



General Manager's Report By Andrew Fecko

Completing a Lengthy To-Do List for Water Reliability

Thanks to mild weather—and a lot of hard work—Placer County Water Agency made strong progress this summer on a number of Renewal and Replacement projects. From Rocklin to Colfax, construction crews have been busy addressing aging infrastructure, increasing water storage, and improving the water system.

These projects are all part of PCWA's long-term strategy to modernize the water system, improve efficiency, and prepare for the future. Whether replacing old pipelines, upgrading treatment plants, or transitioning canals to pipes, each project supports three

core goals: reliability, resiliency, and responsible stewardship of our water resources.

Projects completed so far this year include:

- **Rocklin Main Replacement Phase I** – In partnership with the City of Rocklin, this \$3.65 million project replaced 1,940 feet of aging pipeline that was leaking and showing signs of deterioration. The new main helps ensure reliable water delivery to Rocklin residents.
- **Sawyer Street Pipeline Replacement** – In Auburn, 860 feet of main and a 220-foot segment on Circle Drive were replaced. This upgrade improves water quality and increases fire protection through up-sized hydrants – important for fire preparedness in this foothill community.
- **Alta Loop Pipeline** – Another project focused on aging infrastructure, this upgrade replaced old mains in Alta Bonnybrook Road, Alta Powerhouse Road, and Brown Road plus added a new main on Cable Road to provide backup capacity which is vital for reliability.
- **Bowman Water Treatment Plant Upgrades Phase 3** – Also in Auburn, this phase installed a new automated raw water intake screen and vertical flocculators. It followed Phase I electrical upgrade and Phase 2 filter replacements.

- **Antelope Stub Canal to Pipe** – In Loomis, 1,300 feet of open canal was replaced by 12-inch pipe, laid inside the former canal. This change both potentially saves 190 acre-feet of water annually and also improves water pressure for customers.

And we're not done. Now underway:

- **Monte Vista Water Treatment Plant Tank Replacement** – In this project, a new 100,000-gallon steel tank will replace a smaller redwood tank along with upgrades to the aging raw water pump and intake piping. These improvements will help maintain reliable drinking water and increase fire protection for the Monte Vista community.
- **Colfax Water Treatment Plant** – Mass grading and basin construction have started on this \$36 million project to build a new, larger, state-of-the-art facility.



- **I-80 Crossings Replacement** – With construction expected to start this winter, this long-term project will repair or replace 26 raw water crossings and 24 treated water crossings along Interstate 80 from Roseville to Alta.
- **Old State Highway/Buena Vista to Taylor Road** – In partnership with South Placer Municipal Utility District, this Newcastle project will combine the replacement of 1,800 feet of water main with the installation of new sewer lines.

From pipelines to treatment plants, these projects are key to securing Placer County's water future. Replacing the old and building the new—this is how PCWA keeps the water flowing reliably for decades to come.

It's HERE!



FIRE & WATER MAGAZINE

RESILIENCE IN OUR WATER SYSTEMS, FIRE RESPONSE, AND COMMUNITIES



WATER FOR OUR FUTURE

Growing Sustainability Together

Find water-wise inspiration at the
Demonstration Garden at the Loomis Library



Jill Birchell
UC Master Gardener

Saving Water, Welcoming Wildlife: One PCWA Customer's Story



BEFORE



AFTER

David Shield found his energy-efficient dream home in Loomis. He wanted a water-efficient landscape to match.

Now, he has both while supporting native birds and pollinators. With the help of the Placer County Water Agency, Shield transformed his home's large lawn into a water-wise slice of paradise.

"This experience hasn't just reduced my water bills, it has changed how I see my little piece of land in the greater community," Shield said.

This makeover was a long time coming, explained Shield, a retired engineering manager at Intel.

"I moved to Loomis eight years ago after a couple of decades in El Dorado Hills," he said. "The yard came the way it was, with lawn, shrubs, and a few trees. I bought the house from the original owner and builder – it is a nice Craftsman style, which really appealed to me. Once I saw the style and energy-efficient construction, it was the house for me."

But the landscape? Not so much. "There was a lot of lawn, I think about 1,500 square feet," he recalled. "It was hard to keep green, and I was really unhappy with the amount of water and chemicals needed, not to mention the work required."

The more he thought about it, the more determined he became to make the switch.

"I didn't feel good about wasting water on a lawn, and I was beginning to get interested in native plants," Shield explained. "I made the decision to completely remove the lawn, sprinkler system, and most of the existing shrubs, and to replace them all with native plants."

Helping push that decision were available rebates from PCWA. Those incentives helped pay for the lawn's removal and irrigation upgrades.*

In 2022, Shield tackled the project in earnest. He hired a landscape designer certified by the California Native Plant Society to help him mold his vision.

"I wanted native plants and year-round color," he said. "I first showed her the view from inside the house before walking around the yard, describing what I thought of the space usage. She supplied me with a great design, and a list of plants to use – all California native plants."

Shield then spent three months, literally digging in.

"I did a lot of the work, along with hired help, to dig holes and lay down the paving stones," he said.

To take out the old lawn and unwanted shrubs, Shield hired a crew. He installed two fountains and planted dozens of natives, each with its proper irrigation. Among his favorites: 'Hot Lips' salvia and 'Margarita BOP' penstemon.

Three years after its makeover, this Loomis landscape is filled with thriving native plants – and lots of native wildlife.

"I love how many native bees and butterflies are attracted to the yard," Shield said. "The green belt beyond my fence is sort of a part of my backyard. Between that and my yard, it is alive with birds and pollinators."

Shield is also very happy with his water bill – an unexpected benefit. "I have seen my water use drop by about 70% or more," he said. "(In addition), I have noticed a great reduction in mosquitoes and other pests since removing the lawn."

The project also gave him another inspiration: Shield recently became a Placer County UC Master Gardener. He now advises other gardeners on native plants and water-wise gardening.



Rebate customer
David Shield



Penstemon laevis
"Mountain Blue"



Gaillardia pulchella
"Blanket"



Muhlenbergia capillaris
"Regal Mist"

***Thank you to everyone who participated in our rebate programs this year! We have concluded rebates for 2025, and applications will reopen in January 2026. We encourage customers to reach out and participate at that time.**

RATE REMINDER!

A water rate adjustment will go into effect on January 1, 2026. The adjustment is part of a multi-year rate adjustment, approved by the PCWA Board of Directors in May 2022, and includes an adjustment of 7% in January 2026. The change in monthly charges for water service for each customer will vary depending upon meter size, volume of water used, and customer classification. Please visit our Multiyear Rate Adjustment page at pcwa.net for information.

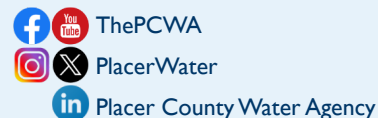


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Board of Directors

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 (2025 Vice Chair)
DISTRICT 2: Primo Santini
DISTRICT 3: Chris Wilson
DISTRICT 4: Robert Dugan (2025 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.