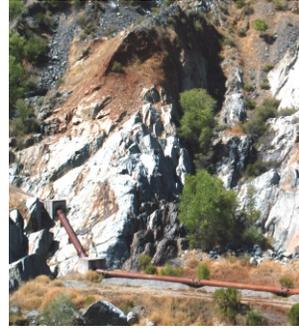




Placer County Water Agency  
Pump Station Project



Can construction and recreation coexist? Answers inside!

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# PLACER COUNTY WATER AGENCY PUMP STATION PROJECT OVERVIEW

## *All you need to know and then some!*

Since the mid 1980s, Placer County has been one of the fastest growing regions in California. Growth means the need for additional water supplies, and these increased water demands have steadily pushed the limits of Placer County Water Agency's (PCWA) ability to adequately meet the needs of its customers. Today, the Bureau of Reclamation and PCWA are jointly 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.

## Background

Congress authorized construction of Auburn Dam on the North Fork of the American River near the City of Auburn way back in 1965. Construction began in 1967 and included building a diversion 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.



suspended in 1977 to conduct a seismic safety study that resulted in a change of design for the dam. Congress has not yet reauthorized this new design.

Before construction of Auburn Dam had begun, PCWA had built a 50 cubic feet per second (cfs) pump station on the North Fork of the American River to convey PCWA water supplies to the Auburn Ravine Tunnel for delivery to PCWA's service area. But before PCWA's operations began, Reclamation removed the pump station in 1972 to make way for construction of Auburn Dam.

Beginning in 1990, PCWA required access to its MFP water annually to meet its growing system demands. Reclamation responded with the seasonal reinstallation and removal of the original pumps. Due to the location of the installation, the pumps have to be removed before winter each year to prevent damage due to flooding from high river flows. Today, the seasonal pumps don't fully meet PCWA's water supply requirements, they aren't reliable, and have become increasingly expensive to install and maintain.



Site of the PCWA Pump Station

## The Project

The purpose of the Pump Station Project is to provide PCWA with the year-round access to its water entitlements from the American River, as it had before its pumps were removed by Reclamation when Auburn Dam construction began.

The Project consists of constructing a diversion/intake structure, and a pump station. The diversion/intake structure diverts water into a pump chamber where it will then be pumped uphill to the Auburn Ravine tunnel. The Project also includes building associated facilities such as pipelines, access roads, power lines, and safety features in the American River Canyon within the Auburn Dam construction area.

The Project will also include restoring water to the currently dry river segment near Auburn that will allow for recreation, navigation, and other uses. Additional work will be performed to ensure public safety access near the Project area (see story "Recreation Following Project" for details).

A contract will eventually transfer ownership of the pump plant facilities to PCWA, including responsibilities for operation, maintenance, and related activities for the Project.

## What's Next?

Work on Phase 1 of the PCWA Pump Station Project is expected to begin in September 2003 with completion scheduled in 2005. A separate contract for Phase 2 of the project will be awarded in 2004. That contract will include building an intake for the pumping station, closing the Auburn Dam diversion tunnel, as well as some additional features for safe public access.

**An acre-foot  
of water is  
just that! -** 

**the amount of water  
needed to cover an acre  
of land a foot deep.  
That's the amount of  
water a typical family of 4  
needs to supply all of its  
needs for about a year.  
Put another way, it's  
325,900 gallons, or 43,560  
cubic feet.**



The Auburn Dam diversion tunnel

## Traffic, Dust, & Noise? Oh No!

As with any construction project, nearby neighbors will be concerned about additional traffic due to the Placer County Water Agency Pumping Plant Project construction, and dust and noise from construction activities. While these issues can't be completely eliminated, Reclamation and the contractor are working hard to minimize them.

### Traffic

There will be two types of traffic on roads leading into the Project area that will increase because of Project construction. One of those will be construction workers going to and leaving the Project area, and the other will be materials and supplies being delivered to the site.

At any one time there will be no more than 30 to 40 construction workers on the Project, and their driving on local roads will not add much additional traffic. Truck traffic on local roads will be more noticeable at the Project's be-

ginning and ending, when equipment is moved in and moved out, and when deliveries are taking place throughout the Project. There will be concrete deliveries, road base (gravel), asphalt, and steel deliveries, as well as other supplies being delivered. However, deliveries will not take place every day during the entire Project. They will be spread throughout the Project as particular construction activities are accomplished. Most deliveries will be made using Indian Hill Road, Auburn-Folsom Road, and Maidu Drive, a wide two-lane road designed and built by Reclamation to be the access route to Auburn Dam. Trucks using this road will stop at intersections that are controlled by stop signs or lights. Transport of excavated materials will not take place over public roads.

### Dust

It's everywhere, but what could produce more dust than a construction project? At least on this Project, dust control measures will be strictly enforced.

The general construction area is within rock formations, so not too much dust will be produced. To avert the possibility of any worker or public exposure, dust monitoring will be on going during earth moving activities. Have you ever been to a construction site and seen a worker spraying the area with water. You get the picture.

## Noise

Trucks, bulldozers, drilling, blasting. Enough construction noise to give you a migraine? Well, there will be some drilling and blasting during the construction of the pump station pad, the access road, and reconstruction of the river channel. But given the distance to the canyon rim and the natural sound barriers present (trees), most potential noise problems should be eliminated. In addition, all of those loud bulldozers and other equipment are required to have mufflers installed. And construction noise will be monitored by sensitive noise receptors on the canyon rim.

When Phase 2 is completed and limited vehicle access is provided into the canyon there will be some traffic increase. River access will be provided through a check in/check out booth operated by the State Department of Parks and Recreation, located near the gated entrance to Project roads.

### Interesting Water Fact!



Reclamation's Shasta Dam holds back the largest reservoir in California -- 4.5 million-acre feet of water! That's 1,466,550,000,000 gallons (1 Trillion, 466 Billion, 550 Million gallons) Gulp!

## Impacts During Construction Mild to Moderate

Federal lands in the American River Canyon are widely known for their natural beauty, attracting many people to enjoy varied public uses, such as hiking, bicycle riding, boating, fishing, horse riding, and others. With construction about to begin on the Project, some changes are in store for those who use the area for recreation, mostly for their own protection.

Currently, there is no public vehicle access into the canyon from the Auburn or Cool sides of the Auburn Dam Site. This policy will remain unchanged during construction.

The public is now allowed to hike, ride mountain bikes, and ride horseback on Federal project roads and trails. During construction, hiking, mountain biking, and equestrian activities will be accommodated to the greatest extent possible in light of the particular construction activity taking place. At all times, public safety will be paramount. For instance, a hiking trail currently crosses the American River at the cofferdam near the Project construction site. There will be periods of time when the trail

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PWCA's seasonal pumps will be replaced



*Project area trails have many uses*

crossing the dry river channel will have to be closed to public use during construction, scheduled to end in 2005.

One of the biggest recreation-related changes the Project will make will be putting the North Fork of the American River back into its historic channel. When Auburn Dam was being built in the early 1970s, a diversion tunnel was bored through a nearby hillside, and a cofferdam was built, forcing the river to flow through the tunnel and leaving a stretch of the downstream riverbed dry. There has been no boating through the area since that time, but occasionally people take tubes or rafts through the diversion tunnel, a dangerous activity that is not condoned.

People who want to try their luck to score a fish from the river can keep casting those lines; construction activity will cause no change to any fishing activity that now takes place. People who want to camp in the area don't have the same privilege: there is no camping allowed now and there will be none allowed after construction is complete.

## Recreation Following Project Change is in the Wind

The Project promises some changes to those seeking to use the canyon for recreation. The changes will be made for health, safety, resource protection, and fire prevention purposes.

Recreation use in the Project area is currently limited to trail uses (hiking, mountain biking and horseback riding) within the bounds of the Auburn Dam construction area. Boating and swimming are prohibited one-half mile upstream of the bypass tunnel inlet and one-half mile downstream of the bypass tunnel outlet. There currently are no provisions for vehicular access to the river in this area.

To promote public safety and resource protection, a gated entrance and staffed booth at Maidu Drive will be built, and parking areas and sanitation facilities (trash containers and restrooms) will be built for public health and safety purposes.

Once the North Fork of the American River is put back into its natural channel following closure of the Auburn Dam diversion tunnel, the area will be open to non-motorized river uses, including canoes, kayaks, and rafts. Two take-out areas to enable rafters and boaters to remove their equipment from the river will be developed in the Project area, a main take-out near the Auburn Dam site and another one downstream at Oregon Bar.

A vehicle turnaround area will be provided for loading and unloading near the main take-out area. Boater and other river users using the turnaround area would be able to drop off and pick up equipment at this location, but would need to park at a 50-vehicle parking lot at the former concrete batch plant site downstream of the main take-out area. The existing road from the batch plant parking site to the main take-out area will be used for access to the riverside turn around area.

The Oregon Bar take-out area, downstream of the batch plant parking area, will be accessed by a continuation of the existing road from the batch plant site to the main take-out area. A trail is also being planned from the batch plant parking area to the Oregon Bar take-out area.

The California Department of Parks and Recreation, responsible for management of recreation activities within the Auburn State Recreation Area, will improve the existing parking area located outside of the gate at the Maidu Drive entrance to the Project area to provide limited parking for trail users who want to access the trails when the river access area is closed, and to minimize the potential for recreation-related parking along Maidu Drive.

The closure of the Auburn Dam diversion tunnel and restoring the North Fork of the American River to its historic channel will result in loss of the Auburn-to-Cool Trail, which currently for

crosses the dewatered portion of the river. Many trail users (equestrians, mountain bikers, hikers, and runners) use the trail. Reclamation, PCWA, and California Department of Parks and Recreation are in the early stages of a plan to eventually construct a new river crossing, should that alternative be chosen to make up for loss of the Auburn-to-Cool trail.



## Talk to Us!

**We want to hear what you think of the Placer County Water Agency Pump Station Project.**

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[www.usbr.gov/mp/ccao/index.html](http://www.usbr.gov/mp/ccao/index.html)