

The California State Water Project

WHAT IS IT?

Planned, designed, built, and operated by the California Department of Water Resources, the State Water Project (SWP) is the largest state-built multipurpose water project in the U.S. It is a water delivery system of 29 storage facilities, 18 pumping plants, four pumping-generating plants, five hydroelectric power plants, and approximately 600 miles of canals and pipelines.

WHY WAS IT BUILT?

California's water supply varies from year to year, season to season and area to area. The major water sources are in northern California, while the major urban centers and agricultural lands are in the northern Bay area, central valley, and southern California. Seventy percent of the total stream runoff is north of Sacramento, but 80 percent of the water demand is south of that city. The SWP's main purpose is water supply. The project diverts and stores surplus water during wet periods and distributes it to areas of need in Northern California, the San Francisco Bay area, the San Joaquin Valley, the Central Coast, and Southern California.

Other project benefits are flood control, power generation, recreation, fish and wildlife enhancement, and water quality improvement in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

WHERE IS IT?

The Project extends for more than 600 miles north to south through the State. Water first stored in Lake Oroville in Butte County flows through the Hyatt and Thermalito hydroelectric plants and reenters the natural channel of the Feather River. From here, the water winds its way to the Sacramento River and to the Delta.

The 444-mile California Aqueduct begins at the Delta Pumping Plant in the south Delta. The Aqueduct carries water southward through the San Joaquin Valley over the Tehachapi Mountains and into southern California, where the Aqueduct divides. The West Branch terminates at Castaic Lake in north Los Angeles County, while the East Branch ends at Lake Perris in Riverside County.

WHO PAYS FOR IT?

The 29 contracting agencies that receive SWP Water are paying for its major costs. A \$1.75 billion bond issued in 1960 provided the initial funding. Payments received from the contracting agencies are paying off the bonds.

WHEN WAS IT BUILT?

Construction of the Project began in 1957. Although the initial facilities were completed in 1973, the expansion of SWP facilities continues.

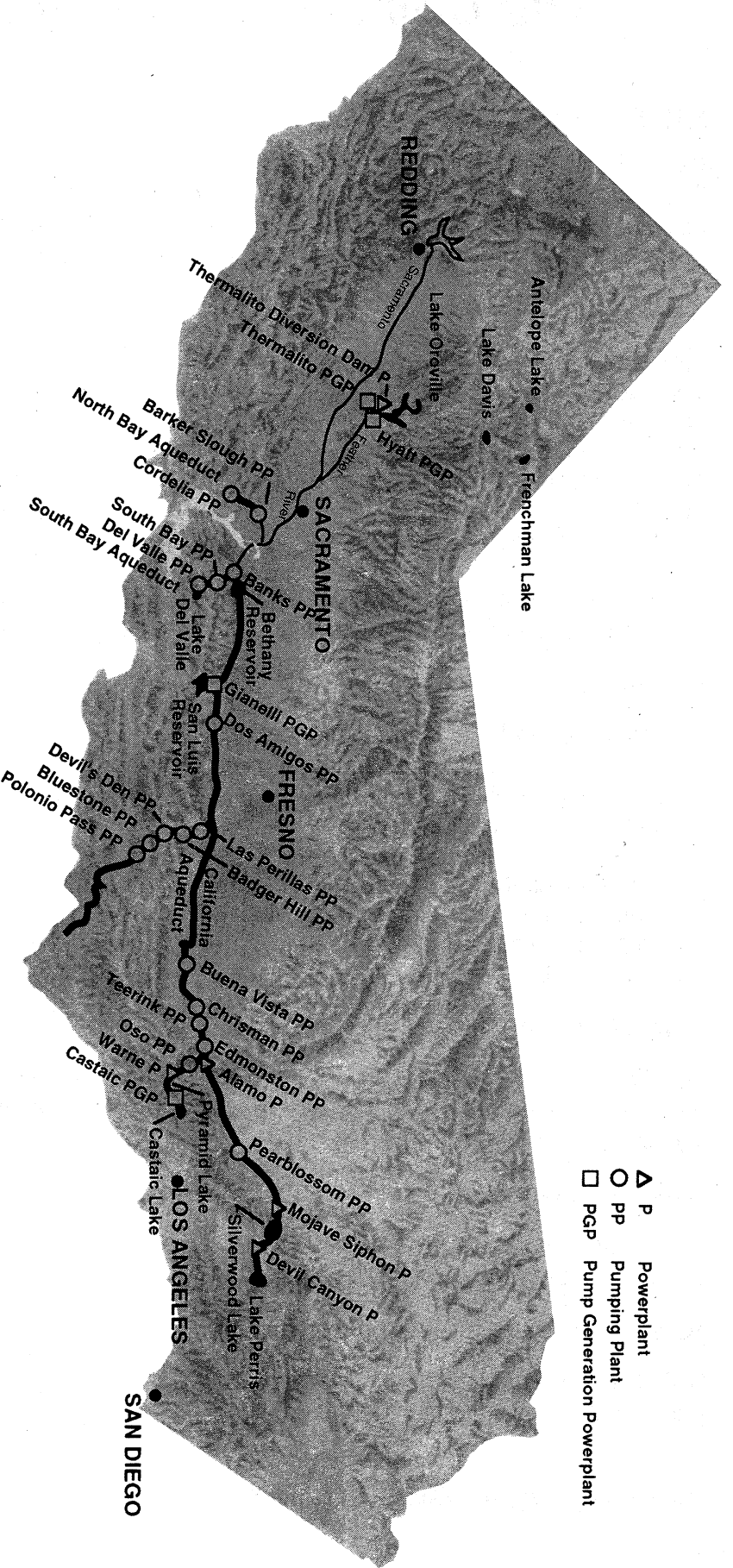
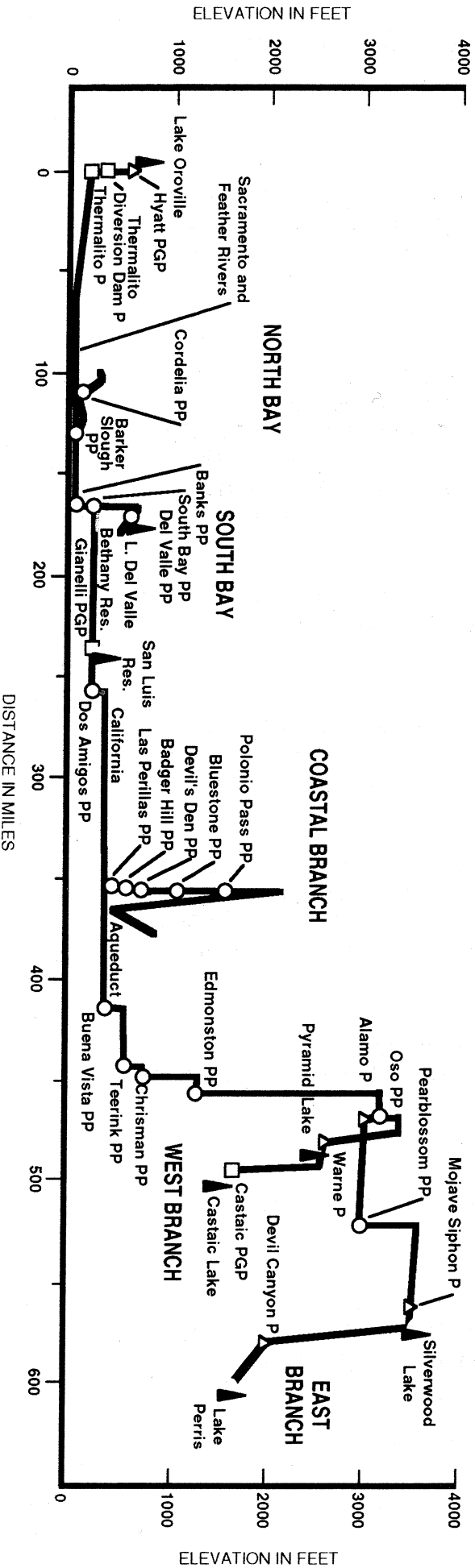
HOW MUCH WATER IS DELIVERED?

With its existing facilities, the Project can deliver 2.3 million acre-feet*, somewhat more in wet years. At full capacity, the Project would eventually deliver 4.2 million acre-feet a year.

*An acre-foot is 326,000 gallons, enough supply for one to two average families a year.

Revised 6/97

Location and Profile of State Water Project Facilities



- △ P Powerplant
- PP Pumping Plant
- PGP Pump Generation Powerplant