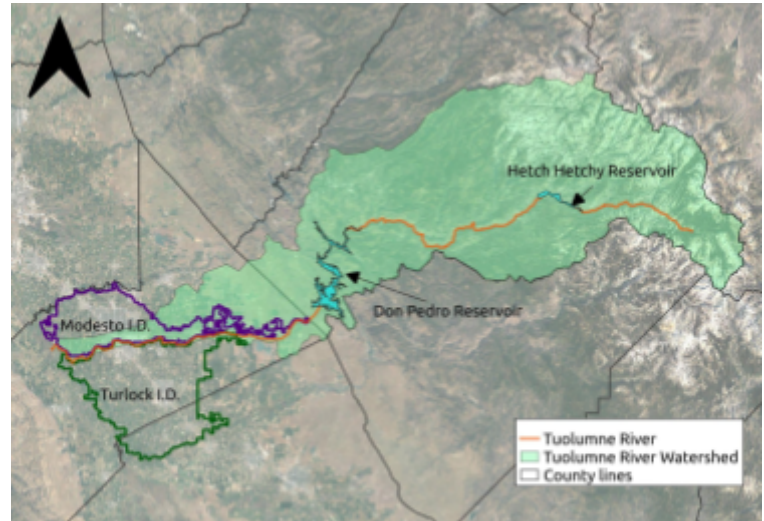


## The Value of the Tuolumne River for Agriculture

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Melted snow-pack and rain that falls on the Sierra Nevada runs off to the Tuolumne River, which flows from Yosemite National Park to the Central Valley where it meets the San Joaquin River. On its way, it supplies water for the environment, domestic use, power generation, recreational use and irrigation. There are two main reservoirs located along the river: Hetch Hetchy, used to supply clean water to the City of San Francisco, and the Don Pedro Reservoir. Don Pedro Reservoir was built by Modesto and Turlock Irrigation Districts in 1923 and later expanded in 1971 (“New Don Pedro”) with the main objective of storing water for irrigation. The reservoir has a capacity of 2,030,000 acre-feet (661 billions of gallons) and is the largest locally operated reservoir in the state (not operated by the federal or state governments).



Modesto and Turlock Irrigation Districts, located in the Central Valley, California. Don Pedro Reservoir and Hetch Hetchy Reservoir are located in the Tuolumne River and are used to store water and power generation.

After building the reservoir, the Irrigation Districts were able to store water and use it to irrigate crops during the summer when crops demand water. This change bolstered the agricultural sector in the region and the expansion of irrigated land. Water from the Tuolumne River has enabled the growth of the agricultural sector and dairy sector in the region, ranking Stanislaus County as the 5th most important county in production value in the state.<sup>1</sup> Agriculture is an important source of revenue, employment

(twenty thousand jobs per year in the county<sup>2</sup>) and fodder for dairies. Food production in this region, specifically tree nuts, supplies food throughout the U.S. and to other countries.



Almond orchard at the Fiorini Farm, Turlock, Stanislaus County.

In 2019, Turlock I.D. and Modesto I.D. harvested 194,241 acres<sup>3</sup> of various crops with an estimated total production value of \$721 Million.

The most important crop in these two districts is almonds with 85,054 acres. Almonds are followed by corn, walnuts, and irrigated pasture.

<sup>1</sup> USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service California Field Office 2021

<sup>2</sup> Employment Development Department (EED) <https://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/data/ca-agriculture.html> <sup>3</sup> Land IQ 2019 Available at: <https://data.cnra.ca.gov/dataset/statewide-crop-mapping>