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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Water Storage is Good Despite Lack of Rain, Snow

AUBURN - The mountain reservoirs serving Placer County are holding above average water storage for this time of year, even though the month of December was one of the driest on record.

This message was part of a water supply outlook presented at Thursday's (Jan. 5) meeting of the Placer County Water Agency Board of Directors.

PCWA Director of Field Services Mike Nichol reported that statewide water storage remains at 118 percent of average for this time of year and that local reservoirs in Nevada and Placer counties also are at higher than average levels. He said storage is good despite Jan. 1 snow surveys that showed an average 2-inch water content in the California snowpack, just 19 percent of average for this time of year.

Local water storage has been assisted through a Pacific Gas and Electric Company maintenance project at Lake Spaulding, where water releases have been limited over the past three months, allowing more water to be kept in storage, Nichol said. He said Spaulding is holding more than twice average levels.

PCWA Director of Power Generation Services Jay L'Estrange said water storage is ample in the agency's two large high country reservoirs, French Meadows and Hell Hole, which now hold 175,000 acre-feet of water, well above the 142,000-acre-foot average for this time of year.

Nichol said agency staff is working closely with PG&E and NID to monitor the water supply situation and to take appropriate steps if necessary.

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In other business, PCWA directors:

- authorized the agency to join with an alliance of Northern California government, business and labor organizations in the submittal of a letter to the Delta Stewardship Council, where an environmental impact report is under review on a plan for the future of the Delta. “They are calling for more natural flows of water into the Delta,” said PCWA legal adviser Janet Goldsmith. “This could be catastrophic for communities in the north state.”

- received a presentation from actuary John Bartel of Bartel Associates on alternative retirement options offered by CalPERS for new employees, and the potential impact of those options on the Agency’s future pension liability. The matter was referred to committee for further study.

- heard reports on 2011 accomplishments and issues anticipated in 2012 from Director of Strategic Affairs Einar Maisch and Director of Financial Services Joseph Parker.

- declared an election for three seats on the PCWA board and requested that it be consolidated with the Placer County general election on Nov. 6, 2012. Voters will be asked to decide four-year terms for the District 3, District 4 and District 5 seats on the PCWA board.

The next regular meeting of the PCWA Board of Directors will be held at 2 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 19, 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. PCWA information is also posted at www.pcwa.net.