



**Action Item:** Consideration of Resolution No. 2011-03 regarding the renaming of the Thermalito Pumping-Generating Plant in Honor of Ronald B. Robie

This item will be heard at 1:00 pm

The Water Commission will take public testimony and consider a proposal to acknowledge the significant and lasting contributions of Justice Ronald Robie to water management and environmental protection in California by naming the State Water Project Thermalito Pumping –Generating Plant in his honor. The new name of the facility would be Ronald B. Robie Thermalito Pumping-Generating Plant.

*Statutory Authority: The California Water Commission shall have the power to name all facilities of the State Water Resources Development System owned by the State. The commission may receive testimony from the public on matters involving its responsibilities under this section, and, after public hearing for the purpose of considering all proposed names for such facilities, may, by resolution express its decision regarding the naming of specific facilities of the State Water Resources Development System. CWC §161.5*

#### Previous Water Commission Activities on Issue

On July 20, 2011, the Water Commission was briefed on a request to consider naming Thermalito Pumping-Generating Plant for Justice Ronald Robie, former DWR Director. Letters of support for the proposal were received from Justice Arthur Scotland, Third District Court of Appeal; Thomas Birmingham, Westlands Water District; Jeffrey Kightlinger, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California; Eric Garner and Jeffrey Dunn, Best Best and Krieger; Rita Schmidt Sudman, Water Education Foundation; and Edward Tiedemann, Kronick, Moskovitz, Tiedemann & Girard.

On August 17, 2011, the Water Commission adopted its Procedures for Naming State Water Facilities and received a Staff Report. The report provided background information on the proposal and identified support from Department of Water Resources Director Mark Cowin and

Deputy Director of the State Water Project, Ralph Torres. The procedures document and staff report are attached.

Following the August 17 meeting, CWC staff sent letters to Butte County agencies and officials informing them of the proposed name change and inviting their comments. The letter and a list of recipients are attached.

### September 21 Public Hearing

In accordance with CWC policies, the Commission will hold a public hearing as part of its September 21 regular monthly meeting to receive comment and testimony on the proposed name change. It is expected that representatives from the State Water Project offices in Sacramento and the Oroville Field Division and representatives from the State Water Contractors will attend the hearing and speak in favor of the proposal. There is no known opposition.

After receiving public testimony, the Commission may vote on a resolution regarding the naming of the specific facility.

### Background on Thermalito Pumping-Generating Plant

NOTE: This material was previously presented to the Commission in August 2011

The Thermalito Pumping-Generating Plant is part of the State Water Project's Oroville-Thermalito Complex, a water and power system that stores about 3.5 million acre-feet and generates power from water releases.

Located about four miles west of the city of Oroville in Butte County, the plant is operated in tandem with Hyatt Powerplant and Thermalito Diversion Dam Powerplant to produce power.

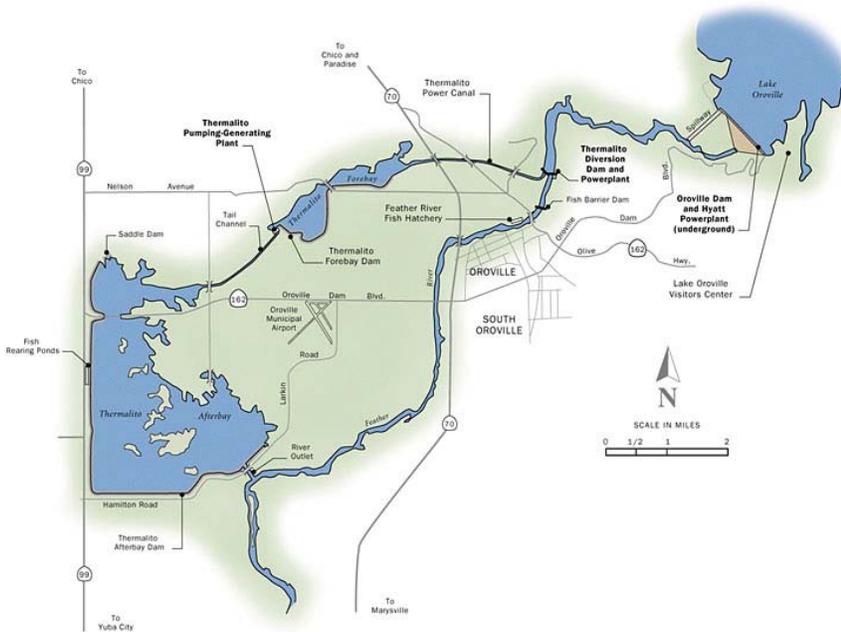
Water released from Lake Oroville is used to produce electricity at Hyatt Powerplant, located in the bedrock beneath Oroville Dam. This water flows into the Thermalito Diversion Pool where it is diverted into the Thermalito Power Canal or released into Feather River through the Thermalito Diversion Dam Powerplant which generates additional electricity.

Water diverted into the Thermalito Power Canal flows into Thermalito Forebay and through the Thermalito Pumping-Generating Plant to produce more electricity before entering Thermalito Afterbay. Water is then released back into the Feather River at the Thermalito Afterbay River Outlet.

To further maximize the efficiency of the Oroville facilities, water that is released for power in excess of local and downstream requirements is conserved by pumpback operations into Lake Oroville during off-peak hours. The water can then be released again for power generation during peak power demand.

Construction on the plant began in 1964 and with operations starting in 1968.





Background on Justice Ron Robie

As Director from 1975 to 1983, Ron Robie's tenure was the second longest in DWR's history. Robie led the department through a serious drought in 1976-77, and was instrumental in recognizing environmental forces and implementing conservation measures which resulted in innovative water management and storage projects.

Among his most significant and lasting contributions were for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and power supply issues for the State Water Project. One of the attached articles from

DWR NEWS/People was authored by Judge Robie in late 2010 and provides a first-hand account of the challenges and tremendous accomplishments during his years as Director. The second provides an overview of his distinguished career.

Prior to his appointment as DWR by Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr., Robie was an adjunct professor of law at the McGeorge School of Law and a member of the State Water Resources Control Board. He also served as a consultant to the Assembly Water Committee from 1961 to 1969 and in that capacity, played a major role in the development of the Porter-Cologne water quality act.

Appointed as a municipal court judge in 1983, Robie was later elected to a seat on the Sacramento County Superior Court. In 2002, Governor Gray Davis appointed Robie to the California Court of Appeal, Third Appellate District. He was named "Judge of the Year" by the Sacramento County Bar Association in 2002 and is considered one of the state's leading experts on water law issues. He has taught water law and environmental law at the University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law, since 1970 and is Chair of the Governing Committee of the California Center for Judicial Education and Research.

### **Attachments**

CWC Procedures for Naming State Water Project Facilities, Adopted August 17, 2011

CWC Staff Report on Proposal to Rename Thermalito Pumping-Generating Plan, August 17, 2011

Letter of Support, Justice Arthur G. Scotland

Letter of Support, Westlands Water District

Letter of Support, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

Letter of Support, Best Best & Krieger

Letter of Support, Water Education Foundation

Letter of Support, Kronick, Moskovitz, Tiedemann & Girard

Letter to Community Officials and Organizations, August 2011

*Highlights of the State Water Project, SWP 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, DWR News/People Fall 2010*

*Ronald B. Robie, SWP 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, DWR News/People Fall 2010*

### **Contact**

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