



THREE RIVERS LEVEE IMPROVEMENT AUTHORITY

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\$192 MILLION SECURED FOR FLOOD PROTECTION IN SOUTH YUBA COUNTY

YUBA COUNTY – The Three Rivers Levee Improvement Authority’s (TRLIA) hard-fought plans to break ground on the state’s largest setback levee were seemingly at risk last week, but a partnership between Yuba County and the Yuba County Water Agency (YCWA) assured that 200-year flood protection can be achieved for the south County.

In a deal mapped out last Thursday and Friday, the County and YCWA agreed to collectively borrow \$46.6 million to pay the bulk of local costs for the construction of the Feather River Setback Levee, a project designed to substantially improve flood protection in an area twice devastated by flooding in recent years. Contributions from Reclamation District 784 (\$1.4 million) and local developer Axel Karlshoej (\$5.3 million) will round out the local funding picture. Provisions for \$53.3 million in local funds were required to secure a \$138.5 million grant from the state Department of Water Resources, an amount which is expected to cover the remainder of the six-mile setback levee’s \$192 million cost.

“This is yet another example of strong local commitment to protect our residents and properties from flooding,” said Yuba County Supervisor Mary Jane Griego, chair of the TRLIA Board. “The Boards of TRLIA, the County and YCWA have stepped up to show the leadership necessary to secure the state grant and lead the way in Northern California for flood protection improvements.”

Originally, the County had offered to contribute \$23.3 million to the local funding cause, while nearly \$30 million was to have come from private-sector contributions from nine area developers. However, the plan was dashed when several developers wouldn't sign the agreement, prompting the County and YCWA to quickly devise an alternative strategy for funding.

“Our developers have provided \$78 million toward local levee improvements, which represents nearly half the resources we’ve invested to date,” said TRLIA Executive Director Paul Brunner. “Their partnership was pivotal

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in our ability to make progress in improving our flood protection system. Fortunately, the County and YCWA stepped up to provide the resources we need to complete the project.”

With approvals from the Boards of the County and YCWA in hand, TRLIA’s levee improvement program is now fully funded. Construction contracts are expected to be awarded next month with levee improvement work commencing shortly thereafter. Assuming cooperative weather and timely issuance of the remaining federal permits, a final portion of the setback levee is slated to be completed in 2008.

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The Three Rivers Levee Improvement Authority, a joint powers agency, was established in May 2004 by the county of Yuba and Reclamation district 784 to finance and construct levee improvements surrounding the south Yuba county area. Four work phases have been identified with the goal of achieving 200-year flood protection.