



NEWS RELEASE

Placer County Water Agency

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Larry Corsini Recognized for 40 Years with PCWA

Foresthill - Friends and fellow workers gathered Tuesday morning (May 9) to honor Foresthill resident Larry Corsini on the 40th anniversary of his employment with the Placer County Water Agency.

The honors were afforded at the PCWA Power System office in Foresthill, where Corsini has been based as a Senior Operator with the PCWA Middle Fork American River Hydroelectric Project.

Corsini, who joined the agency May 9, 1966, is the only remaining member of the original crew of the Middle Fork Project. He has been a Foresthill resident throughout his PCWA career.

Construction of the \$115 million Middle Fork Project was nearly complete when Corsini, a Boston area native arrived from Idaho to take a position as a hydroelectric systems operator. He came to the area following a six-year stint as a power operator in Idaho Falls.

When Corsini came aboard, complicated water right issues were still being settled, project construction was wrapping up, and the new crew was preparing for acceptance testing which commenced in fall 1966. The project was dedicated in the spring of 1967.

Now, four decades later, PCWA is seeking to renew the 50-year federal license it

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was granted in 1963 for the Middle Fork American River Project. The water agency built the project in 1963-67 and must renew its license by 2013.

The publicly-owned water and hydroelectric power project includes four reservoirs, seven dams and five hydroelectric power plants. The project stores 342,000 acre-feet of water and generates an average 1 million megawatt-hours of energy per year. It is operated with a crew of 17 from the PCWA Power System office in Foresthill.

One of four original operators, Corsini says that while much has changed and improved, basic operation of the power system is much the same. Demand for power production is set through the Pacific Gas & Electric Company Drum Division, with PCWA setting its flows and output accordingly. Water flows and power production schedules are influenced by weather and costs of other forms of power and based on forecasts using snow depth water content, watershed size and runoff characteristics and other factors. Corsini has seen many advances in these practices. "All water use impacts those downstream," he says.

Through his 40-year career, Corsini has seen drought and flood, blinding snowstorms, erosion, slides, washed out roads and threatened facilities. "There have been times when our main objective was to save the project," he says.

As weather changes, so does PCWA power production. In a drought year, for example, production might total only a third of normal, while in a wet year it might almost double to the 1.8 million megawatt-hours level of both 1982 and 1983.

The biggest changes Corsini has seen in his long career are advances in computerization and record-keeping, better equipment, better and safer working conditions and better training.

The biggest challenges have always been the annual fall maintenance outages when much work must be completed in as short a time as possible. The planned outages last two to four weeks each year. "There's a lot involved," Corsini says. "You have to plan, disseminate information, coordinate with all the agencies and crews, see that they work safely and keep everything on schedule.

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Mother Nature, of course, provides challenges to men who work in the mountains. “The rain, the snow, the trees falling into canals and the log jams at our dams. Sometimes everything is buried; we’ve had up to 15 feet of snow at French Meadows.”

Corsini and his wife, Sharon, raised three children in Foresthill, Tina, Keri and Larry, all graduates of Placer High School. The couple now enjoys nine grandchildren, who are spread between Oregon, Idaho and Mexico.

Corsini says he has totally enjoyed his four decades with the water agency, the work he has performed and the friendships he has made.

“I’ve worked in a remote area but there has always been a lot of interaction with other people,” he says. “I’ve enjoyed working with our people and with people from other agencies. I’ve always tried to be a people person.”

As an employer, PCWA is number-one in Corsini’s book. “It has been an excellent place to work; the opportunity of a lifetime for me. I’ve been able to live and raise a family in a beautiful small town in the forest and clean air. I have to laugh when I hear the traffic reports on the radio.”