID canal to receive water	\$ 77.97	\$ 86.74	\$ 95.50	\$ 104.26	\$ 112.80
Lift Pump	Surface water must be pumped by FID along canals to reach landowner (no gravity flow)	\$ 102.77	\$ 114.32	\$ 125.87	\$ 137.42	\$ 148.68
Freewater District	A specific area within FID located in the Freewater County Water District that FID delivers surface water to	\$ 64.20	\$ 71.41	\$ 78.63	\$ 85.84	\$ 92.87

5. HOW DO I KNOW FID WILL USE THE ASSESSMENT FUNDS TO BENEFIT LANDOWNERS?

Throughout its 100+ year history, FID has demonstrated a commitment to agriculture, industry, cities, and communities by responding to the present and planning for the future. Over the last 20 years, FID has added key infrastructure and operations tools to the area including 395 acres of groundwater recharge and regulation basins (with plans to develop 420 additional acres in the next decade), over 50 miles of canal lining and pipelines, and more than 230 regulation and measurement sites leading to enhanced deliveries and supplies to growers. Building on the foundation of local support and investment, FID will continue to invest in the era that follows. Annually, FID produces an annual report and will provide an update on the projects/programs completed with revenues generated from the increased investment from landowners.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

6. HOW DOES THE ASSESSMENT ADD VALUE TO LANDOWNERS?

Investing in FID is an investment in your land. FID's extensive water rights directly influence high land values observed within the District. The 2022 Trend Report farm appraisal analysis illustrates thanks to surface water supply, land in FID was valued as high as \$45,000 per acre, while land in Fresno County with no district water were valued as low as \$10,000 per acre.

7. HOW WAS THE ASSESSMENT RATE DETERMINED?

A detailed independent engineering study was conducted to prepare an Engineer's Report. The Board has evaluated the proposed assessments outlined in the Engineer's Report and supports the increased investments and its benefits to FID and landowners.

8. DOES FID GENERATE REVENUE THROUGH OTHER MEANS?

FID works to generate revenue apart from Prop 218 landowner investments to continue its services through grants, water sales, and power generation. Since 2020, FID has been awarded \$4.3 million to develop groundwater recharge basins, and together with other partnering agencies more than \$2.5 million to increase capacity in Big Dry Creek channel. Since 2018 FID has received more than \$8.33 million in Federal and State grant funds to build necessary projects while keeping FID assessments as low as possible. Additionally, in dry hydrologic years, FID can sale a small portion of its available water supply at market value to willing buyers to generate funds to support the completion of capital improvement projects and to fund the general fund shortfall.

9. ARE OTHER DISTRICTS LOOKING INTO ASSESSMENT RATE INCREASES?

Nearby irrigation districts and water agencies are finding there is a need for additional revenue to maintain infrastructure and plan for the future of water management in California. Even with the proposed increased investments, FID assessments would remain some of the lowest in the Valley. Some assessments are as high as \$140 and \$246 per acre.

10. WHAT HAPPENS IF THE ELECTION FAILS?

The cost of Prop 218 election failure is:

- FID will be forced to rely more heavily on water sales to areas outside the District to meet budget shortfalls.
- A weakened position to defend FID's Kings River water rights currently under attack

- Potentially losing local control of groundwater supply and its management to the State Board
- Less maintenance, more weeds, leaks, and breaches due to less investment in existing facilities
- More major leaks and major water service disruptions due to a reduction in pipeline replacements and canal lining
- Higher staff turnover, hiring challenges, and loss of institutional knowledge compromising FID's ability to provide quality service to its landowners

11. WHAT IS NEEDED FOR THE ELECTION TO PASS?

The election will pass if a majority of the votes received are in favor of the assessment increase. Votes are weighted by acreage, correlating to the financial obligation of the affected property per acre.

12. HOW AND WHEN DO I VOTE IN THE ELECTION?

Ballots and postage pre-paid envelopes will be mailed in April to all landowners included in the assessment. To cast a vote, landowners may:

- Mail their ballots in the enclosed self-addressed envelope
- Hand deliver to the secured ballot box at the FID office, 2907 S Maple Ave., Fresno, CA 93725 OR
- Hand deliver at the Public Hearing scheduled for June 8, 2023 at 3:00 PM at the FID office

Ballots must be received prior to the conclusion of the Public Hearing. Landowners can request a replacement ballot by calling the ballot request hotline at (209) 259-6740. You can also request a replacement at the Public Hearing.

13. WHEN WILL THE ASSESSMENT TAKE EFFECT?

If the Prop 218 election passes, the new assessment rate will be set by the Board not to exceed the proposed maximum and will appear on County tax rolls in fall 2023 for calendar year 2024.

14. WHERE CAN I FIND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION?

Visit our Prop 218 webpage at www.fresnoirrigation.com/prop218 to view more information and resources, including a short video of FID General Manager Bill Stretch introducing the Prop 218, an educational handout available in multiple languages (English, Spanish, Punjabi, Hmong), and the Engineer's Report containing detailed information about the rate classifications and benefits.



WHO SHOULD I CONTACT WITH QUESTIONS?

FID staff are available for your questions. Call us at 559-233-7161 or email Prop218@fresnoirrigation.com.