

California Department of Water Resources NEWS

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Sacramento Weir Scheduled to Open New Year's Day

The Department of Water Resources today announced that some gates on the Sacramento Weir will be opened about 9 am on Wednesday, January 1, 1997.

It will mark the first time the Sacramento Weir has been opened since March, 1995, a period of high runoff from wet storms.

The weir is a concrete flood overflow structure 1,920 feet long in the west levee of the Sacramento River. It is about four miles upstream of Sacramento's Tower Bridge, and about three miles upstream from the mouth of the American River.

The chief purpose of the Sacramento Weir is to protect the City of Sacramento from excessively high flood stages in the Sacramento River downstream of the American River.

Under rules developed by the US Army Corps of Engineers, the Sacramento Weir is opened after the Sacramento River at Sacramento's I Street Bridge hits the 27.5 foot stage.

The weir is the furthest downstream of five overflow waterways along the Sacramento River between Butte City and Sacramento, which are used to divert runoff into the Sutter and Yolo Bypasses.

The Yolo Bypass is a broad leveed floodway channel which in wet years is used to safely conduct a high volume of water to the Delta, water which can't be contained within the lower Sacramento River.

The Sacramento Weir is the only operable weir along the Sacramento River. Four other "passive" weirs farther north (Moulton, Colusa, Tisdale, and Fremont) already are easing flow pressures on the Sacramento River. The passive weirs have a fixed crest elevation that allows excess floodwaters to flow

from river channels into the natural Butte Basin, Sutter Bypass and Yolo Bypass.

The Sacramento Weir consists of 48 gates which can be opened to send water west down the mile-long Sacramento Bypass into the Yolo Bypass.

Several of the gates are scheduled to be opened January 1, based on expected Sacramento River conditions and reservoir release schedules.

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The Department of Water Resources operates and maintains the State Water Project, provides dam safety and flood control and inspection services, assists local water districts in water management and water conservation planning, and plans for future statewide water needs. The State Water Project provides water to two-thirds of California's population.

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