

# ESP UPDATE



Spring 2003 Edition



*The Emergency Storage Project is a system of reservoirs, interconnected pipelines and pumping stations designed to make water available to the San Diego region in the event of an interruption in imported water deliveries.*

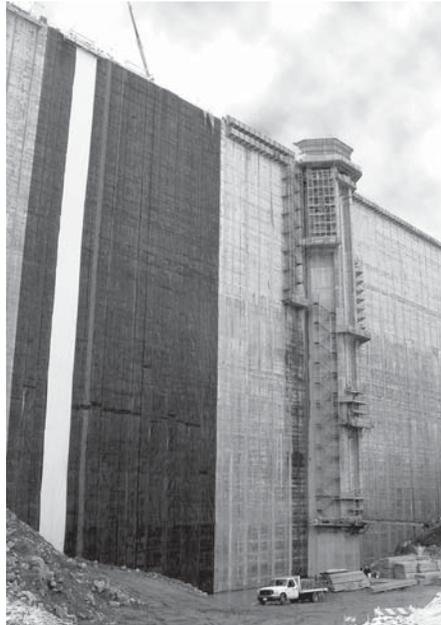
*The Emergency Storage Project is part of the San Diego County Water Authority's Capital Improvement Program to enhance and increase the operational flexibility of its water delivery system.*

*This newsletter is one way the San Diego County Water Authority is keeping communities informed about the project's progress.*

*For more information, please call toll-free (877) 426-2010 or visit our Web site at [www.sdcwa.org](http://www.sdcwa.org)*



San Diego County Water Authority  
Capital Improvement Program



*Workers begin lining the dam near the inlet/outlet tower.*

## Lining the Olivenhain Dam

Poised on scaffolding similar to what window washers use, crews are installing a state-of-the-art waterproof liner on the upstream side (water side) of the 318-foot-high Olivenhain Dam. The dam is designed to remain operational even after a magnitude 7.25 earthquake. This liner will ensure that minor leaks will not occur in the dam. Where water will soon be, these workers are methodically bolting a polyvinyl chloride membrane liner to metal beams attached to the dam. This flexible, rubbery plastic liner is applied in 8-foot sheets that are melded together. The result is the creation of a uniform waterproof surface that covers the entire side of the dam. Between the plastic liner and the dam is a black mesh screen that protects the plastic liner from being punctured. At approximately 210,000 square feet, the amount of liner being used is equivalent to the size of four football fields.

The 318-foot dam height was reached last October when roller-compacted concrete operations were completed two months ahead of schedule. Currently, work progresses on the inlet/outlet tower, which will control

..... See *LINING DAM* on page 3

## Environmental Study Under Way for the San Vicente Pipeline

An environmental study is in progress for the 11-mile San Vicente Pipeline, the longest tunneled pipeline in San Diego County. Tunneling will enable the Water Authority to build the pipeline with fewer impacts to land surfaces and the surrounding communities. In January, the Water Authority provided information and received comments from the public at a community open house and two environmental scoping meetings that were hosted to prepare for the Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The comments received were used by the project team to assist in determining the scope of this environmental study.

The purpose of the Subsequent EIR is to evaluate elements of the project that have changed since 1997, when the Emergency Storage Project's

..... See *STUDY* on page 2

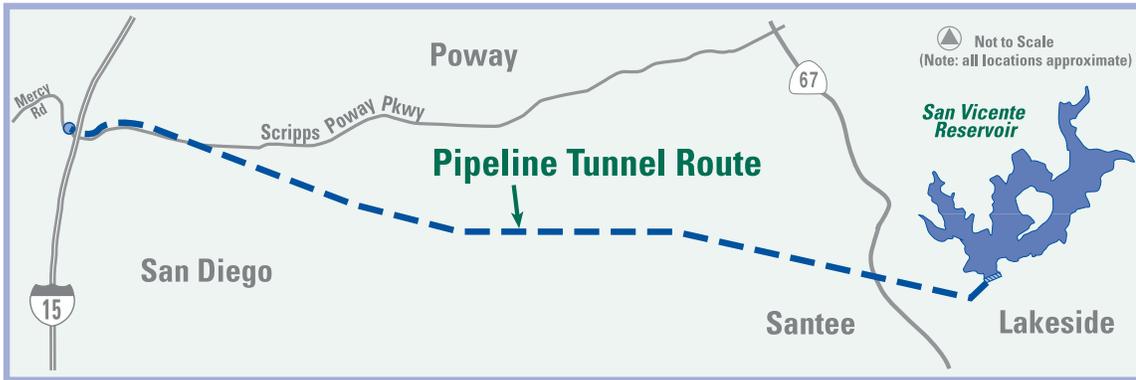
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Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) was certified. After 1997, portions of the tunnel route and other aspects of the project were modified and now need to be evaluated for their potential environmental impacts.

### **San Vicente Pipeline Tunnel Alignment**



*The route for the tunnel and pipeline begins at San Vicente Dam and extends in a northwesterly direction. As the tunnel approaches more densely populated areas in Scripps Ranch, it will be below San Diego Gas & Electric transmission lines. The tunnel route ends just west of I-15 at Mercy Road.*

Environmental analysis will continue for several months. This summer, the public will have an opportunity to review and provide comments on the Draft Subsequent EIR during a 45-day



*San Vicente Pipeline public meeting held in January.*

public review period and at a public hearing before the Water Authority's board of directors. The board of directors is expected to certify the final Subsequent EIR in November of this year. In addition to considering environmental findings, the board will weigh other factors such as community concerns, cost and project schedule when making a final decision on how

to construct the pipeline. The pipeline is scheduled to be under construction by 2005, and will take approximately three years to build.

More information about the project and the Subsequent EIR can be found by visiting the "Infrastructure" section of the Water Authority's Web site at [www.sdcwa.org](http://www.sdcwa.org) or by calling the

Emergency Storage Project information line at **(877) 426-2010**. The Water Authority will provide additional notification when the Draft Subsequent EIR is available for review. 

## **Environmental Resources - Avoiding, Minimizing and Mitigating Impacts**

The Water Authority is committed to avoiding impacts to the environment from Emergency Storage Project construction activities whenever possible. Prior to any construction project, a detailed study is conducted to identify sensitive habitats, plants, wildlife and cultural resources that could be affected. An environmental mitigation monitoring program is developed based on the study's findings.

The ESP Mitigation Monitoring Program includes avoiding and minimizing impacts, compensating for impacts by restoring habitat onsite and acquiring and preserving offsite mitigation lands.

As part of its mitigation efforts, the Water Authority is obligated to acquire and preserve habitat to compensate for temporary and permanent impacts associated with the Emergency Storage Project. Rather than purchasing lower-cost, easy-to-acquire land, the Water Authority exceeded its mitigation requirements and acquired core upland areas that benefit regional conservation planning efforts. Working closely with wildlife resources agencies and jurisdictions impacted by project construction including the

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city and county of San Diego, the city of Poway and the San Diego Association of Governments (on behalf of seven north county cities) enabled the Water Authority to identify a land mitigation package that was beneficial to all parties. To date, 650 acres of upland habitat has been acquired and 45.4 acres of wetland

habitat will be created or restored. These lands will be preserved for future generations.

Environmental mitigation work along Escondido Creek has been rescheduled to begin in September. The work was postponed due to permitting issues and the approaching migratory bird breeding season. The goal of this project is to remove non-native plants such as eucalyptus trees that displace native species along Escondido Creek between the Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve and the intersection of Harmony Grove Road/Elfin Forest Road - near the Olivenhain Dam. 



*Weather and air quality monitoring station at the Olivenhain Dam.*

## Olivenhain Pump Station and Surge Control Pipe

Unlike many other dams, the Olivenhain Dam is not built on a stream or river. For this reason a pump station is needed to bring water in and out of the reservoir. Work began on the Olivenhain Pump Station in September 2002. Once complete, the pump station will serve as an integral component to dam operations. The pump station will use gravity and pumping to fill and drain the Olivenhain Reservoir, provide untreated water to Olivenhain Municipal Water District's water treatment plant and, in the event of an emergency, transport water from the reservoir to the county

by pumping water north through a pressurized pipeline and then allowing it to flow south by gravity.

Design work on the surge control pipe for the dam and pump station is now in the beginning stages and construction is scheduled to begin this summer. This 2,000-foot-long pipe will be approximately eight feet in diameter and will be completely buried. In the event of a sudden power loss, the surge control pipe will serve to collect the water being pumped into the reservoir and protect the pump station from the potentially damaging

backflow. Construction of the pump station and surge control pipe is scheduled to be complete by December 2003. 

## LINING DAM *continued from page 1*

the flow of water to and from the dam. A colored varnish is currently being applied to the dry side of the dam so it will blend better with the surrounding environment.

The Water Authority is purchasing generators to provide emergency power during a catastrophic event such as an earthquake. The generators will be located near the top of the dam on the downstream side. Site and sound walls are being designed to encapsulate the emergency generators. These generators are only for emergency use during an electrical power outage at the site.

Finally, the construction of a pump station and design for a surge control pipe are under way to support the dam and reservoir (see related story).

The majority of water stored in the Olivenhain Reservoir will be reserved for use in the event of an interruption in imported water deliveries, caused by a drought or major earthquake. The filling of the reservoir is scheduled to begin late this summer. 

The dam is designed to remain operational even after a magnitude 7.25 earthquake.



## Lights Out!

Harmony Grove Road — the road leading to the Olivenhain Dam — is a winding, rural road with one lane traveling in each direction. Well before construction began at the Olivenhain Dam, the Water Authority studied various ways for construction traffic to safely access the site. Because large trucks turning left from

By mid-May, the signals will be dismantled and it will be lights out once again along Harmony Grove Road.

Harmony Grove Road into the construction site posed a safety issue, the project's traffic study recommended a temporary traffic signal be installed. To preserve the rural characteristic of the drive along Harmony Grove Road, the community

voiced its preference that the traffic light look very temporary and be removed at the conclusion of construction at the Olivenhain Dam. In response, the Water Authority included this requirement in its permit with the county and committed to the

removal of the traffic light upon project completion. Work will begin the end of April to return the intersection at Harmony Grove Road and Via Ambiente to its preconstruction condition. By mid-May, the signals will be dismantled and it will be lights out once again along Harmony Grove Road. 

For more information

About the San Diego County Water Authority's Emergency Storage Project, please call toll free (877) 426-2010 or visit the "Infrastructure" section on our Web Site at: [www.sdewa.org](http://www.sdewa.org).



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*The Water Authority is a public agency serving the San Diego region as a wholesale supplier of water. The Water Authority works through its 23 member agencies to provide a safe, reliable water supply to support our region's \$126 billion economy and the quality of life of nearly three million residents.*