

MP Region Public Affairs, 916-978-5100, <http://www.usbr.gov/mp>, May 2017

## Mid-Pacific Region, Orland Project

### History

The Orland Project, in California, is located in the Sacramento Valley about 100 miles north of Sacramento. The project is one of the oldest federal projects in Reclamation, and one of the first undertaken in California. It was authorized by the Secretary of the Interior in October 1907. Water was delivered from East Park Dam to the first farm units at the beginning of the 1910 growing season.

The Orland Project comprises two main dams to store water, East Park and Stony Gorge, two diversion dams, almost 17 miles of canals, and 139 miles of laterals. Rainbow Diversion Dam and Northside Diversion Dam are the main diversion structures.



East Park Dam and Reservoir

### East Park Dam and Reservoir

East Park Dam is on Little Stony Creek in Glen County about 33 miles southwest of the town of Orland. The reservoir has a

storage capacity of 50,900 acre-feet and stores surplus water for irrigation purposes. The dam is a curved, concrete thick-arch gravity structure. East Park Dam was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in the mid-1980s.

### Stony Gorge Dam and Reservoir

Stony Gorge Dam, completed in 1928, is on Stony Creek about 18 miles downstream from East Park Dam and 20 miles west of the town of Willows in western Glenn County. Construction was completed in 1928. The reservoir has a storage capacity of 50,380 acre-feet and stores surplus water for irrigation purposes. The dam is a concrete slab and buttress structure.



Stony Gorge Dam and Reservoir

A study conducted in 2001 found that a large earthquake could cause the vertical concrete buttresses that support the dam to buckle, possibly leading to subsequent dam leakage or collapse. Construction of structural modifications began in

January 2007 and was completed in January 2009. The dam modifications consisted of building a concrete wall and additional supports between the vertical buttresses to provide increased stability during a possible earthquake.

## **Rainbow Diversion Dam**

Rainbow Diversion Dam is on Stony Creek about three miles west of the town of Stonyford. The dam's function is to divert part of the high water flows of Stony Creek into the 7-mile long East Park Feed Canal and then into East Park Reservoir to supplement the natural flow into that Reservoir.

## **Northside Diversion Dam**

Northside Diversion Dam is on Stony Creek about five miles northwest of Orland. Its function is to divert water into the headworks of the North Canal.

## **Canal and Distribution System**

The canal and distribution system were designed to deliver water directly to each 40-acre unit in the project. The system contains 16.9 miles of canals, 117.6 miles of laterals, and about 2,000 concrete control structures.

## **Operating Agency**

The Orland Unit Water Users Association has operated the project since October 1, 1954.

## **Construction**

Construction of East Park Dam was started on August 27, 1908, and completed in 1910. Northside Diversion Dam was built during the same period. Rainbow Diversion Dam and East Park Feed Canal were constructed in 1913-1915 when it was determined that insufficient water was being stored for project use. Stony Gorge Dam was started in 1926 and finished in October 1928.

## **Recreation**

East Park and Stony Gorge Reservoir areas provide campgrounds, including trailer space, picnicking areas, swimming, boating, and fishing, primarily for bluegill and largemouth bass. Reclamation manages the recreation facilities at Stony Gorge Reservoir and has a contract with Colusa County for administration of recreation at East Park Reservoir.