

Placer County Water Agency Pump Station Project

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Since the mid 1980s, Placer County has been one of the fastest growing regions in California. The resulting increased water demands have steadily pushed the limits of Placer County Water Agency's (PCWA) existing water deliveries to meet the needs of its customers adequately. Reclamation and PCWA are pursuing the development of a year-round water diversion facility capable of diverting up to 35,500 acre-feet annually of PCWA's water entitlements from its Middle Fork Project (MFP) on the American River.



Construction under way at the Placer County Water Agency Pump Plant in mid- 2004.

BACKGROUND

In 1965, Congress authorized construction of Auburn Dam on the North Fork of the American River near the City of Auburn. Construction began in 1967 and included a bypass tunnel through a ridge to run the river around the construction site, a cofferdam to force the river through the tunnel, and excavation for the Auburn Dam foundation. Construction was suspended in 1977 to conduct a seismic safety study that culminated in a change of design for the dam. Congress has not yet reauthorized this new design.



Before the initiation of construction of Auburn Dam, PCWA had built a 50-cubic feet per second (cfs) pump station on the North Fork American River to convey PCWA water supplies to the Auburn Ravine Tunnel for delivery to PCWA's service area. However, before PCWA's operations began, Reclamation removed the pump station in 1972 to facilitate construction of Auburn Dam. Reclamation has since installed a seasonal pump station annually as needed by PCWA to meet water supply demands.

Beginning in 1990, PCWA \ required access to its MFP water annually to meet its system demands under a variety of operating conditions. Reclamation has responded with the seasonal reinstallation and removal of PCWA's original pumps. Due to the location of the installation, the pumps have to be removed before winter each year to prevent damage due to inundation from high river flows. The seasonal pumps do not fully meet PCWA's water supply requirements, are not reliable, and have become increasingly expensive to install and maintain. The project purpose includes providing PCWA with the year-round access to its MFP water entitlements from the American River, as it had before its pumps were removed by Reclamation when Auburn Dam construction was initiated.

The Project consists of constructing a diversion and intake structure, pump station, and associated facilities including pipelines, access roads, power lines and safety features in the American River Canyon within the Auburn Dam construction area. It will also include restoring the currently de-watered river segment near Auburn which will allow for all beneficial uses of water in what is now the dewatered river channel, including recreation, navigation, and other instream uses. Additional improvements will be made to ensure safe public access near the project area. Excavation for the project will involve some 750,000 cubic yards of material. A contract will eventually transfer ownership of the facilities to PCWA, including responsibilities for operation, maintenance, and related activities for the project.

PROJECT STATUS

Reclamation has awarded a contract in the amount of \$16,974,135 to Steve Manning Construction of Redding, California, to build Phase 1 of the American River Pump Station Project. Work began in September 2003 with completion scheduled in 2007. A separate contract for Phase II of the project will be awarded in late 2005. That contract will include building an intake for the pumping station, closing the Auburn Dam diversion tunnel, as well as some additional features for public access. The goal is to have the new pumping plant functional in 2006 and the project completed in 2007.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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