

Bay Street tank opens as Loch Lomond dips further

Lake level drops to 70% as restrictions continue

By J.M. BROWN

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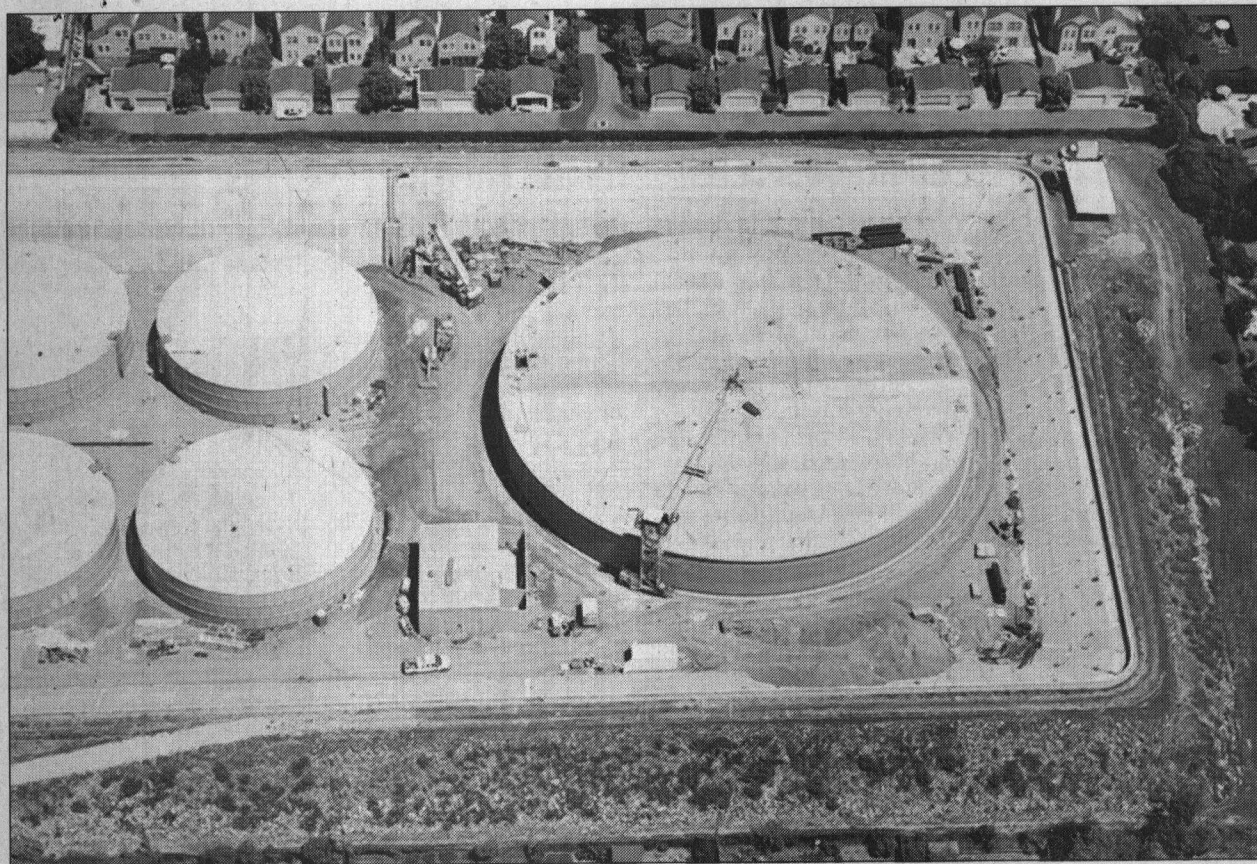
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SANTA CRUZ — Six years after the 89-year-old Bay Street Reservoir was demolished due to a crumbling roof, the first of two 6-million-gallon replacement tanks is in operation.

The tank came online last week after 18 months of construction, and work is expected to begin this fall on a second tank to be completed by the end of 2014.

Linette Almond, interim water director, said the tanks play an important role in managing supply for the city's 90,000 customers. Because they hold treated water, compared to the raw water in Loch Lomond Reservoir, the tanks provide a critical emergency supply.

SEE TANK ON A4



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The first of two 6-million-gallon replacement tanks, seen on the right, for the Bay Street Reservoir was put in operation last week.

TANK

Continued from A1

"Of the three tanks serving the system, the Bay Street tanks are the largest and most important to managing the system," Almond said.

There are also holding tanks near DeLaveaga Park and UC Santa Cruz.

The cost of the first Bay Street tank was about \$10 million and the estimated cost of the second is \$8 million. Ratepayers will cover 80 percent of the costs, and 20 percent will be covered through fees for new developments.

Neighbors of the Westside facility have dealt with years of noise, dust and other nuisances related to demolition and construction. But the city sent regular updates to neighbors as the project progressed and celebrated the opening of the first tank with them.

"I understand it's a very necessary thing, but for those of us who live around it, it's awesome, in a difficult way," said Madeline Crews, a three-decade resident of Iowa Drive. "I feel like I can't be anti the project because I realize it's important."

Construction began in



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Construction of the original Bay Street Reservoir in 1924.

1924 on the Bay Street Reservoir, a 35-million-gallon, open-air facility that held raw water from the North Coast streams. After about 50 years, the facility was outfitted with a roof once the site was converted to store treated water.

Weather eventually contributed to the deterioration of the roof's structure, and a study determined it was more costly to make repairs than to replace it. After the roof failed in 2006, the City Council approved the demolition, which began in 2007, and four 1.5-million-gallon temporary tanks were installed in 2008.

Construction on the first

6-million tank began in April 2012. Time and costs related to the second tank are expected to be less because less infrastructure is required.

LAKE IS LOW

Meanwhile, the 2.8-billion-gallon Loch Lomond has dipped to 70 percent of capacity after a second year of low rainfall. Dry conditions continued throughout October, with just a quarter-inch of monthly rainfall expected by Thursday compared to the average month-ending total of 1.5 inches.

It rained about 0.06 inches Monday, but it wasn't enough to make a difference.

"The thing we want people to know is that things are not back to normal again," conservation manager Toby Goddard said. "Even in spite of last night's beautiful sound on the roof, it's going to take several storms to begin to start the replenishment of supply."

Water officials had hoped to end the high-demand season Thursday at 75 percent capacity, but a reduction in diversions from the North Coast streams to restore fish habitat have compounded conditions that required tapping the lake, Goddard said. The North Coast provided 1 billion gallons of water last year but so far this year has produced only 200 million to 300 million gallons, with the city halting diversions on Laguna Creek since June.

A second year of customer restrictions was supposed to end Thursday but city officials agreed last week to extended the 5 percent curtailment until conditions improve. Under stage 1 shortfall restrictions, customers are not supposed to water landscapes between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. and restaurants should provide water only when asked.

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