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Second Construction Season Begins on the San Clemente Dam Removal Project

PACIFIC GROVE, Calif.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--April 22, 2014--

California American Water, with partners NOAA Fisheries and the California State Coastal Conservancy, announced today that the second season of construction for the San Clemente Dam Removal Project will begin this May. The project's three year construction schedule began last summer and is on-track for completion next year. San Clemente Dam is a 106-foot-high concrete arch dam located 18 miles upstream from the Pacific Ocean on the Carmel River in Monterey County. It is the largest dam removal project in California history.

"It's great to see the work on schedule and proceeding as planned," said U.S. Representative Sam Farr. "As we celebrate Earth Day, the progress being made here is especially meaningful because, at its heart, removing this dam is not just about fixing safety issues; it's about restoring the Carmel River and its habitat."

In 1991, the California Department of Water Resources, Division of Safety of Dams, agreed with a California American Water consultant's assertion that the San Clemente Dam in Monterey County was inadequate for seismic stability and flood safety. After years of study, the California Department of Water Resources and Army Corps of Engineers evaluated five options to address the safety issues.

The option to remove the dam with a plan to reroute the river around the silt that had accumulated behind the dam was favored by environmental groups and public agencies concerned with protection and enhancement of the Carmel River ecosystem. The project design involves an innovative engineering approach to reroute a half-mile portion of the Carmel River into San Clemente Creek and use the abandoned reach as a sediment storage area.

"When this project is complete, you won't even be able to tell a dam was ever there," said California Coastal Conservancy Executive Officer, Sam Schuchat. "By removing the dam, we will be providing access to over 25 miles of spawning and rearing habitat for the threatened steelhead trout and we'll also open over 900 acres of watershed lands to the public."

"About 175 people will be directly employed by the project this summer," said California American Water President Rob MacLean. "That doesn't include outside vendors and suppliers. All that activity translates into about \$150 million of economic output for the area. We're proud to be partners in this project, which benefits the environment, public safety and the local economy."

Construction activities completed last year included development of a new access road, preparation of the 68-acre construction site, partial construction of the Carmel River diversion system, completion of geotechnical investigations and relocation of fish and other wildlife. Work to be completed this year includes the permanent rerouting of the Carmel River to an alternate course that bypasses the 2.5 million cubic yards of sediment that has accumulated behind the dam. Partial removal of the dam will also begin this year, with full removal occurring next summer along with work to restore the natural character and habitat of the project site.

For more information on the Carmel River Reroute and San Clemente Dam Removal Project, visit www.sanclementedamremoval.org.

California American Water, a subsidiary of American Water (NYSE: AWK), provides high-quality and reliable water and/or wastewater services to approximately 600,000 people.

Founded in 1886, American Water is the largest publicly traded U.S. water and wastewater utility company. With headquarters in Voorhees, N.J., the company employs approximately 6,700 dedicated professionals who provide drinking water, wastewater and other related services to an estimated 14 million people in more than 30 states, and parts of Canada. More information can be found by visiting www.amwater.com.

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