

Placer County running out of water

By Ed Fletcher, Sacramento Bee

The agency that provides water to Placer County is expected to declare a water shortage emergency in a matter of days as a result of a recent canal failure.

The Placer County Water Agency has been able to meet customer needs while the weather is cool and demands are low, but agency general manager David Breninger predicts a “dire, catastrophic situation” once temperatures start to rise, if there is no fix.

About 150,000 customers in and around Auburn will be asked to significantly reduce water usage in order to keep water flowing, Breninger said.

“Basically, without a massive infusion of water very soon from PG&E to PCWA, thousands of our customers face a stark reality of little to no water in certain regions of our vast service area,” Breninger said in a prepared release.

Hardest hit will be the agency’s 1,250 customers who use canal water for irrigation and farming, because a higher priority will be placed on treated water for public health and fire safety, Breninger said.

A 40-foot section of the Bear River Canal in a remote area near Colfax below Rollins Reservoir broke April 19, sending the water cascading down a steep hill and into the Bear River. The canal, maintained by Pacific Gas and Electric Co., normally is the main water source for Placer County Water Agency customers.

Read the whole story