



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

June 7, 2011

Contact: David A. Breninger, (530) 823-4860  
or: Dave Carter, (530) 265-NEWS

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

#### **Water Shortage is Over** ***PCWA Board Declares End of Water Shortage Emergency***

AUBURN -- With the recently repaired PG&E Bear River Canal returning to normal operation, the Placer County Water Agency Board of Directors on Monday (June 6) terminated the water shortage emergency.

The board had declared the emergency on May 5 following the April 19 collapse of a section of PG&E's Bear River Canal. The canal failure, caused by a landslide in a steep river canyon near Colfax, cut a primary water supply to PCWA.

PCWA Director of Field Services Mike Nichol said Monday the agency is again receiving deliveries of water from PG&E and water flows are ramping-up in canals throughout PCWA's Western Water System.

Impacts of the water shortage were most apparent for the 3,800 PCWA irrigation canal water customers as reduced deliveries or rolling outages were implemented to equitably spread water throughout the western water system. The water agency, with assistance from other area water suppliers and voluntary customer conservation, was able to maintain uninterrupted water for the treated water customers and fire flows. Placer County Agricultural Commissioner Josh Huntsinger and Placer County Resource Conservation District Manager Rick Gruen attended Monday's adjourned meeting of the board and thanked PCWA for the work it did to limit the impacts on local agriculture.

-more-

*Water Shortage Emergency Over, page two*

Huntsinger said some rice farmers in far western Placer County did not plant this year, beyond that, he had not heard of any serious local crop damage. “The cool, wet weather has been a real godsend,” he said. Gruen said the RCD mobilized a livestock water delivery program but did not have to make deliveries.

In declaring the end to the emergency, PCWA directors said no reconnection charges would be imposed for those who voluntarily gave up water supplies, and that 7,000 acre-feet of supplemental water would be available to agricultural growers in Zone 5. The board’s resolution also commends PG&E for its rapid repair of the canal.

Directors also voted to accept PG&E’s offer to offset PCWA’s pumping costs and to reimburse PCWA for lost revenue resulting from customer billings being adjusted for water they did not receive as a result of the Bear River Canal outage. PG&E voluntarily set-aside \$1.8 million to reimburse the agency and the Nevada Irrigation District for emergency pumping and other associated costs resulting from the canal outage.

Directors then approved a motion to direct staff to adjust charges on irrigation canal customers’ bills for the days that water was not delivered.

PCWA Director of Financial Services Joseph Parker said the agency is working on a canal by canal formula through which irrigation canal customers would be billed only for the days and amounts of water they received during the emergency water shortage.

District 2 Director Alex Ferreira said Mother Nature caused the canal failure and it was Mother Nature that helped minimize the impact to our customers (with the unseasonable cool, wet weather).

Board Chairman Lowell Jarvis said the emergency situation was not nearly as serious as it could have been due in large part to the unusually wet weather over the past month. He commended PG&E, PCWA staff, neighboring water suppliers and customers who pitched in and reduced their water use.

*-more-*

*Water Shortage Emergency Over, page three*

Monday's meeting of the PCWA board was a special adjourned session. The next regular meeting of the board will be held at 2 p.m. on June 16 at the PCWA Business Center, 144 Ferguson Road, in Auburn.

Information on PCWA board meetings may be obtained through the Clerk to the Board at (530) 823-4850 or (800) 464-0030. More information is available at [www.pcwa.net](http://www.pcwa.net).