

Waters Asks 'Happy Medium' On Melones Filling Issue

Assemblyman Norman Waters (D-Plymouth) has called for "responsible action rather than a shortsighted unrealistic approach" to solve the ongoing issue of filling New Melones reservoir.

"A happy medium can and must be struck bet-

ween recreation, conservation and the demands of California's future generations," Waters said.

In July 1973, A California Assembly joint resolution urged Congress to "proceed with the

construction of the project as quickly as possible and in 1974, through statewide vote by referendum, Proposition 17, the citizens of California voted not to keep the Stanislaus as a wild and scenic river," Water's said. "This alone expressed the desires of

the California citizens and taxpayers.

"It is irritating as a representative of the district in which the dam is located to see a project's progress, a \$341 million investment paid for by the taxpayers, continually being delayed by the emotional demands of a small special interest group," he said.

"I am not opposed to the historic and recreational uses and qualities of our rivers and their surrounding areas," Waters stated.

"I would like to point out, however, that the six mile stretch of white water in the Stanislaus canyon which the Friends of the River are working to save, is not a natural stretch of white water. It was created and is a direct result of the Beardsley and Donnell dams that were built upstream from the Stanislaus canyon.

He said the power plan could annually serve all the needs of more than 200,000 people.

"The dam has a capacity of 2.4 million acre feet. When filled only to Parrots Ferry, to to the 300,000 acre feet it uses only 10 percent of the reservoir capacity.

"The potential to provide over 220,000 acre feet of irrigation water (enough to serve 80,000 acres with revenues of over 40 million annually from the farms lands productivity) plus the potential hydro power generation benefits are staggering, particularly in light of the recent furor over nuclear power in nearby Rancho Seco," he said.