

April 2, 2004

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Auburn - With good water content in the mountain snowpack, the Placer County Water Agency expects to have sufficient water this year to meet the needs of all customers, including agricultural water users in western Placer's Zone 5.

The water availability assessment was offered Thursday (Apr. 1) by PCWA General Manager David Breninger at a regular biweekly meeting of the PCWA Board of Directors.

Snow surveys taken Tuesday (Mar. 30) on watersheds above PCWA's Hell Hole and French Meadows reservoirs showed a water content of about 90 percent of the long-term Apr. 1 average reported PCWA Power System Manager Steve Jones.

The good water content is due to wet early and mid-winter conditions; the month of March was dry and the warmest on record, leading to early runoff, Jones noted.

PCWA's major reservoirs, Hell Hole and French Meadows, are expected to be near capacity by late May. Hell Hole is projected to fill to its 207,000 acre-foot capacity by late May and French Meadows should be within 10,000 acre-feet of its 135,000-acre-foot capacity, Breninger added.

Water from Hell Hole and French Meadows powers PCWA's Middle Fork American River Hydroelectric Project and is pumped from the American River in the summer months to water users in western Placer County. Water will be available year-around when the current American River Pump Project is completed in 2005.

Most PCWA water users are supplied with water from the Yuba and Bear river

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watersheds delivered to PCWA through the PG&E canal system. Reservoirs in these areas are also expected to be at or near capacity.

PCWA Field Services Director Mike Nichol said he is projecting total water deliveries this year of 115,000 acre-feet, the most since the record year of 1999-2000 when the agency supplied 107,000 acre-feet.

In a related matter, the Board of Directors declared that up to 17,700 acre-feet of water would be available to agricultural water customers in Zone 5 west of Lincoln. The water is delivered from several sources including PCWA, PG&E, Nevada Irrigation District and South Sutter Water District.

In other business, directors:

- voted to retain the certified public accounting firm of Gilbert Associates, Inc. of Sacramento as the agency's auditor. The firm was represented at the meeting by Peggy A. Vande Vooren, CPA.

- discussed a lengthy list of new water system improvements for existing Zone 1 that will be needed over the coming 25 years to meet the needs of projected growth in both unincorporated and incorporated communities in Placer County. There was considerable discussion on how to finance the work. The Board referred the matter for further study to the Budget Committee.

- nominated District 1 Director Pauline Roccucci of Roseville for election as a special district representative on the Placer Local Agency Formation Commission (this action was taken during adjourned session on Wednesday, Mar. 31).

The regular board meeting was adjourned in honor of two longtime Placer County journalists who died this week. Tom Homer was editor of the Colfax Record and Jim Janssen was a reporter with the Roseville Press-Tribune.

The next meeting of the PCWA Board of Directors will be held on Monday, Apr. 19, at 2:00 p.m. at a location to be determined in West Placer County.