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Building for dry tomorrow

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Federal permits last piece

May 26, 2008 11:52:00 PM

By Andrea Koskey/Appeal-Democrat

On Yuba County's Feather River levee, near Shanghai Bend, heavy machinery transports dirt to create room for a slurry wall.

Farther north, crews lay gravel on the land side of the levee for a seepage berm.

These projects and others are part of the final phase of levee improvements in Yuba County, culminating four years and \$400 million of work.

A slurry wall and seepage berm are meant to prevent a levee from becoming too saturated with water, threatening the strength of the levee.

The final phase is expected to be completed by the end of the year.

"So many people left after the '86 and '97 floods because they felt unsafe," said Supervisor Mary Jane Griego. "Now we can say we're the safest community in California."

This final phase, which includes the strengthen-in-place procedures such as the slurry wall and seepage berms on the north and south end of the levee, and a 6-mile setback between Shanghai and Star bends, is funded through Proposition 1E money and a joint loan from the county and the Yuba County Water Agency.

The county received more than \$138 million from the state through Proposition 1E, if it could come up with a \$53 million local match for the \$200 million project. That local match is made up of a \$46.6 million joint loan and \$6 million from Reclamation District 784.

Completion of the project is expected next month and construction on the setback levee is scheduled to begin next week, said Doug Handen, a consultant for the Three Rivers Levee Improvement Authority.

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Photos by Nick Adams/Appeal-Democrat
Excavators work on the slurry wall being built to reinforce the Feather River levee on the Yuba County side on Thursday. It is part of the final phase of \$400 million in levee improvements over the past four years.

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Once completed, the entire phase will protect the communities of West Linda, Olivehurst and Plumas Lake.

The last major hurdle the levee improvements face is obtaining federal permits to tie in the setback levee with the existing levee at Shanghai Bend and Star Bend. If obtained by September, work could be completed by December.

Paul Brunner, executive director of TRLIA, said because the permits are not yet approved, he's apprehensive to celebrate the completion of the project, but he is thrilled construction has gotten to this point.

"The entire project is doing one big push" to the end, he said. "We're moving forward as quickly as possible."

Crews from Nordic Industries Inc., were out in full force digging holes and laying gravel on Thursday. Nordic was awarded the contract last fall for this portion of levee improvements.

"Construction is the easy part," said Handen. "It's amazing how long permits can take."

Teichert Aggregates Inc., was awarded a contract for the setback levee May 20.

Griego, who is also the chair of the Three Rivers board, said four years ago flood control was her major issue.

"I didn't know how we were going to do it back then," she said.

Griego said the setback levee is what needed the most attention because it would relieve choke points in the river.

"Not only is it a benefit to us," she said, "but the entire region will benefit."

Know & Go

What: Setback levee groundbreaking ceremony

When: 10 a.m. Wednesday

Where: 1000 Anderson Avenue, at the intersection of Anderson Avenue and Feather River Boulevard.

RSVP: Call Three Rivers Levee Improvement Authority at 749-7841

Contact Appeal-Democrat reporter Andrea Koskey at 749-4709 or akoskey@appealdemocrat.com

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clopez wrote:

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5/29/2008 9:37:11 AM

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rex1937 wrote:

Thinker and Virginia Blacks Captain, you are both out of Yopur league here.

5/28/2008 12:50:46 PM

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rex1937 wrote:

Thinker, You also ask intellegent questions, Just like "Captain" Ron Johnson, I will try to answer your queries. My term was from 1987 to 1996, The flood ,Now pay attention here, of 1986 was three (3) years before my term. The Flood of 1997 was One year after my term. I had stood on the Feather River with State flood people and the Corps of Engineers in february of 1996 and shown them a Giant pond being Excavated close to a ancient Boil site next to the Land side of the Levee and told them if you let Nordic continue digging the Fish& Game pond, The levee will fail right here where we stand.

They continued the digging and 10 months later, the levee failed where we had stood.

Those were engineers who did not believe me, but the following Law suits rapid settlement proved my case.

Now I say the same thing about the West linda levee but the Engineers dont believe now either.

5/28/2008 12:05:15 PM

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rex1937 wrote:

"Captain" R. Johnson, You were kept in the Jail division where you could not mess up the Sheriffs office, then Virginia Black names you a Captain and you were plsced in charge of Patrol division. You had never set foot on the streets of Yuba, and still you were in charge of patrol. That was her way of Gutting the patrol division, which is non existant today, thanks to you and Her Clone Steve Durfor.

Be advised I can spell but my Computer can not and I do not have spell check, Are you sure the world is not flat? Golly Gee, you are intelligent!

5/28/2008 11:53:39 AM

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thinker wrote:

Rex, you were president of RD784 for nine years. Does that leave YOU responsible for our floods in 86 and 97. Why didn't you have these levees in shape before we flooded instead of accusing everyone for what you didn't do before hand. The voters have rejected you as a leader so many times, when do you do your time?

5/28/2008 8:57:37 AM

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yubacounty59 wrote:

Thank you, come agan!!!!
LOL looks like captain wouldnt win a spelling bee either :-)

5/28/2008 2:08:44 AM

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captainyuba wrote:

captainyuba's comment is abusive and has been removed.

5/27/2008 11:29:22 PM

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rex1937 wrote:

Ynotcat, You have my interest up, where in Olivehurst or W.Linda did the Flood waters of 1997 reach?

5/27/2008 10:51:23 PM

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rex1937 wrote:

Yubaduba, When the Next 1986 Type storm comes and the West linda levee breaks where the Boulders are, The boulders that were temporery 20 years ago, and where the Slurry wall was stopped, mid way, and TRLIA ran away to work on the Feather River, and the Rushing Water breaks through the Weak part of the levee, Any investment in Plumas Lake,will be under 17 feet of water. (My experiance is nine years as president of RD 784 and have been active in the 1986 and 1997 floods.)

5/27/2008 10:48:07 PM

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yubaduba wrote:

dopieagain questioned why there were no developer money in this project. The article didn't say, however developers have funded to the tune of 80 mill. The 46 mill. that was loaned by the county/YCWA will be paid through future development fees. Question,if we were building Bullards Bar Dam today and you were told after 30 years of payments that you would receive 150 million each year for electricity sales, would you complain? So,my point is, with improved Levees in the South County the investments in jobs, sales tax, and new housing will pay-off in the long run.

5/27/2008 10:20:33 PM

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