



The Project

The Yuba–Bear Hydroelectric Project is owned and operated by the Nevada Irrigation District. It is one of the most complex hydropower projects in the state, and it is vital to NID operations.

NID maintains and operates the Project under an original 50-year license granted by the federal government in 1963. The District is currently in the process of completing a multi-year effort to relicense the Yuba-Bear Project with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

The Project consists of:

- **Nine on-stream reservoirs** (Jackson Meadows and Milton reservoirs on the Middle Yuba River; Jackson Lake on Jackson Creek; French, Faucherie, Sawmill and Bowman lakes on Canyon Creek; and Dutch Flat Afterbay and Rollins Reservoir on the Bear River)
- **Three off-stream impoundments** (Dutch Flat Forebay, Little York Basin and Chicago Park Forebay)
- **Two diversion dams** (Texas Creek and Fall Creek)
- **Four powerhouses** (Bowman, Dutch Flat, Chicago Park and Rollins)
- One overhead, **60 kilovolt transmission line** (Bowman-Spaulding)
- Various water conduits, recreation facilities and appurtenant facilities and structures

The combined gross storage capacity of the Project is about 207,865 acre-feet of water and the installed electric generation capacity is 79.32 megawatts.



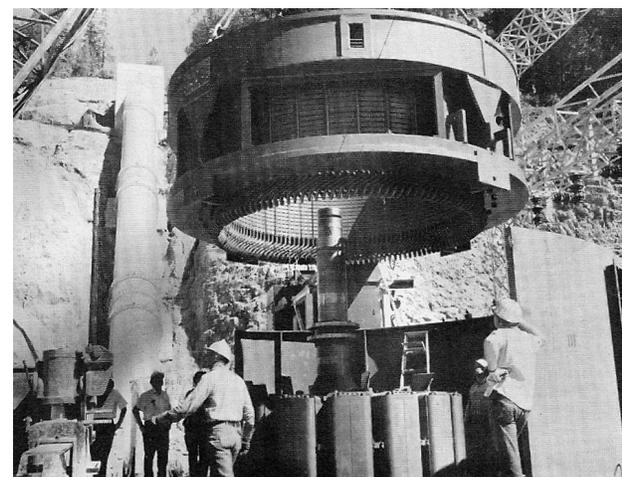
Bowman Dam

History

The Yuba–Bear project was incepted in 1962. To finance the huge undertaking, NID proposed a \$65 million (about \$643 million in 2023 dollars) bond issue for construction. In an August 7, 1962 election, NID voters passed the bond issue by an overwhelming 97 percent support (2,225 to 59 votes) for construction of the project.

Sweetening the deal, power generated by the project would be sold to PG&E, which would, in turn, repay the bonds issued to build it.

The Project was constructed from 1963-66. It remains a very important milestone in NID history. It brought not only power generation capability, but new reservoirs and canal systems and, most importantly, created an additional 145,000 acre-feet of water storage for NID customers.



Dutch Flat Powerhouse 1965



Yuba-Bear Hydroelectric Project



The water source for the Yuba-Bear Hydroelectric Project is high in the Sierra Nevada: the Middle Yuba River and Canyon Creek (a tributary of the South Yuba River).

Jackson Meadows Dam stores water from the Middle Yuba River. That water is diverted south through the Milton-Bowman Diversion Conduit into Bowman Lake, an impoundment of Canyon Creek. In addition to Jackson Meadows and Bowman reservoirs, the Yuba-Bear project collects water from 14 smaller high elevation Sierra lakes.

After passing through Bowman Powerhouse, the water continues south via the Bowman–Spaulding Conduit to Lake Spaulding, which is part of the Drum-Spaulding Hydroelectric Project owned by PG&E. Lake Spaulding is an impoundment of the South Yuba River, and is an important hub of the system as nearly all the water used by both projects passes through it.

Below Lake Spaulding water passes through Drum-Spaulding Project canals through Emigrant Gap into the upper Bear River, where it powers six hydroelectric plants on its long descent to Rollins Reservoir, the lower-most major reservoir of the Yuba-Bear project. NID operates two of these plants (Dutch Flat No. 2 and Chicago Park), in addition to a small powerhouse below Rollins Dam.