

Kings River Conservation District names new general manager

By Marc Benjamin
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Paul G. Peschel has been named the Kings River Conservation District's new general manager, agency officials announced Monday.

Peschel, the planning and engineering manager for the Imperial Irrigation District Energy Department in El Centro, will begin his new job for the Fresno-based agency on Jan. 25.

Paul Peschel will take over as Kings River Conservation District general manager Jan. 25, the district announced. He replaces David Orth. Kings River Conservation District

A registered civil engineer, Peschel has a background in water resources, engineering and management. He was employed by the Imperial Irrigation District for nearly 30 years, starting as an assistant engineer for the district located in southeast California. He also has served as chief civil engineer/assistant water department manager, and executive program manager/general services manager.

During his tenure, Peschel managed capital projects and programs exceeding \$200 million annually and resource, operation and maintenance budgets up to \$10 million. Peschel was a key player for the All-American Canal Lining Project, San Diego County Water Transfer and the Imperial Irrigation District/Metropolitan Water District Transfer.

Peschel will succeed David Orth, who resigned as general manager in August after 13 years with Kings River. Orth co-chaired Gov. Jerry Brown's Drinking Water Stakeholder Group, providing recommendations for solving drinking water problems among disadvantaged communities.

Orth, 58, worked on several projects while at Kings River, a public agency formed in 1951 to manage water, power and the environment for agriculture, businesses and residents in a 1.2 million-acre swath of Fresno, Kings and Tulare counties.

He also serves on the California Water Commission. The commission is setting priorities for spending nearly \$3 billion in bond money on water storage projects. Among the contenders is Temperance Flat Dam, which would expand water storage above Millerton Lake.

Peschel, 53, holds a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from North Dakota State University and has completed academic work toward a master's degree in public administration at San Diego State University.

He is a past president of the American Society of Civil Engineers and the American Public Works Association. He has served on several key water and engineering boards, including past involvement with the Salton Sea Authority Technical Advisory Committee.

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