



Merced Irrigation District Board Approves Contract to Protect Exchequer Penstock

For Immediate Release: February 1, 2011

Contact: Mike Jensen

209-722-5761

mjensen@mercedid.org

MERCED, CA – The Merced Irrigation District Board of Directors approved a construction contract today that will result in increased protection to the penstock at the Exchequer Dam and powerhouse.

The concrete-encased steel penstock, measuring 982-feet long and 16-feet in diameter, delivers water from the base of Lake McClure, providing for MID irrigation water releases and generation of hydroelectric power. The penstock is located at the base of a steep canyon with a potential for falling rocks and other debris.

At today's meeting, the MID Board unanimously approved a \$170,000-contract with SRC Contractors of Folsom, CA, which submitted the lowest bid. The contractor will install a steel cover to protect the penstock from potential rock-fall damage. The funds will be reimbursed to MID by PG&E, which receives the hydroelectric power through June 30, 2014.

"This project will provide a significant protection to MID's irrigation water and future hydroelectric power," said Steve Dunn, Manager of Engineering and Operations Energy Resources.

“I am grateful for PG&E’s willingness to partner with us on this project and ensure that we are providing the best management of our facilities for our customers and community,” said MID General Manager John Sweigard.

The work is expected to begin in the coming days and be completed by the end of March.

###