

# RECLAMATION

*Managing Water in the West*

## CENTRAL VALLEY PROJECT'S NEW MELONES DAM, RESERVOIR AND POWERPLANT



New Melones Dam, 625-feet high and 1,560-feet long, is an earth and rockfill embankment dam on the Stanislaus River, about 5 miles west of Jamestown, Calif., in the Sierra Nevada Foothills. The dam, constructed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, provides flood control, irrigation, power, wildlife and fishery enhancement, recreation and water quality benefits. After completion in 1978, the facilities were transferred to the Bureau of Reclamation.



Built in the 1920s, this PG&E powerplant generated electricity from the original Melones Dam. The New Melones Dam now towers hundreds of feet above it. The building is still owned by PG&E and is used as a storage unit.



The beautiful green stone that was removed to construct the spillway is now part of the earth and rockfill dam.



This 8-foot-diameter penstock delivers water to the generators at the New Melones Powerplant which produces enough electricity to power 72,000 homes annually.



This is a look inside one of the penstocks at New Melones Powerplant. As the water flows through the penstocks to the generators, it produces hydroelectric power for industry and residential areas.



The reservoir has a 2,400,000 acre-feet capacity with a surface area of 12,500 acres. Recreation includes fishing, camping, boating and other activities as part of the lake's Glory Hole and Tuttletown recreation areas.



One of the highest reservoir bridges in the United States at 450 feet, the 550-foot-long Archie Stevenot Bridge was built in 1976. The bridge allows traffic on Route 49 to cross the Stanislaus River and New Melones Lake into California's Gold Country area.



Visitors to New Melones Lake will often see osprey flying overhead or perched atop their nests. Ospreys' feet are uniquely designed for catching fish; two toes extend forward and two backward. The soles are heavily scaled to help clamp tightly onto slippery fish, which make up to 98 percent of their diet.



The picnic areas at New Melones provide BBQ pits and tables, some of which are accessible to individuals who use wheelchairs. Additionally, certain campgrounds are designed to accommodate individuals with disabilities, offering raised platforms that enable those who use wheelchairs to transfer from their chair onto the raised platform without assistance. Several hiking trails also provide wheelchair access.