

EID's Osborne on a spending spree

By Letters to the Editor - Mountain Democrat

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EDITOR: Since 2002 the El Dorado Irrigation District has spent \$750 million, squandering literally tens of millions of dollars of ratepayer money.

Preposterous? Like for what, you say? Well try more than \$50 million for start-up losses on the hydro contract with PG&E that ratepayers had to pay. Or \$50 million of unfunded retiree benefits resulting from George Osborne and the rest of EID's board voting to retroactively increase pension formulas in 2005.

Next consider that EID's Mosquito Road overhead has surged more than \$10 million annually since 2002... now including per employee \$18,500 medical plans, \$12,500 pension contributions, seven to 10 weeks paid time off, 11 IT employees, five HR employees, three PR employees and two lawyers.

Next, consider EID's 175 vehicles for 115 field personnel, \$6,000 management car allowances and the 20 engineering personnel who design and build "world class" projects, but for projects that are far more numerous and far more "world class" than EID absolutely needs or that ratepayers can afford. EID capital projects continue to require \$20 million per year of new debt... \$20 million of deficit spending, on top of the \$390 million debt it now has, and which cost you 35 percent of your EID bill.

Despite George Osborne's protests to the contrary, the foregoing sampler of excessive expenditures demonstrates that George Osborne is a spender... a chronic spender that EID's ratepayers cannot afford.

Aren't the 28 percent rate increase for 2012, after increases of 18 percent in 2010 and 15 percent in 2011, proof enough that George Osborne needs to head for retirement and take with him his ever-present "yes" votes for more EID spending?

So vote your wallet. Vote for fiscal responsibility and for new EID directors on Nov. 8.

GREG PRADA

Cameron Park