FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PCWA AND SACRAMENTO AREA FLOOD CONTROL AGENCY TO STUDY RESERVOIR MODIFICATIONS FOR ENHANCED FLOOD PROTECTION

AUBURN, Calif. (October 19, 2018) — At the October 18 meeting of the Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) Board of Directors, the Board approved a Memorandum of Agreement (Agreement) between PCWA and the Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA) to explore the feasibility of utilizing PCWA’s Hell Hole Reservoir to mitigate the negative effects of extreme flood events in the region. The Agreement, while non-binding, establishes a more formal cooperative effort to study matters of mutual interest.

Specifically, PCWA and SAFCA will explore modifications to the spillway and low level outlet at Hell Hole Reservoir. The reservoir currently operates a passive spillway; modifications could allow for more storage and controlled releases in advance of severe storm events. The low level outlet currently delivers water for environmental purposes; modifications could increase the capacity of water releases to protect against flood events and provide other ecological benefits.

The timing of the partnership is fortuitous for both agencies. For PCWA, dam modifications at Hell Hole Reservoir could satisfy environmental requirements of its Middle Fork American River Project (MFP) relicensing effort. Hell Reservoir is one the MFP’s two major reservoirs. For SAFCA, cooperative management of upstream river systems dovetails with its efforts, over the last few years, to strengthen Sacramento-area levees in anticipation of a 200-year storm event. Separately, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is moving forward with the Folsom Dam Raise Project to help further reduce flood risk in the region.
“The Middle Fork American River Project is operated first to fulfill its water supply function, and secondarily for power generation and other purposes,” said Andy Fecko, PCWA Director of Strategic Affairs. “Downstream flood protection does not typically factor into our reservoir operations, but this agreement provides an opportunity to investigate whether we can comply with our relicensing requirements, and help our downstream neighbors from the threat of flood, all at a reduced cost.”

The next regular meeting of the PCWA Board of Directors will be held on Thursday, November 1, 2:00 PM, at the PCWA Business Center, 144 Ferguson Road, in Auburn. PCWA board meetings are open to the public.

For information on PCWA board meetings, please contact the Clerk to the Board at (530) 823-4850 or (800) 464-0030.

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About PCWA
PCWA is the primary water resource agency for Placer County, California, with a broad range of responsibilities including water resource planning and management, retail and wholesale supply of drinking water and irrigation water, and production of hydroelectric energy.