

# **PG&E canal break forces call to conserve water**

**Cathy Locke, Sacramento Bee, 4-20-11**

Placer County Water Agency officials are asking customers to conserve water following a major break on the Pacific Gas and Electric Co.'s Bear River Canal.

The break, which was reported about 5 a.m. Tuesday at a remote location below Rollins Reservoir near Colfax, cut flow to the Placer County Water Agency.

David Breninger, the water agency's general manager, said the canal break affects both treated water and raw water supplies. He said the district immediately took steps to open interties with the Nevada Irrigation District and the city of Roseville, and began pumping water from the American River to make up for some of the water shortages.

Irrigation customers will be the most affected. To deal with water shortages, rolling 24-hour outages are planned until PG&E supplies to raw water customers are fully restored.

Breninger said agency staff members are calling and talking to customers or leaving messages urging conservation. He said updates will be posted on the website at [www.pcwa.net](http://www.pcwa.net).

The Placer County Water Agency serves about 150,000 people on the county's western slope.

In a written statement released late Tuesday afternoon through the Placer County Water Agency, PG&E said that a slide occurred below a portion of the Bear River Canal, causing part of the canal sidewall to break and divert water from the canal down the steep hill into the Bear River.

The canal was inspected by foot patrol on April 1 and no potential problems were identified at the time. Officials said it is not known whether recent heavy rains or another cause may have contributed to the slide.