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## Reclamation kicks off 120th anniversary with groundbreaking for the B.F. Sisk Dam Safety

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# Modification Project

Media Contact: Mary Lee Knecht 916-978-5100 mknecht@usbr.gov

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Dirt is turned on the B.F. Sisk Dam Safety Modification Project today. Event held to kick-off Reclamation's 120th Anniversary today.

**LOS BANOS, Calif.** – The Bureau of Reclamation kicked off its 120th anniversary year today at San Luis Reservoir with the groundbreaking of the B.F. Sisk Dam Safety Modification Project. The billion-dollar effort received a \$100 million investment earlier this year from President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. This is Reclamation's largest project under the 1978 Safety of Dams Act and when complete will modernize the dam to reduce risks due to seismic events.

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“B.F. Sisk Dam and San Luis Reservoir are representative of Reclamation’s legacy of effective resource management,” said **Reclamation Commissioner Camille Calimlim Touton**. “The work being done here today—funded by the transformative Bipartisan Infrastructure Law—is emblematic of our commitment to modernize water infrastructure. So, it is fitting to break ground here once again and invest in our infrastructure and in the future of California.”

Speakers at today’s event included Commissioner Touton, Assistant Secretary for Water and Science Tanya Trujillo, Reclamation California-Great Basin Regional Director Ernest Conant, California Department of Water Resources Director Karla Nemeth, California State Water Resources Control Board Vice Chair Dorene D’Adamo and San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority Board President Cannon Michael.



Assistant Secretary for Water and Science speaking at today's ceremony. Joining her on stage (L-R) Federico Barajas, Commissioner Camille Calimlim Touton, Karla Nemeth, Dorene D'Adamo and Regional Director Ernest Conant.

Reclamation was established on June 17, 1902, in accordance with the Reclamation Act by Department of the Interior Secretary Ethan Allen Hitchcock in President Theodore Roosevelt’s Administration. Originally called the U.S. Reclamation Service, the agency pursued water development projects and helped established the West as we know it today.

Renamed the Bureau of Reclamation in 1923, today the agency is the nation’s largest wholesale water supplier operating 338 reservoirs, and second largest producer of hydropower in the country, operating 53 hydroelectric powerplants. Reclamation delivers 10 trillion gallons of water to more

than 31 million people each year.

Included in today’s celebration was the beginning of construction to retrofit the 3.5-mile-long B.F. Sisk Dam to protect it from future seismic events and for public safety. Construction will include stability berms and other engineered features. The dam impounds San Luis Reservoir, the nation’s largest off stream reservoir, which provides water for farms, wildlife refuges, and Californians served by the federal Central Valley Project and State Water Project.

“We are thrilled to celebrate the anniversary of the Bureau of Reclamation today in the same footprint where President John F. Kennedy dedicated San Luis Reservoir <sup>Return to top</sup> ~~si~~ly years ago,” said **Reclamation Regional Director Ernest Conant**. “President Kennedy stressed the

uniqueness of the project in 1962 due to the federal, state, and local partnerships that came together to make the original project happen. These collaborations continue today and enable Reclamation’s California-Great Basin Region to make important strides in water management especially in light of changes brought on by climate change.”

In March 2022, the Department of the Interior announced a \$100 million investment in the B.F. Sisk Dam Modification Project as part of President Biden’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding. California Department of Water Resources is a cost share partner in the project. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law provides \$500 million for dam safety projects across the country to support the operational capacity of 12 dams that require modification to minimize risk to the public.

“As we face the impacts of climate change during this drought, we applaud this important investment in California’s aging infrastructure to ensure water supply reliability and climate resiliency into the future,” said **DWR Director Karla Nemeth**. “DWR looks forward to working with Reclamation on Sisk Dam’s modernization efforts to reduce seismic risk and enhance public safety.”

Learn more about Reclamation’s history and 120th anniversary celebrations.

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