

Hetch Hetchy Is Drying Up

YOSEMITE (AP) — Hetch Hetchy Reservoir, the main source of water for San Francisco and some towns on the San Francisco Peninsula, is drying up.

The reservoir, located on the Tuolumne River in the High Sierras at Yosemite National Park, has dropped about 244 feet.

In a normal year, the reservoir holds 360,000 acre feet, and it is now down to 24,844 acre feet.

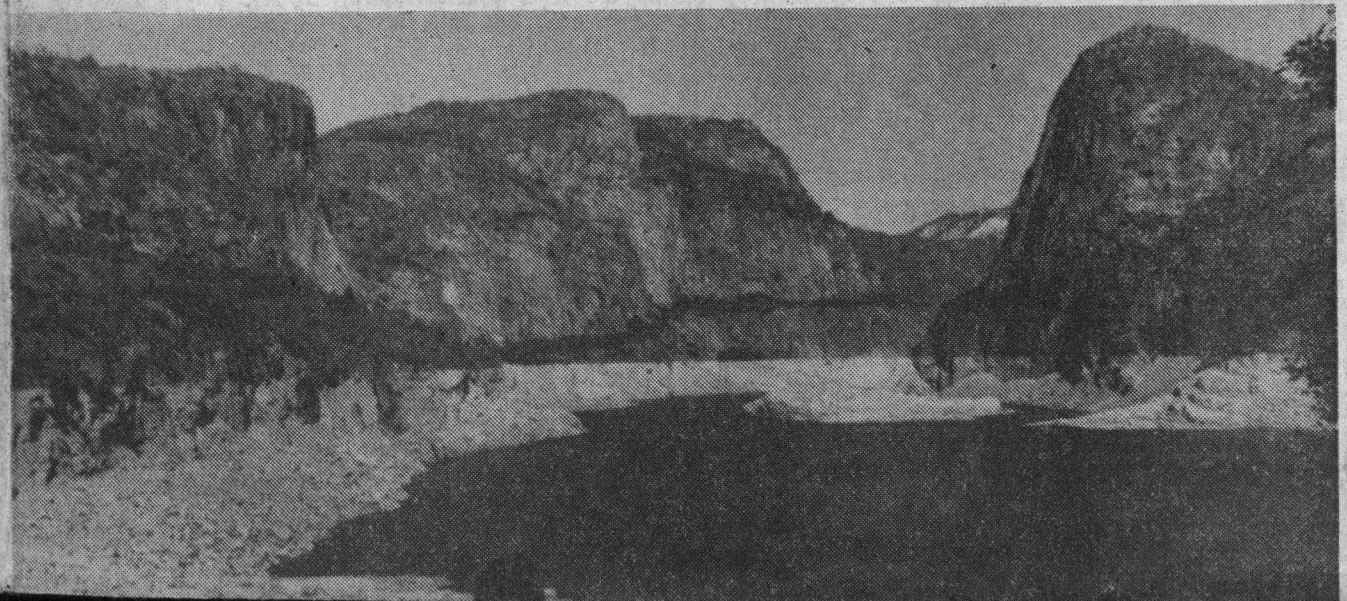
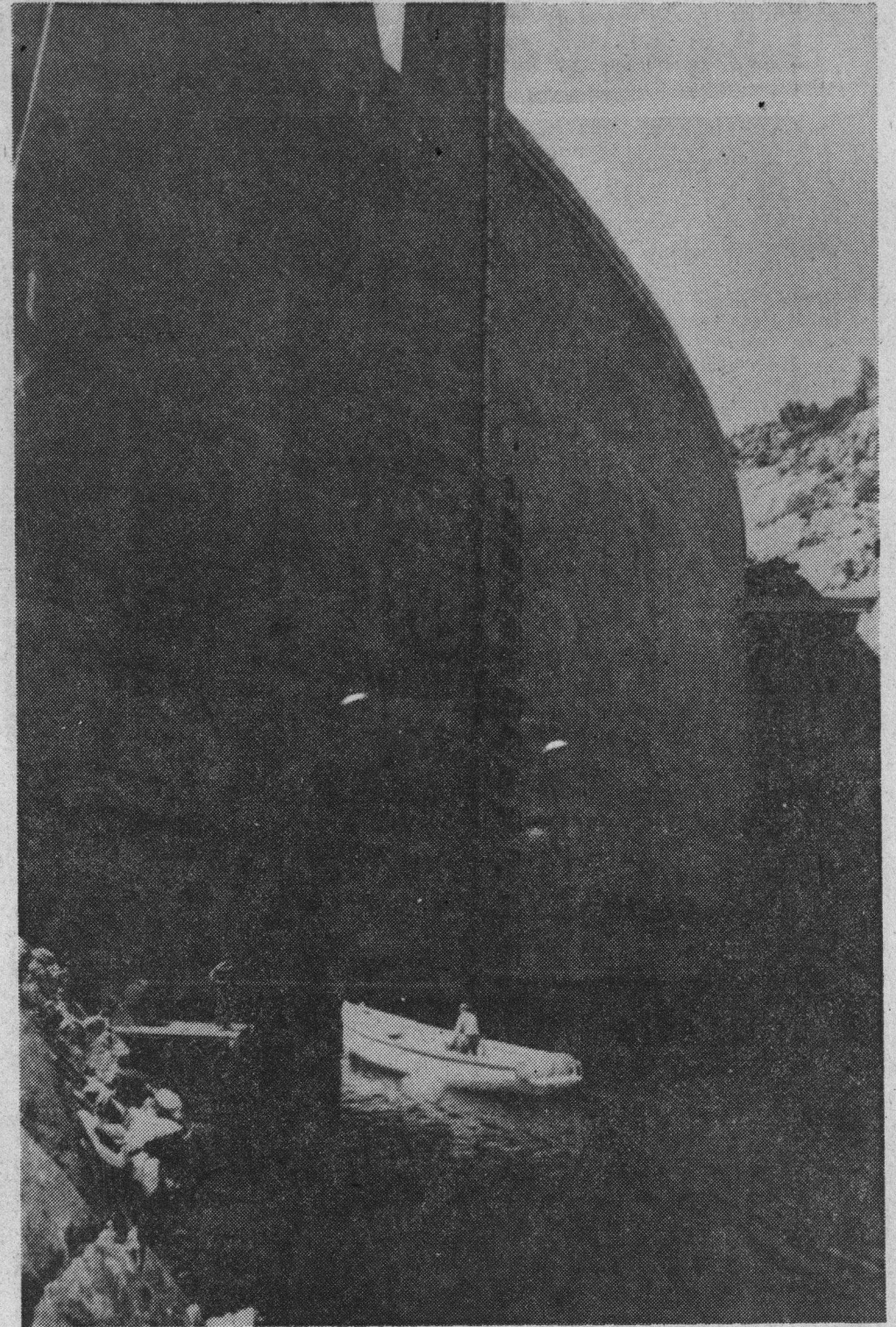
The Tuolumne River is presently flowing into the reservoir at a rate of about 240 acre feet a day, and the amount flowing out of the reservoir is about 330 acre feet a day.

Drought conditions have dropped the reservoir from its usual length of about seven miles down to three miles.

Leo Bauer, an official from Hetch Hetchy Water and Power, says without any more rain and with San Francisco's present rationing plan, the reservoir supply can last until about February of next year.

When the water leaves the reservoir, it flows down the Sierra slopes, across the San Joaquin Valley, through the Coast Range, and around San Francisco Bay until it reaches Crystal Springs, a reservoir on the San Francisco Peninsula.

Water shed workmen at San Francisco's Hetch Hetchy Reservoir in Yosemite National Park walk among huge boulders that normally would be under several hundred feet of water, upper left. A 30-foot boat is dwarfed by the massive dam at Hetch Hetchy, upper right. At capacity, the reservoir holds 360,000 acre feet of water. Because off the drought it now holds approximately 24,840 acre feet. Jay Vargas, water shed keeper, looks at the Tuolumne River trickling into the reservoir, left. At right, bleached rocks are a grim reminder of



Auburn Dam Controversy Stirs California Emotions

By RON ROACH

SACRAMENTO (AP) — Not an inch of its 700-foot-high wall has yet been built, but the Auburn Dam is stirring emotions as intense as California's thirst for water and its fear of earthquakes.

Political pressure favoring the dam, nestled in the High Sierra foothills, is riding high in the wake of President Carter's announcement last month that the dam is one of numerous projects he'll cut off pending further study.

Although the dam's water could not help the current drought, the fact that many Californians are drinking rationed water is a tremendous psychological ally for boosters of the dam.

So far the federal government has spent over \$200 million on the \$418 million dam, and environmentalists contend that money has been spent on a potential disaster — a dam which, if it ever crumbled, could make last year's Teton Dam break look minor.

If the dam ever broke, says Larry Moss of the Planning and Conservation League, it would unleash a wall of water 10 feet high, which would flood Sacramento and the surrounding area.

Defenders of the dam contend the structure can be engineered safely, and they say the state, now in the grip of a two-year drought, desperately needs the water.

The dam site in the American River North Fork canyon, 28 miles northeast of Sacramento, looks like a World War I battleground.

"It looks like Verdun," said an official of the state Seismic Safety Commission. "They've dug eight miles of trenches" where scores of geologists have combed the earth, looking for signs of recent earth movement.

Before Department of Interior hearings last month in Sacramento, a memo was leaked that was signed by nine U.S. Geological Survey scientists. It reported tentative evidence of a fault about a mile

from the dam site. The memo said the fault may be less than 70,000 years old, which scientists consider active.

The Bureau of Reclamation describes the memo as "inconclusive" and says review by other 38 geologists has produced no agreement on the age of the fault.

The Sierra foothills had long been considered relatively safe from earthquakes — until 1975, when a major temblor jarred Oroville, site of a huge land-fill dam. It survived undamaged, but state officials quickly launched inquiries of the Auburn Dam plans.

Shortly after that, the federal government delayed major contract bidding and authorized an independent study, which was requested before Carter's announcement of the project cuts.

Moss said the \$1 billion property damage and 11 lives lost at Grand Teton last year are minuscule compared to what could happen to the Sacramento area's 650,000 people. "You could multiply that \$1 billion by a factor of at least 100."

Congress authorized the dam in 1965, and it was to have been finished in 1974. But money shortages because of the Vietnam War prompted a new 1982 completion date, said Billy Martin, regional director of the Bureau of Reclamation.

The Auburn Dam decision may hinge on the report due in June by the Oakland firm of Woodward-Clyde Associates, internationally known reviewer of dam construction.

The study is to consider seismic hazards which Robert Olson, the state Seismic Safety Commission chief, describes as a "substantial question" not addressed in earlier reviews.

The state Seismic Safety Commission urges a six-month

to one-year, state-sponsored analysis of the Woodward-Clyde report, with findings released publicly.

Gov. Edmund Brown Jr. supports completion of the dam, if it can be built safely, and Ronald Robie, Brown's water chief, wants the federal government to hold up irreversible work on the dam and power house until the state is satisfied of the dam's safety.

"The commission is concerned with earthquake safety, not political pressures," Olson said. "Our job is to call it the way we see it."

Dam proponents such as Democratic Reps. John McFall and Harold "Bizz" Johnson feel the Auburn Dam storage capacity would keep parts of the San Joaquin Valley from drying up and blowing away.

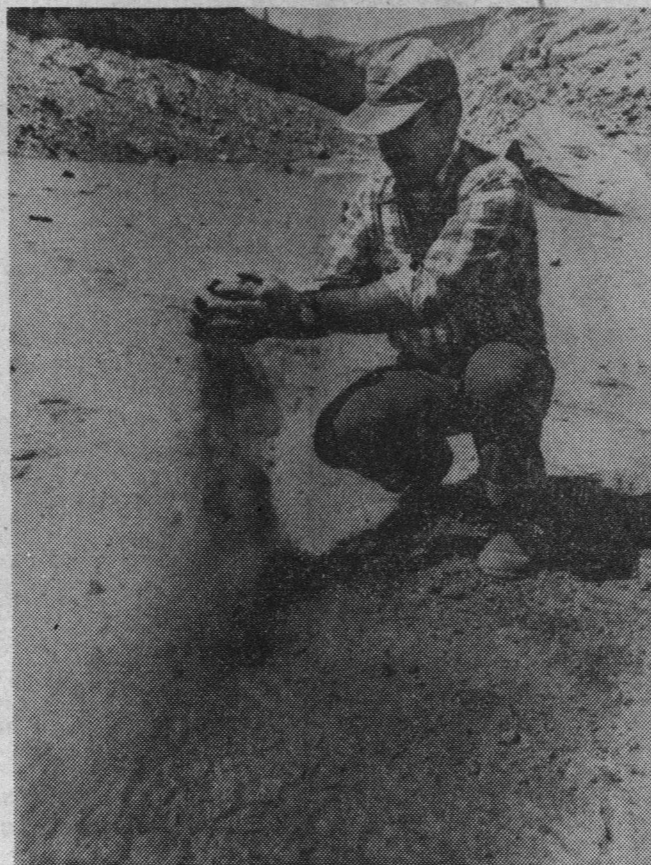
Thousands of jobs are at stake, both in building the dam and on farms which the additional water would irrigate, proponents say.

"Losses would be incalculable" to agriculture if the dam isn't built, as well as the more than \$600,000 canal planned to extend down into the valley, said McFall.

James Lee, president of the 340,000-member State Building and Construction Trades Council, said, "Modern engineering can build 30 and 40-story buildings in San Francisco and Los Angeles to withstand earthquakes. I'm confident the Auburn Dam can be built safely, too."

Herman Grabow, lobbyist for the California Grange, commented: "Everything man does is subject to possible destruction. The grange supports construction of the Auburn Dam even though nothing man builds is forever."

drought conditions. Below, Vargas lets powdery dust from bottom of reservoir sift through his hands. (AP Laserphotos by Walt Zeboski.



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