

Monumental Water Plan Reviewed by State Board

Eventual Moving of 20,000,000 Acre-Feet From Northern to Southern Areas Visioned

BY ED AINSWORTH

Times Staff Representative
SAN BERNARDINO, May 3.—A full-dress review of the "monumental" California Water Plan was given here today before the State Water Resources Board and 200 Southern California leaders.

The plan is on an almost unbelievably large scale.

It contemplates the eventual moving of 20,000,000 acre-feet of water from Northern California into the San Joaquin Valley and Southern California—an amount more than 15 times as great as this State's present allotment of 1,212,000 acre-feet from the Colorado River.

The Water Resources Board is on a three-day tour of the proposed routes of the Feather River project. It spent yesterday inspecting Ventura County, a part of the San Joaquin Valley and the Antelope Valley. Today it will conduct a session in Los Angeles.

Tentative Draft

Clair A. Hill of Redding, chairman of the Water Resources Board, disclosed that a tentative draft of the California Water Plan will be sent out tomorrow to interested agencies for appraisal and discussion. He said that 100 engineers have been working on it for a number of years. It is the third and final bulletin in a series of three put out by the board, the first one having been an inventory of the State's water and the second a study of present utilization and ultimate requirements.

It was disclosed by Max Bookman, chief State hydraulic engineer, that Southern California now is using 2,000,000 acre-feet of water per year out of its present potential supply of 2,500,000 acre-feet, leaving a "cushion" of only 500,000 acre-feet of water per year.

Importation Planned

He said that the State Water Plan contemplates the importation of 3,000,000 additional acre-feet a year, to take care of future needs.

Asst. State Engineer William Berry had disclosed that 20,000,000 acre-feet is the contemplated amount to be moved southward from the north coastal rivers such as the Trinity, the Klamath and the Eel, and from the Upper Sacramento Valley.

He pointed out that farmers at present use about 90%

of California's developed water supply and that even under ultimate development, when there are even larger metropolitan areas, the farm use will still be 80% of the total.

Regarding Feather River

Turning to the contemplated \$1,500,000,000 Feather River project to bring water to the San Joaquin Valley and Southern California, Berry said, "We needed Feather River water yesterday—and we must have it today and tomorrow."

Bookman traced the present plan for bringing Feather River water south and pointed out that it has been proposed to lift it 3357 feet over the Tehachaps and through a high-line canal to the Antelope Valley, Mojave Desert, Beaumont and Banning, Palm Springs and Desert Hot Springs, then on to San Diego.

Study Fund Provided

He added, however, that the Legislature appropriated \$1,100,000 for the study of alternate routes, one along the coast from San Joaquin Valley and another through a tunnel at lower elevation in the Tehachaps.

Phil D. Swing, the only charter member of the Water Resources Board, told the gathering that "whether we like it or not, we are destined to have an enormous population piled up here on the West Coast, and it is our duty to see that all the water now wasting into the sea will be used."

All three speakers stressed that California now is entering into the phase of redistributing its water resources so that it will do the most good where needed.

Legislature Praised

Swing and others praised the Legislature for having streamlined and reorganized the State's administrative water machinery so as to provide the proper leadership for the immense task.

J. C. Sloan, president of the San Bernardino Chamber of Commerce, introduced Swing and Hill and three other members of the Water Resources Board, W. R. Rich of Marysville, Arnold Frew of King City and W. Tenn Rowe of San Bernardino; Sen. James Cunningham of San Bernardino and Assemblymen Jack Beaver and Eugene Nisbet.

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