SAN LUIS JOINT-USE COMPLEX

The San Luis Joint-Use Complex serves the California State Water Project (SWP) and the Federal Central Valley Project (CVP). The complex is operated and maintained by the California Department of Water Resources. The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, builder and operator of the Central Valley Project, constructed the complex. Cost and use of these joint facilities are shared approximately 55 percent by the State and 45 percent by the Federal government.

The Joint-Use complex, located off Highway 152, eight miles west of Interstate 5, includes O'Neill Dam and Forebay, Sisk Dam, San Luis Reservoir, Gianelli Pumping-Generating Plant, Dos Amigos Pumping Plant, Los Banos and Little Panoche detention dams and reservoirs and a 103-mile portion of the California Aqueduct.

RESERVOIR AND FOREBAY STATISTICS

San Luis Reservoir

Gross capacity	2,027,840 acre-feet
Federal capacity	965,660 acre-feet
State capacity	1,062,180 acre-feet
Shoreline	65 miles
Surface area	12,520 acres
Maximum depth	274 feet
Length of dam	18,600 feet
Height of dam	385 feet
Dam crest elevation	554 feet

O'Neill Forebay

Gross capacity	56,430 acre-feet
Shoreline	12 miles
Surface area	2,700 acres
Maximum depth	40 feet
Length of dam	14,350 feet
Height of dam	88 feet
Dam crest elevation	233 feet

Located 12 miles west of Los Banos, the Gianelli Pumping-Generating Plant (lower right) pumps water from O'Neill Forebay into San Luis Reservoir (below), a key conservation facility that provides off-stream storage for the SWP and CVP.

Our Mission

To manage the water resources of California in cooperation with other agencies, to benefit the State's people, and to protect, restore and enhance the natural and human environments.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit DWR's Website at
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CALIFORNIA'S STATE WATER PROJECT

SAN LUIS
JOINT-USE COMPLEX

SAN LUIS RESERVOIR

O'NEILL FOREBAY

GIANELLI PUMPING-GENERATING PLANT

THE STATE WATER PROJECT

Planned, designed, constructed and operated by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), the State Water Project (SWP) is the largest state-built, multi-purpose water project in the United States.

The SWP, spanning more than 600 miles from Northern California to Southern California, includes 34 storage facilities, 20 pumping plants, four pumping-generating plants, five hydroelectric power plants and approximately 700 miles of canals, tunnels and pipelines.

The SWP's main purpose is to provide a water supply—that is, to divert and store water during wet periods and distribute it to areas of need during dry periods in Northern California, the San Francisco Bay area, the San Joaquin Valley, the Central Coast and Southern California. Other project purposes include flood control, power generation, recreation, fish and wildlife enhancement and water quality improvements to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

The $1.75 billion bond measure approved in 1960 provided initial funding for the SWP and payments received from 29 contracting agencies are paying off the bonds. These 29 urban and agricultural water agencies have long-term contracts for the delivery of SWP water. Approximately 70 percent of SWP water goes to urban users and 30 percent to agricultural users. These SWP contracting agencies are repaying the cost, including interest, of financing, building, operating and maintaining the SWP water storage and delivery system.

HISTORY OF CONSTRUCTION

On August 18, 1962, President John F. Kennedy led the official groundbreaking ceremonies for the San Luis Joint-Use Complex. The event was the result of a 1961 agreement between California and the Federal government to build the facilities, since both State and Federal water projects required the development of the B.F. Sisk San Luis Dam site for storage of flows pumped from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The agreement integrated storage,

pumping-generating and conveyance facilities for State and Federal water operations.

Construction of the Sisk and O'Neill dams began in 1963 and was completed in 1967. Although water was first pumped into San Luis Reservoir for storage on April 12, 1967, it was filled for the first time on May 31, 1969.

SAN LUIS RESERVOIR

Located in the eastern foothills of the Diablo Mountain Range, San Luis Reservoir is the largest off-stream reservoir in the United States. (An off-stream reservoir is a reservoir filled with water pumped from a source other than its natural watershed.)

San Luis Reservoir holds water originally captured from rainfall and snowmelt stored in Shasta Lake (Federal) and Lake Oroville (State) that flows through the Delta and is pumped into the California Aqueduct (SWP) and the Delta-Mendota Canal (CVP). As needed, water is pumped back to O'Neill Forebay to State and Federal customers that have contracted to receive it. They are located on the west side of the San Joaquin Valley, the Central Coast, and Southern California as well as San Benito and Santa Clara counties.

San Luis Reservoir can store 2,027,840 acre-feet, of which 1,062,180 acre-feet is the State's share. (An acre-foot is 325,851 gallons, often described as the amount of water two families use in a year.)

FACILITY NAMES

Gianelli Pumping-Generating Plant, located between San Luis Reservoir and O'Neill Forebay, is named for the former Director of the California Department of Water Resources (1967–73) William R. Gianelli. He is credited with completing the initial phase of the State Water Project, which included the first deliveries of water to Southern California.

Sisk Dam, which retains San Luis Reservoir, was named to acknowledge the role of the late Congressman B.F. Sisk of Fresno, a prime supporter of California water development, including the Central Valley Project. He introduced the Federal legislation authorizing the San Luis Unit of the Central Valley Project.

RECREATION

At O'Neill Forebay, you can fish, swim, boat, wind surf, jet ski and water ski. Trophy size bass have been caught in O'Neill Forebay. Two sandy beaches and dozens of picnic tables are found along the shoreline. Campsites are available along the O'Neill Forebay shoreline and at San Luis Reservoir's Basalt recreation area, which also has a boat launching ramp and picnic facilities near the boat ramp. On the west end of the reservoir, you will find the Dinosaur Point boat launching ramp and picnic facilities.

Since wind conditions can change rapidly, boaters should heed wind warning lights at the Romero Visitors Center and near the boat launches, as well as on shores of O'Neill Forebay. A yellow light means you should exercise great care; a red light signals danger—you should stay off or get off the water. For wind information, call 1-800-805-4805. For camping and boating information, visit the California Department of Parks and Recreation website at **www.parks.ca.gov.**

VISITORS CENTER

In the Romero Overlook Visitors Center, photos, wall displays, movies and videos tell the story of the State Water Project, the Federal Central Valley Project and why the San Luis Joint-Use Complex was developed and constructed to combine State-Federal operations. Free telescopes at the Center offer spectacular views of the area. The Visitors Center, staffed by Department of Water Resources' guides, is open daily from 9am to 5pm and only closed on New Year's Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas. There is no charge. To contact the Romero Visitors Center, call 209-827-5353.