



Stampede Dam and Reservoir

Overview

Stampede Dam and Reservoir are part of the Bureau of Reclamation's Washoe Project, located on the Little Truckee River in Sierra County, California, about 11 miles northeast of Truckee. The dam helps manage water for environmental, recreational, and municipal uses throughout the Truckee River Basin.

Completed in 1970, the facility plays a vital role in regulating streamflow and supporting downstream ecosystems, particularly for fish and wildlife conservation. Stampede is one of several key reservoirs in the region, working in conjunction with nearby Boca and Prosser reservoirs.

- ✓ Location: near Truckee, CA
- ✓ Impounds: Little Truckee River
- ✓ Creates: Stampede Reservoir
- ✓ Total Capacity: 226,610 acre-feet
- ✓ Part of: Washoe Project
- ✓ Built: 1966-1970
- ✓ Type: Earthfill
- ✓ Size: 239-ft high; 1,511-ft long

to support fish spawning and migration, especially during dry periods. The dam also provides supplemental flood control and augments municipal and industrial supplies downstream. Stampede does not supply water for irrigation directly but supports broader water management goals under the [Truckee River Operating Agreement](#).

Stampede Reservoir is a popular outdoor destination offering boating, fishing, camping, hiking, and wildlife viewing. Access roads are open seasonally, and water levels vary based on annual snowpack and operational needs.

Operations

The reservoir is operated primarily to enhance and sustain instream flows for fishery purposes in coordination with the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Stampede helps deliver consistent water releases



The end result of the 2018 Safety of Dams Modification Project, which strengthened the dam's embankment and raised the dam crest by 11.5 feet to improve seismic stability and reduce flood risk.



Stampede Dam, nestled in the Sierra Nevada near Truckee, California, helps store water for fishery enhancement, recreation, and water supply reliability in the Truckee River Basin.

Safety Improvements

In 2018, Reclamation completed the [Stampede Dam Safety of Dams Modification Project](#), strengthening the dam's embankment and raising the dam crest by 11.5 feet to improve seismic stability and reduce flood risk to downstream communities. In addition to the raise, this project constructed a mechanically stabilized earth wall over the dam and dike and two small earthen dikes in low-lying areas on the south rim of the reservoir. These updates ensure the dam remains reliable and safe for future generations.



View of upstream face of Stampede Dam showing 11.5 foot high crest raise

Stampede Dam Powerplant

Construction of Stampede Dam Powerplant began in 1986 and became operational in 1988. The powerplant was built by [Truckee Meadows Water Authority](#) (TMWA) under a Lease of Power Privilege Agreement with Reclamation. The agreement allows TMWA, a municipal water utility serving the Reno-Sparks area, to finance, construct, and operate the hydroelectric facility on the federal facility while Reclamation retains ownership of the dam itself.



Stampede Reservoir is a hotspot for boating, fishing, and camping adventures.



The end result of the 2018 Safety of Dams Modification Project, which strengthened the dam's embankment and raised the dam crest by 11.5 feet to improve seismic stability and reduce flood risk.

The project was developed as a way to generate renewable energy from environmental water releases that were already required for fish and wildlife purposes. The powerplant was designed to have no impact on water rights, storage operations, or endangered species flow requirements. Approximately 3.65 megawatts are generated by the powerplant providing energy for about 3,000 homes.



The spillway at Stampede Dam underwent significant modifications to enhance its capacity to handle extreme flood events