

Agreement reached to repair Mono Lake damage

By Louis Sahagun, Los Angeles Times

Ending decades of bitter disputes over fragile Mono Lake, Los Angeles and conservationists on Friday announced an agreement to heal the environmental damage caused by diverting the lake's eastern Sierra tributary streams into the city's World War II-era aqueduct.

The controversy over alkaline Mono Lake, which is famous for its bizarre, craggy tufa formations and breeding grounds for sea gulls and migratory birds, is one of California's longest-running environmental disputes.

The settlement resolves all of the issues among weary combatants, including the city of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, California Trout and the Mono Lake Committee.

It calls for construction of a \$15-million adjustable gate in Grant Dam, an earthen structure 87 feet high and 700 feet long designed to impound tributary water. The goal is to release pulses of water along a seven-mile stretch of Rush Creek to mimic annual flood cycles, distributing willow seeds and promoting healthy trout populations. The settlement will not affect water levels at Mono Lake.

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