



DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
SACRAMENTO COUNTY
WATER AGENCY

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Historic Water Project Launched after 30 Years of Negotiation

Sacramento and East Bay Communities to Benefit

Freeport -- Construction has begun on the historic Freeport Regional Water Project, which will provide much-needed water from the Sacramento River for the East Bay and Sacramento.

Community leaders and officials gathered on the east bank of the Sacramento River at Freeport -- the site of the project's intake facility -- to celebrate the start of the project, which is widely hailed as a model of regional cooperation.

The situation was quite different thirty years ago. The communities squared off in court for seventeen years and battled for more than a decade over East Bay rights to American River water in the Sacramento area. But the old water wars have now been replaced with a new partnership which greatly benefits both Sacramento County and the East Bay.

The Freeport Regional Water Project, the single largest water supply project that Sacramento has seen in years, protects the American River by diverting water from the Sacramento River. The project will provide a supplemental water supply of up to 85 million gallons of water a day for Sacramento and provide reliability far into the future. By using surface water from the Freeport Project, the Sacramento County Water Agency will protect its fragile groundwater basin from depletion.

“By advancing and constructing the Freeport Regional Water Project, the Sacramento County Water Agency helps assure the success of the conjunctive use program designed to provide a reliable and sustainable groundwater and surface water supply to tens of thousands of County residents for generations to come,” says Don Nottoli, Sacramento County Supervisor and Freeport Regional Water Authority Director.

For the East Bay Municipal Utility District, the project will guarantee a dry-year supply of up to 100 million gallons a day that will guard against the economic hardships and lessen or remove the rationing associated with a severe, multi-year drought.

“The Freeport Project brings to life the real world success that results from negotiation and working together for regional solutions to water challenges,” says Lesa McIntosh, president of EBMUD’s Board of Directors.

EBMUD will be able to receive water from the project by the end of 2009. EBMUD serves 1.3 million customers in Alameda and Contra Costa counties. Sacramento will receive water in 2011 because it will take additional time to complete the Vineyard Surface Water Treatment Plant. The Freeport Regional Water Project will ultimately serve more than 300,000 customers in central Sacramento County. The Sacramento County Water Agency will pay \$386 million for its share of the project and EBMUD’s cost will be \$517 million.

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