



Update No. 8 Caples Lake emergency drawdown and outlet works repair project



For immediate release
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Repairs to Caples main dam outlet works near completion Board funds fish restocking plan

Placerville, CA . . . With the area of Caples Lake between the temporary bladder dams and main dam now dewatered, crews are repairing the main dam outlet works. Inspections conducted after the dewatering show that the 85-year-old slide gates, their appurtenances, and the trash rack were more badly deteriorated than indicated by earlier underwater investigations. However, no new major problems were discovered.

The repair teams are removing the slide gates and trash rack and installing replacements. El Dorado Irrigation District (District) anticipates the work will be done by November 1, possibly earlier. Once the repairs are completed, the gates will be tested and the bladder dams removed.

Currently, the District is pumping water—at the rate of two to three cubic feet per second—from behind the bladder dams into Caples Creek through a three-quarter-mile-long pipe laid specifically for this purpose. The flow is required to help meet the needs of fisheries downstream of the main dam.

Funding for fish restocking approved

At their October 6 meeting, the District's Board of Directors unanimously voted to fund the first year of the Caples Lake fish restocking plan, approved by the state Department of Fish and Game. According to the plan, over a ten-year period, brown, rainbow, and lake (mackinaw) trout will be released into the lake to reestablish the lake's recreational fisheries. The comprehensive plan includes a timeframe that Fish and Game believes will allow a trophy mackinaw fishery to reestablish and will provide trophy rainbow and brown trout fishing opportunities next year.

The plan is divided into two phases. The first phase will commence next spring as soon as the lake's water level is suitable. Over the course of the spring and summer, 31,200 pounds of trophy rainbow and brown trout—approximately 12,400 fish—will be released into the lake. More than 9,000 pounds of catchable rainbows, or about 18,700 fish, will also be released. By next fall, some 175,000 fingerling and sub-catchable rainbows, along with 50,000 fingerling mackinaw, will join the larger fish in the lake. Fish and Game will fund the restocking of the mackinaw. The cost to the District to fund the first year restocking effort is \$246,282.

The second phase calls for additional stocking over nine years beginning in 2010. At this time, the details are being worked out by District staff, Fish and Game, and potential partners.

Background

The El Dorado Irrigation District's Board of Directors declared an emergency on July 1, 2008, after a mid-June underwater investigation revealed major deterioration of the outlet works at the Caples Lake main dam. To access the areas that must be repaired and maintain a safe work environment, the water level in the reservoir had to be drawn down.

Caples Lake is part of Project 184, the District's hydroelectric power generation system. Under conditions of the federal license to operate the system and according to state regulations, the District must assure safe operation of the dam.

Learn more about the emergency project by visiting the District's website at www.eid.org. District employees continue to brief the Board of Directors on the emergency project during Board meetings, which are open to the public. The meeting schedule is posted on the website or can be obtained by calling 530-622-4513.

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