

THE HISTORY OF SMUD'S UARP

Overview

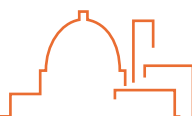
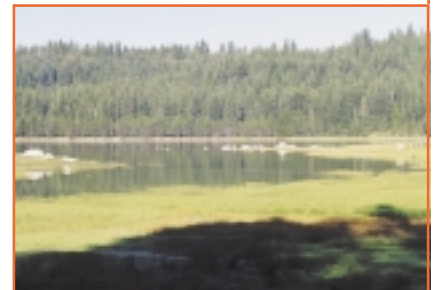


SMUD's Upper American River Project (UARP) is located in California's beautiful Sierra Nevada Mountains, between the southern shores of Lake Tahoe and Sacramento. Most of the project lies within El Dorado County on federal lands within the Eldorado National Forest (ENF). The project area is rich in human history, encompassing periods of pre-historical habitation by Native Americans, active gold mining, and the development of hydroelectric power.

Pre-Project History

Prior to European settlement, several Native American groups lived on the east and west sides of the Sierra Nevada Mountains near Lake Tahoe, including the Nisenan (Southern Maidu), Washoe and the Sierra Miwok. The ENF lies near the intersection of the Nisenan, Washoe and Northern Sierra Miwok prehistoric spheres of influence.

The Nisenan territory included the drainages of the American River, from the Sierra crest to the Sacramento River. Nisenan villages were located on ridges or larger flat areas near water. The Nisenan territory was crossed with trails allowing for easy access and trade with other areas and groups. Many of these historic trails are still used today.



SMUD

SACRAMENTO MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT

The Power To Do More.SM

An area rich in historical content



The Washoe occupied an area south of Lake Tahoe, ranging from the High Sierra to the Great Basin. They followed an annual migration route fishing, hunting and gathering nuts, berries and seeds in season, venturing almost as far west as Sacramento on occasion. Archaeological evidence indicates that the Washoe may have occupied most of the project area early, giving way to later incursions by the Nisenan.

The Northern Sierra Miwok occupied the Mokelumne and Calaveras river drainages, near the southern border of the ENF. Documented villages may be found within or near the ENF.

On January 24, 1848, the discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill on the South Fork American River significantly changed the culture of the area. Seemingly overnight

mass immigration occurred and communities such as Coloma, Growlersburg (Georgetown), and Old Dry Diggins (Placerville) were born in the foothills.

To assist with mining, the diversion of water from the South Fork American River began in the 1850s. During the latter half of the 19th century, dams, diversions, canals, and ditches were all used to store and

transport water for mining of gold. Many of these water developments would later supply water for other uses, including agriculture, hydroelectric generation and consumptive purposes.

Construction of the UARP System

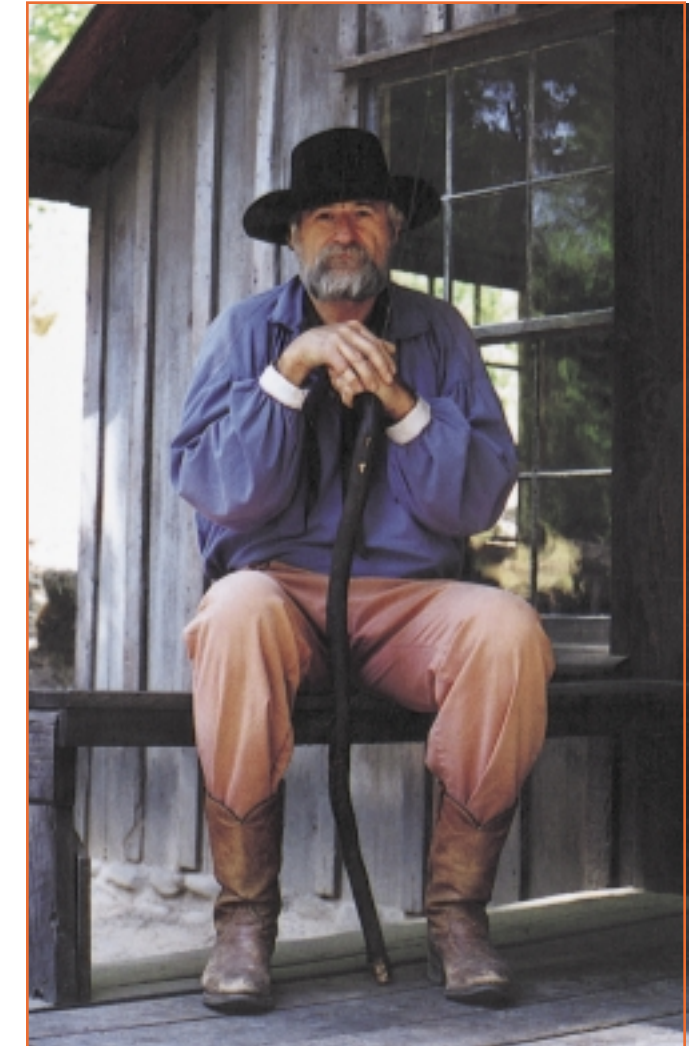
The Sacramento Municipal Utility District was created on July 2, 1923 by popular vote of the residents of Sacramento. From its inception, the SMUD Board of Directors saw the advantage of hydroelectric power generation in the Silver Creek basin. Nevertheless, by 1947, when SMUD officially took over the electric distribution system for Sacramento from PG&E, it produced no power of its own, instead buying electricity from other utilities and agencies. In 1948, SMUD took its first step

toward generating its own power by introducing plans to build the UARP.

The early plans for the UARP were designed to meet a moderate level of around-the-clock electric demand. However, rapidly changing patterns of demand during the postwar economic boom of 1945-1960 led to a different design. During those years, SMUD customers grew from 65,000 to 170,000, electrical demand more than tripled, and the sales of room air conditioners grew exponentially. And in 1960, for the first time, demand for electricity during the summer exceeded demand during the winter. As those changes unfolded, the UARP plans were revised to meet the peak demand of SMUD customers.

On August 28, 1957, the Federal Power Commission issued a license to SMUD for construction of the UARP. SMUD began construction in September 1957, and first produced electricity at the Jaybird Powerhouse on May 1, 1961. It took more than a thousand workers 10 years to complete the entire system of dams, reservoirs, tunnels and powerhouses. Crews often worked through the night, drilling and blasting through solid granite to create underground water tunnels.

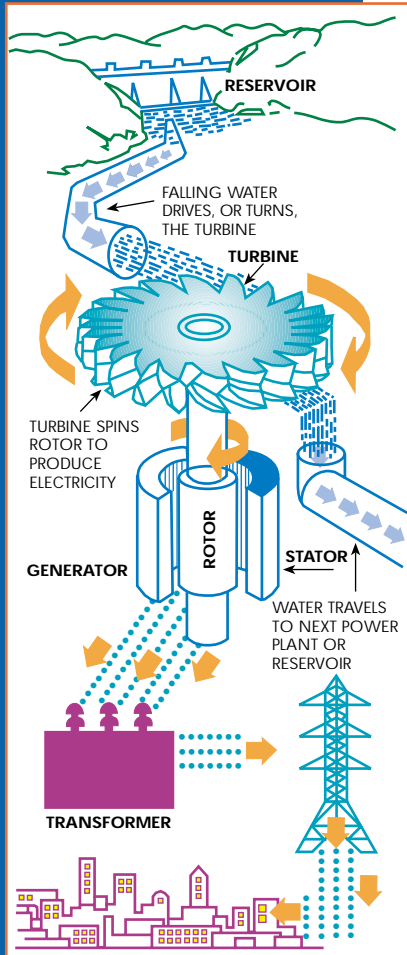
In 1971, SMUD completed the Loon Lake powerhouse. This underground powerhouse is



Bill Demerritt Jr., retired SMUD hydro employee, portraying James Marshall at the Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park in Coloma. Bill has donated more than 3,000 hours to the Gold Discovery Park Association since becoming a docent in 1989.

located in a manmade cavern carved out of solid rock 1,200 feet below the surface of Loon Lake. SMUD added the Jones Fork powerhouse and tunnel to the UARP in the early 1980s, completing construction in 1985.

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The UARP Today

As the term of the initial operating license comes to a close and SMUD looks to the next term, the UARP continues to operate as a hydroelectric project offering many benefits to the citizens of Sacramento and El Dorado Counties. Not only does it provide economical and reliable power from a non-polluting fuel source, it also offers local jobs in the maintenance and operations workforce and substantial recreational opportunities.

Today, tourism – based primarily on historical interest, agriculture and recreation – ranks as the leading industry in El Dorado County. Located in the general vicinity of the UARP are dozens of ranches, orchards, farms and vineyards set amidst breathtaking vistas of the High Sierra. Equally attractive are the numerous streams and lakes scattered among the varied landscapes of the foothill and mountain regions. These features of the project vicinity, coupled with the fact that over half of El Dorado County is in public ownership, afford both residents and visitors a wide spectrum of recreational opportunities. The UARP – with over 700 developed lakeside campsites, boat launch facilities, miles of trails and seasonal flow regulation benefits to whitewater boating below Chili Bar – contributes to the tourism industry and quality of life in El Dorado and Sacramento Counties.



For additional information, please contact:

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