



SWEETWATER AUTHORITY

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GOVERNING BOARD

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CARLOS QUINTERO
GENERAL MANAGER

January 31, 2023

Dear Ms. Rafferty,

In regards to the recent article “Storm destroys fishing float at Loveland Reservoir – after Sweetwater Authority drained water to historic low” published on January 25, 2023 Sweetwater Authority would like to provide corrections to factual inaccuracies and additional information. The points from the article are listed in the first bullet, and the information from the Authority is provided in the second.

- “When Sweetwater Authority authorized draining Loveland Reservoir down to dead pool status over public objections, it left an L-shaped floating fishing dock paid for by taxpayers through a federal HUD grant perched on dry land.”
 - The fishing dock was already on dry land before the controlled water transfer from Loveland Reservoir to Sweetwater Reservoir, due to the reservoir water level before the controlled water transfer.
- “This would never have happened if Sweetwater left minimum pool in the like they promised HUD and Congress in their grant solicitation.”
 - There has never been a promise of a minimum pool for the Loveland Recreation Program. Documents for the grant indicated installation of a fishing float, which could be moved as required to accommodate fluctuating reservoir water levels and to provide a stable fishing platform for anglers, however, this can only be moved within the limits of the recreation area.
- “Walsh says the draining caused “massive erosion” that has many ramifications”
 - Areas eroded by recent storms in the Loveland Recreation Program area were already above the water level before the controlled water transfer from Loveland to Sweetwater Reservoir, so indicated that draining the reservoir led to massive erosion is not accurate.
- “The next speaker, Russell Walsh, noted that a bond measure passed was “specifically pushed by the division of safety of dams to correct problems at Sweetwater Dam” but that none of the items specified for the bond have been done. Fix Sweetwater dam and Loveland stairwell were among those items. “Your agency is not meriting public funding like this when bond money is treated like this, especially bond measure gotten by order of the division of Safety of Dams.”
 - There were several eligible projects to use the mentioned bond funding, with the Sweetwater Dam improvements/repairs being one of them. However, the Division of Safety of Dams ordered a Comprehensive Assessment of Sweetwater Dam after final design plans for Sweetwater Dam improvements/repairs were submitted to the Division of Safety of Dams for approval, putting a halt to previously proposed improvements/repairs at Sweetwater Dam until the Comprehensive Assessment is completed, estimated in October 2024. Therefore, bond funds were used on other





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eligible projects, such as replacement of a 36-inch transmission water main in Bonita. Documentation reflecting the scope of the bond has been provided to Russell Walsh.

- “He also said the drought was not a sufficient reason given levels of state reservoirs, and said claiming a need to drain the lake or change valves was also a hoax”
 - Local water is far less expensive to produce than imported water from Northern California or the Colorado River. Although there are plans to replace valves at Loveland Dam in the future, the controlled water transfer initiated on November 15 was to address local drought conditions and not to replace the valves at Loveland Dam.
- “Mike Simpson said he toured the area around Loveland and took photos, adding, “draining Loveland to dead pool level is unacceptable. He, too, warned of fire danger by removing a water source used by firefighters in the past, adding pointedly that if “property burns or citizens are injured because of lack of water to put out fires, Sweetwater would be liable and responsible.”
 - Before the controlled water transfer initiated on November 15, Cal Fire did not raise any concerns and indicated that if any lake water would be needed for firefighting purposes, that they would just go to a different water source and would note on their map of available water sources that Loveland might not have sufficient water.

Finally, I would like to point out that Loveland Reservoir has been operated as a water supply facility since its construction in the mid-1940s. Recreation activities, such as fishing have been allowed provided there is sufficient water in storage. At no point in time has Sweetwater Authority, or its predecessors, relinquished water rights for fishing or any other purpose.

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to make corrections to article. If you have any questions, please contact Leslie Payne, Public Affairs Manager, at 619-409-6723 or lpayne@sweetwater.org

Sincerely,

Carlos Quintero
General Manager

