



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Conservation Urged

Water Emergency Continues in Placer

PCWA Customers Asked to Reduce Usage by 25 Percent

AUBURN -- The PCWA water shortage emergency in western Placer County is expected to continue until mid-June, it was reported at Thursday's (May 19) meeting of the Placer County Water Agency Board of Directors.

The water agency has been proactively managing the water shortage emergency in wake of the Apr. 19 sudden failure of the Pacific Gas and Electric Company's Bear River Canal. A landslide took out a section of the canal (which is located above the Bear River canyon about a mile south of Rollins Reservoir and a mile west of Colfax.)

When this occurred, water supplies ceased flowing to PCWA. The Agency and its customers are heavily dependent upon this supply as are approximately 150,000 people. PCWA had to immediately devise and implement numerous alternatives for securing temporary water supplies and enact bold water conservation reduction actions.

PG&E spokesman Brian Jensen said, at the board meeting, the company is making very good progress in repairing the canal and expects to have normal deliveries restored by mid-June to PCWA.

Meanwhile, he said, the company has begun pumping a small amount of water from the Bear River into the PG&E canal (downstream from the break) for PCWA's use.

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The company also has plans, he said, for a second temporary water supply that may be flowing by the first of June to PCWA.

In the meantime PG&E has also been trucking water to PCWA's Lake Arthur and to other locations to supplement agency supplies. (PG&E has initiated a livestock watering program coordinated with Placer County Resource Conservation District.) The trucks have delivered more than 3.1 million gallons of water to date, Jensen said.

The agency is also relying on many other alternate sources of water from neighboring water entities. PCWA is also pumping water from the American River to supplement supplies for the duration of the emergency.

PCWA has instituted a wide range of water shortage emergency management actions since April 19. Staff also enacted an aggressive customer outreach program since the day of the emergency. These include direct mail to all customers, telephone and e-mail communications, news media coverage, advertising campaigns and presentations at governmental, civic and community meetings.

Rocklin Fire Chief Bill Mikesell attended the agency board meeting and said PCWA has done an "outstanding job" in communicating with his department and keeping water available for fire protection purposes.

PCWA General Manager David Breninger said, "With public understanding, a 'patch quilt' pattern of many temporary water supplies that have been pieced together like dominos and aggressive water conservation reduction actions by our customers, I'm hopeful that adequate flows of water can be sustained to serve our customers throughout our vast distribution system until this emergency ends."

PCWA directors will continue to review the status of the situation at each meeting. The board's next regular meeting is scheduled at 2 p.m. on June 2 at the PCWA Business Center, 144 Ferguson Road, in Auburn. Information about PCWA board meetings is available from the Clerk to the Board at (530) 823-4850 or (800) 464-0030.

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The PCWA website is updated daily on the water emergency and actions to be taken to reduce water usage. Customers can stay up to date at www.pcwa.net. The PCWA Customer Services Center may be reached by e-mail at customerservices@pcwa.net or by calling (530) 823-4850 or toll-free (800) 464-0030.