



PLACER COUNTY WATER AGENCY
SINCE 1957
BUSINESS CENTER
144 Ferguson Road
MAIL
P.O. Box 6570
Auburn, CA 95604
PHONE
530.823.4860
530.823.4960 - fax
WWW.PCWA.NET

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Contact: David A. Breninger, (530) 823-4860

or: Dave Carter, (530) 265-NEWS

AUBURN-- The interconnected water systems of the Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) and the Nevada Irrigation District (NID) proved to be very valuable during the 49 Fire in North Auburn, it was reported Thursday (Sept. 3).

The PCWA Board of Directors on Thursday afternoon heard a briefing from staff on the agency's response to the fire that broke out on Aug. 30, destroying 63 homes and burning 343 acres.

NID General Manager Ron Nelson also appeared at the board meeting to thank PCWA for its support during the emergency. "The cooperation and good planning we've had over the years really paid off," Nelson said. "It could have been much worse."

NID's North Auburn Water Treatment Plant on Locksley Lane was in the direct path of the fire. Although the plant suffered only minor surrounding landscape damage, the fire knocked out power to the site. NID had to rely on generator power which limited output to about 50 percent of capacity.

Bryant Newcomb, PCWA's safety and risk administrator, said that in response to NID's call for mutual aid, the water agency opened two water system interties to keep water flowing through the North Auburn service area. He said about 2 million gallons of water flowed to the area during a 24-hour emergency period.

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PCWA Treated Water Supt. Dave Kephart credited the canal operations and water treatment staffs for coordinated efforts throughout the water delivery system. He thanked the Board of Directors for providing staff with the resources necessary for effective emergency response.

General Manager David Breninger noted that at no time during the fire was there a serious loss of water supply or pressure. "This is one of those quietly-done, yet critically important tasks performed by two very public-minded water utilities to help their citizens," he said.

In other business, directors:

- approved a \$16,500 partnership grant to the Placer Nature Center to help underwrite watershed education programs for youth. The funding will support an estimated 1500 students taking part in field trips and educational programs at the 60-acre learning center off Christian Valley Road.

- rejected all three bids received for a painting project at the Middle Fork Powerhouse because of questions about required levels of experience. Bid documents will be revised and all of the contractors will be invited to submit new bids.

- heard an update on water legislation in Sacramento. PCWA officials remain concerned that legislative "solutions" to problems of the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta could impose water supply and/or financial impacts on upstream water suppliers and their constituents.

The next regular meeting of the PCWA Board of Directors will be held at 2 p.m. on Sept. 17 at the PCWA Business Center, 144 Ferguson Road, in Auburn. PCWA board meetings are open to the public.

Information on PCWA board meetings is available through the Clerk to the Board at (530) 823-4850.