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Mid-Pacific Region, Red Bluff Pumping Plant and Fish Screen

Background

The Red Bluff Pumping Plant and Fish Screen were completed in August 2012 to replace the Red Bluff Diversion Dam and improve fish passage conditions on the Sacramento River at Red Bluff, Calif. The facility includes a 1,118-foot-long flat-plate fish screen, intake channel, 2,500 cubic-feet-per-second (cfs) capacity pumping plant and discharge conduit to divert water from the Sacramento River into the Tehama-Colusa and Corning canals.

As designed, the diversion dam formed Lake Red Bluff and diverted water to the canals by gravity. However, the diversion dam also created a barrier to migrating fish, some of which are listed under the Endangered Species Act.

In 2011, the dam gates were permanently placed in the open position for free migration of fish while ensuring continued water deliveries by way of the Red Bluff Pumping Plant.

Jointly constructed through a partnership undertaken by Reclamation and the Tehama-Colusa Canal Authority, the Pumping Plant is operated and maintained by TCCA through an agreement with Reclamation, and provides water to the 17-member water districts throughout a four-county service area.

Project Benefits

The pumping plant:

- Allows the Red Bluff Project to be operated in a manner that allows unimpeded upstream and downstream passage for five runs of listed salmon species and the green sturgeon.
- Alleviates a long-standing fish passage concern.
- Provides irrigation water to approximately 150,000 acres of high-value cropland with an economic benefit of an annual average of over $1 billion.
- Provides 2,000 cfs initially, with capability for adding pumps to deliver 2,500 cfs, which is the full capacity of the canals.

Red Bluff Pumping Plant and Fish Screen

Budget Information

The Department of the Interior allocated $113 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding, the largest single outlay of ARRA funds in Reclamation. Additionally, the State of California provided $12 million. The total project cost is $180 million.