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**Flood Concern Growing Among Sacramento County Voters,  
According to New Survey**

*Auburn Dam top choice for greater flood protection*

AUBURN—Support for greater flood protection in Sacramento County has grown over the last year according to a public opinion survey conducted by the American River Authority (ARA) last month — prior to the winter storms that pummeled the Sacramento area over the last few weeks. The results were released today at the ARA's regularly scheduled board meeting in Placerville.

Fifty percent of the voters polled rated "providing additional ways to protect the Sacramento area from flooding" as being "very important" ("10" on a scale of "one" to "10") — up from only 33% when the same question was asked in a September 2004 survey.

"We knew that the Katrina disaster would open a lot of people's eyes to the dangers of flooding, but we just weren't sure if Sacramento County residents were taking the information to heart," said Placer County Supervisor Bruce Kranz, who currently chairs the ARA and sat on its survey development committee. "From the looks of these results, I think people are starting to understand the seriousness of the situation."

The only issue that rated higher than flood protection was "protecting our water supply from pollution and other contamination" (65%).

In addition, residents were asked what they felt were the best ways to increase the area's flood protection — 42% favored building the Auburn Dam, 32% chose to strengthen local levees and 20% preferred to modify the Folsom Dam.

When asked a straight "yes" or "no" question regarding their support for the Auburn Dam, regardless of flood control, initially 52% of Sacramento County residents supported it while 24% opposed it. However, after respondents learned that the Dam would provide 500-year flood protection, a new water supply,

electric generation, recreational opportunities, and water for fish and wildlife, support for the Auburn Dam jumped to 62% (with 25% opposed).

Other key findings include:

- Over seventy percent (70%) of Sacramento County voters said they feel it would be a worthwhile investment by government to spend \$400 to \$600 million on projects that would prevent Katrina level flooding in our area.
- Fifty-five percent (55%) said they would be willing to pay at least \$100 per year toward increased flood protection.
- Sacramento area residents do not have very strong opinions about our local levee system. Only five percent (5%) said they were very confident in the levees, and six percent (6%) said they were not at all confident in them.
- Even with the increased concern about flooding and flood protection, approximately sixty percent (60%) of Sacramento County voters said there is only a ten percent (10%) chance or less of flooding in their area over the next five years. *(Note: This survey preceded the recent New Year's storms.)*

"We plan to use the valuable information gathered from this research to develop a public education program that will address issues relevant to area residents, and ultimately raise residents' awareness of local flood control efforts and other important water issues," said Kranz.

Public Opinion Strategies conducted the ARA's telephone survey of 600 registered "likely" voters in Sacramento County. The margin of error is +/- 4.0% at a 95% confidence level.

The ARA was formed in 1982 to support construction of the Auburn Dam, but has since expanded its scope to include a variety of water issues. It is a joint powers authority comprised of Placer, El Dorado and San Joaquin counties, and the Placer and El Dorado County Water Agencies.

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