



U.S. Bureau of Reclamation plans to raise Shasta Dam

The Shasta Dam is a federally owned facility and it is the largest reservoir in California. But soon, the dam could be raised by several feet.

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Posted By: Ana Marie Torrea

The Shasta Dam feeds water into the Sacramento River.

“The Sacramento river has a lot of flow that could potentially be stored for winter use,” said Shasta County Public Works Director Pat Minturn.

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation plans to raise the dam by 18.5 feet. Shasta County Public Works Director Pat Minturn believes raising the dam would be beneficial to Shasta County.

“We’re consumers out of the dam,” said Minturn. “Everybody will benefit from more water coming out of the dam potentially in the summer.”

Increasing the dam’s height will give it the ability to store over 600,000 acre-feet of water. Which the bureau believes will benefit not only the environment but people as well.

“This will increase power generation and flood control,” said Minturn. “Having more volume in the dam means holding back a big storm if it comes.”

The Shasta Dam is the largest in the Central Valley Project. The total estimated cost to complete the project is 1.4 billion dollars. But there is opinion on all on sides.

“18 more feet of water in there it will help irrigation and people with it being raised,” said Larry Strum of Summit City.

But there are still lingering questions.

“What is the benefit for us,” said Debbie Sifers of Redding. “We’re still getting the higher increases from the electric company.”

Some see the benefit, but others aren’t so sure.

For our sake and residents of Redding? I don’t believe so,” said Sifers. “But to save 18.5 feet of water, that’s good for droughts.

But one visitor told Action News Now, they would like dam to be raised, because they believe it would help farmers in the valley.

Pre-construction activities are ongoing. The Bureau says the hope to complete the project by 2024.

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SHASTA COUNTY, Calif. - Construction is currently underway to raise the height of the Shasta Dam by 18 and a half feet, a project that has been decades in the making.

The stage of pre-construction is expected to take place in the next few months. Geologists have already begun drilling for core samples on and around the dam to determine the engineering needs for construction.

"The cores provide concrete-strict data that contractors would then use for determining how to anchor the new 18 and a half feet onto the existing surface," said Don Bader, manager for the Bureau of Reclamation in Northern California.

The first construction contract is not expected to take place until late next year.

The project will raise the dam from 602 feet to 620 1/2 feet. This would allow for extra storage of over 600,000 square-acre feet of water.

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