



**MONTEREY PENINSULA
WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT**

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April 8, 2009
David Gutierrez, Chief
Division of Safety of Dams
California Department of Water Resources
2200 X Street, Suite 200
Sacramento, CA 95818

**SUBJECT: Los Padres Dam – No. 642-4
Carmel River, Monterey County
Potential for Increasing Storage Capacity in Los Padres Reservoir**

Dear Mr. Gutierrez:

The Monterey Peninsula Water Management District (MPWMD) Board of Directors has directed its staff to investigate opportunities for increased storage capacity at Los Padres Reservoir. Specifically, the Board members directed me to meet with staff of your agency to discuss potential methods for doing so. The purpose of the project is to provide additional storage to allow releases for greater instream flows to benefit the Carmel River environment, and not for increased municipal water supply.

I spoke with Aspet Ordoubigian of your staff in this regard, and he encouraged me to send a letter spelling out my request in more detail. Below are some of the concepts and potential issues MPWMD staff has identified. We would appreciate your comments and recommendations. Following your review of this letter, please contact me to set a meeting at your convenience to discuss the concerns and requirements of your agency.

Concept 1 – Remove Accumulated Sediment

Since construction of Los Padres Dam in the late 1940s, the reservoir capacity at spillway crest elevation has decreased from 3,030 acre-feet (AF) to approximately 1,760 AF due to sedimentation. Methods of sediment removal investigated in the past include hydraulic dredging using barge-mounted equipment and drawing down the reservoir and excavating the sediment. At least once in the past, sediment was sluiced through the outlet works, but this method is no longer considered appropriate due to the effects on water quality in the river downstream of the dam.

California American Water (Cal-Am), owner of Los Padres Dam, has proposed a dredging feasibility study for Los Padres Reservoir. Cal-Am's proposal is included as part of its General Rate Case application to the California Public Utilities Commission for calendar years 2009, 2010, and 2011. MPWMD has expressed support for this study, which is proposed to be completed in December 2009. Results of this study will provide valuable information as to the potential for dredging the reservoir as a means of restoring storage capacity.

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We would appreciate learning whether the Division of Safety of Dams has regulations or concerns that would need to be considered in planning the implementation of a sediment removal project for Los Padres Reservoir.

Concept 2 – Install Facilities to Seasonally Raise the Reservoir Level

Facilities such as an inflatable rubber dam, Obermeyer gates, or drum gates could be installed in the spillway to seasonally raise the reservoir level, thereby increasing the storage capacity. The spillway crest elevation is approximately 1,040 feet, and the dam crest elevation is approximately 1,058 feet. Depending on the stability of the embankment, this method may be feasible, and there may be the potential for increasing the reservoir's storage capacity during certain periods. We would appreciate learning your agency's concerns and considerations for such a plan.

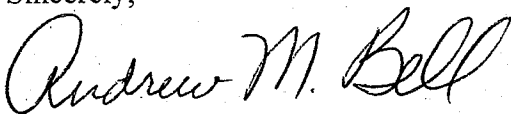
Concept 3 - Increase the Height of the Dam by Adding to Existing Embankment or Removing the Existing Dam and Building a New Dam

Increasing storage capacity by adding to the existing embankment and raising the spillway has been suggested by some. Although this method seems unlikely to be a preferred alternative, it may have some merit.

A new dam and reservoir located approximately ½ mile downstream of the existing dam, creating a reservoir with a 24,000 AF capacity was the primary water supply project from 1989 through 2004 proposed for the Monterey Peninsula area, first by MPWMD and then by CAL-AM. For this project, the existing dam would be breached, not removed. The concept suggested in connection with the current desire to increase the capacity of Los Padres Reservoir is different: if adding material to the existing embankment to increase its height is determined to be either infeasible or not a preferred method, the existing dam could be removed and a new, higher dam could be constructed in its place.

Again, we would appreciate your comments and recommendations regarding these alternatives. Please contact me to set a meeting at your convenience to discuss the concerns and requirements of your agency. My telephone number is (831) 658-5620 and my e-mail address is andy@mpwmd.dst.ca.us.

Sincerely,



Andrew M. Bell
District Engineer

cc: Craig Anthony, General Manager, Central Division, California American Water
Aspet Ordoubigian, Division of Safety of Dams, Area Engineer, Area 5
MPWMD Board of Directors