

## Conservation Request for PCWA Customers Amid PG&E Delivery Issues

PCWA is urging customers to reduce water use to help manage an ongoing water delivery problem caused by damaged Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) facilities. The damage is impacting water delivery from PG&E to PCWA.

PG&E has run into several unanticipated delays that have pushed their return of service from June to July 30th, more than 50 days beyond the original estimate.

Prior to this most recent delay, the water available from PG&E in Rollins Reservoir was sufficient to avoid interruptions to PCWA customers. But, due to the extended delays, PCWA is now asking customers to reduce water use by 20 percent through summer, until repairs are completed, and water delivery is restored.

### Ways to Conserve Water and Rebates

Here are some simple things customers can do to help achieve this goal:

- Reduce landscape watering (while prioritizing water for trees)
- Stop sprinkler runoff
- Water only early in the day
- Fix household leaks

PCWA has enhanced rebate programs that can help offset costs for making water-efficient upgrades. We also offer water-wise house and business calls to help you find ways to save water indoors and outdoors. Visit [pcwa.net](http://pcwa.net) for more information.

### PG&E Delivery Issue, Not a Water Supply Problem

Typically, water from Lake Spaulding travels through a powerhouse before reaching Rollins Reservoir. However, the powerhouse was taken offline by PG&E in March due to a major leak, which caused significant damage to the facility. Without the flow from Spaulding, PCWA and its neighboring water agency, Nevada Irrigation District, are relying on the current water supply in Rollins Reservoir. That supply could be depleted by mid-July without urgent conservation measures.

PCWA is committed to ensuring the reliable delivery of water to its customers and is taking all necessary actions to mitigate the impact of repair delays. Proactive planning for scenarios like this plays a significant role in its ongoing effort to deliver water reliably. PCWA

is also drawing on backup supplies from the American River and groundwater, and interties with neighboring water providers.

### Community Support Needed

While we have plans to compensate for much of the delayed water supply, we need your help to ensure that the water currently available in Rollins Reservoir lasts through the duration of this outage. If conservation measures are not successful, or if PG&E repairs are delayed further, additional, mandatory cutbacks may be required.

## Level Up Your Sprinkler System

PCWA has rebates to make your sprinkler system more efficient and your yard healthier.

#### Smart Irrigation Controller:

- up to \$250 for residents
- up to \$2,000 for businesses

#### Drip Irrigation and Sprinkler:

- up to \$500 for residents
- up to \$2,000 for businesses

Find out more at [pcwa.net/rebates](http://pcwa.net/rebates)



## PCWA BILLING IS GETTING AN UPGRADE

- » Enhanced customer portal
- » New account numbers

Scan to learn more:





# General Manager's Report

By Andrew Fecko

PCWA has committed to good stewardship of natural resources since our inception in 1957. Traditionally, this meant protecting rivers we rely on to supply our customers with water. But recently, our mission has expanded to include the watersheds high above our water facilities, in the forested mountains of Placer and El Dorado counties.

PCWA's Middle Fork Project, built by the people of Placer County in the 1960s, consists of two major reservoirs, French Meadows and Hell Hole, which capture rain and snowmelt from over 1,000 square miles of mountain watershed. While storing this water is a very important part of our mission, we also must ensure the system that moves water from our reservoirs to your tap is operated and maintained to very high standards. This helps ensure a reliable supply of water.

The Rim Fire in 2013 and King Fire in 2014 marked the onset of very large, very high-intensity wildfires in California. For PCWA, the King Fire showed just how damaging and costly these megafires can be to our infrastructure and the rivers we rely on. Ten years after the King Fire, PCWA is still dealing with the aftermath.



Sediment in Ralston Afterbay following the King Fire

While fires like the King, and more recently the Mosquito Fire, can damage PCWA facilities, the real damage occurs in rainy seasons after the fire. Landslides, debris flows, and dead trees make their way down rivers and into our reservoirs and hydroelectric facilities. This material piles up quickly, filling valuable water storage space and hampering operations. Expensive dredging is then required; PCWA recently spent over \$5 million to dredge just a portion of one small reservoir to remove fire debris.

We think there is a better way. Rather than repair damage after a fire, why not prevent damage by working in watersheds to reduce fire intensity?



Treated area within French Meadows Forest Restoration Project

Since 2016 PCWA has led an effort at French Meadows Reservoir to treat 22,000 acres of the watershed through forest thinning and prescribed fire. Our program — in partnership with the County of Placer, the US Forest Service, The Nature Conservancy, and others — does not eliminate the chance of fire. But this kind of environmental stewardship significantly reduces fire intensity and therefore reduces or prevents costly downstream damage to water systems.

For our next watershed project, we are applying lessons learned from French Meadows to the Long Canyon area. This is an important watershed that is tributary to the Rubicon River and flows directly into our Ralston Afterbay, presenting a significant debris flow risk that threatens water supply and hydroelectric facilities.

Long Canyon is severely overstocked with small, dense trees that are prime fuel for the next big fire. Our stewardship work here will remove brush and small trees, while leaving large, older trees that are much more fire-resistant and provide better habitat. This will not only reduce our fire risk but improve the ecosystem as well.

And there is yet another step in our stewardship story in the works.

Together with a private sector technology company, we are working on building a very low-emission biomass facility to utilize the material we are removing from overstocked forests to power our new Ophir Water Treatment Plant. This woody biomass is primarily trees and brush that are too small for a sawmill, but if cut and left on the forest floor would still become fuel for the next fire. We hope to create a regional hub to dispose of this biomass, and use the energy to power our newest water treatment plant near Auburn.

I am so proud of our PCWA team for leading this innovative work with our external partners. Managing fire and watersheds is new to our Agency. But it is vitally important to ensure our water supplies are here for our children and all future generations.



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## Board of Directors

PCWA is an independent public agency governed by an elected Board of Directors. Directors represent each of five districts in Placer County and are elected by voters to four-year terms.

## Your PCWA Board of Directors:

- DISTRICT 1: Gray Allen (2024 Vice Chair)
- DISTRICT 2: Primo Santini
- DISTRICT 3: Mike Lee
- DISTRICT 4: Robert Dugan (2024 Chair)
- DISTRICT 5: Joshua Alpine

## Public Meetings

The Placer County Water Agency Board of Directors meets regularly the first and third Thursdays of each month at 2:00 p.m. at the Placer County Water Agency Business Center at 144 Ferguson Road in Auburn.