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## Mid-Pacific Region, Washoe Project

### Background

The Washoe Project comprises the drainage basins of the Truckee and Lower Carson Rivers. The project covers an area in West-Central Nevada that includes the cities of Reno, Sparks and Fallon, and the town of Fernley. The project also covers a small portion of East Central California in the vicinity of Lake Tahoe, including the cities of Truckee, Tahoe City, and South Lake Tahoe. The project was designed to improve the regulation of runoff from the Truckee and Lower Carson River systems. It also provides fishery uses, flood protection, fish and wildlife benefits, and recreation development.

The project was authorized by Public Law 858 on August 1, 1956, as amended August 21, 1958, by Public Law 85-706. The Watasheamu Division of the project, intended to develop the Carson River Basin above Lahontan Dam, was de-authorized in 1990 under Public Law 101-618. The Stampede Division of the project was constructed and its principal features include:

### Prosser Creek Dam and Reservoir

Prosser Creek Dam and Reservoir are located on Prosser Creek approximately 1.5 miles above the confluence of Prosser Creek and the Truckee River. The dam is a zoned earthfill structure, and the reservoir has a capacity of 29,800 acre-feet. Up to 20,000 acre-feet of this amount is required for flood control purposes from November through June. Water stored in the reservoir is used in

an exchange of releases with Lake Tahoe to improve fishery flows in the Truckee River.



Prosser Creek Dam and Reservoir

### Stampede Dam and Reservoir

Stampede Dam and Reservoir are located on the Little Truckee River immediately below the mouth of Davies Creek and approximately eight miles above the confluence of the Little Truckee and Truckee Rivers. The dam is a zoned earthfill structure; and, the reservoir has a capacity of 226,610 acre-feet. The dam provides flood control, recreation, a reservoir for fishery, and a supplemental water supply to improve spawning habitat conditions on the Lower Truckee River for endangered or threatened Pyramid Lake fish.

### Stampede Powerplant

The Stampede Powerplant is part of Stampede Dam. The powerplant has a total capacity of 3.65-megawatts at a rated head of 183-feet. It is designed as a run-of-the-river facility with two hydro-generators. The small hydro-generator is a 650-kilowatt (kW) unit and produces power during low flows. The larger hydro-generator is a 3,000-

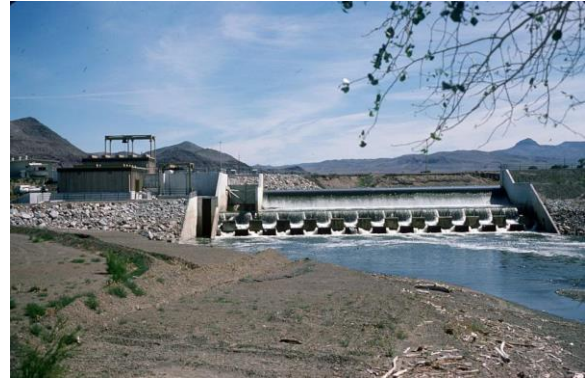
kW unit and can be brought online to take advantage of larger flows. The power generated at Stampede is transmitted into Nevada Energy's power grid and is marketed by the Western Area Power Administration.



Stampede Dam and Reservoir

## **Marble Bluff Dam and Pyramid Lake Fishway**

Marble Bluff Dam and Pyramid Lake Fishway, completed in 1975, are in the Pyramid Lake Paiute Reservation on the Truckee River about 3.5 miles upstream from Pyramid Lake. The dam is a zoned earthfill structure and checks headward downcutting of the river channel, halting erosion of lands on the Pyramid Lake Paiute Reservation. In addition, the dam serves as a heading for flows through the Pyramid Lake Fishway, which allows fish to migrate past the Truckee River delta during low lake levels and low flows. The fishway extends from Marble Bluff Dam about three miles to Pyramid Lake, and has a capacity of 50 cubic feet per second.



Marble Bluff Fish Passage Facility aids in the spawning migration of cui-ui

## **Construction**

Construction of Prosser Creek Dam, the initial feature of the Washoe Project, began in May 1960 and was completed in November 1962. Work began in early November 1966 on the Stampede Dam and Reservoir and was completed in February 1970. Marble Bluff Dam and Pyramid Lake Fishway construction work was started in December 1973 and completed in October 1975. The Stampede Power Plant was completed in 1987.

## **Benefits**

### **Fishery Water Supply**

Water supply from the Washoe Project is providing for fishery purposes in the lower Truckee River Basin. The fishery water supplements flows in the river below Derby Dam in periods of low runoff to help maintain stream conditions and augment Pyramid Lake Fishway flows that enable Pyramid Lake fish to spawn in the lower Truckee River.