

September 17, 2019

New hydroelectric plant dedicated

By Anthony A. Mestas The Pueblo Chieftain



The culmination of a nearly decade of effort to bring hydroelectric power to the Pueblo Dam came to pass Monday as the James W. Broderick Hydropower Plant was dedicated at the foot of Lake Pueblo along the murky Arkansas River.

“This goes beyond the hard work of the people today. The completion of this project will have a longstanding positive impact for the future of our communities,” said James Broderick, namesake of the new facility that was commissioned in May and executive director of the Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District. On April 18, the district board unanimously voted to name the facility after Broderick.

“I need you to all understand how important my wife and my daughter are to me and to my success. For if it was not for them, then I wouldn’t

be the man who I am today. So it's with great honor that the Broderick name be placed on this facility. For me, it recognizes all three of us," Broderick said.

"We are all very humble for that honor." The plant was completed in May 2019 and will generate, on average, 28 million kilowatt hours of electricity annually — enough to power 2,500 homes a year. Construction of the plant was made possible through a Lease of Power Privilege with the Bureau of Reclamation in 2017.

Brenda Burman, commissioner of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation on her first visit to Pueblo, was the keynote speaker at the dedication attended by about 100 people.

"This is an incredible project. We are very proud of it," Burman said.

Burman said reclamation's mission is to deliver reliable water and power supplies in an environmentally and economically sound manner.

To Me this project is just a great way of highlighting how important that is," she said.

"Here we are; our long, successful history with hydropower in the West. We have new opportunities and you just saw across the way there is the James W. Broderick Hydropower Plant as a great example of what we are doing today." She said projects such as this one make the nation stronger and decreases the United States' dependency on other nations.

"It creates jobs. It helps drive economic growth. This president (Donald Trump) and this secretary support hydropower and support the Lease of Power Privilege Projects as an important component of our country's domestic energy security initiatives," Burman said.

"Today is a great example of collaboration. It's a great example of parties coming together. It's a great example of finding solutions to complex issues." Burman said for reclamation, hydropower generation plays a critical role in its broader water management efforts.

The plant was constructed at a cost of \$20.5 million, with \$17.2 million of that coming from a loan from the Colorado Water Conservation

Board. Becky Mitchell, executive director of the conservation board, also spoke at the event.

Mitchell said that the new plant was very appropriately named after Broderick.

“He is the innovative thinker that is behind all of this and has always been an inspiring leader. He also keeps people on their toes and he can find solutions to some of the most complex problems that we have,” Mitchell said.

“His passion and in-depth knowledge of Colorado water has led to so many successes — this just being one of those.”

U.S. Rep. Scott Tipton, R-Colo., who has backed the project from the start, said it’s been a long time coming.

“I’ve been a big proponent of hydroelectric power. I passed the Small Hydroelectric and Jobs Act that President (Barack) Obama signed into law,” Tipton said.

“It’s a great energy source for us. This project wouldn’t have happened without great community leadership; in particular, Jim Broderick.”

Bill Long, the Southeastern District board’s president, said that other than the construction of the Fryingpan-Arkansas project, the hydro project has been the largest and most complex undertaking of the district that has been successfully completed.

Long, who has been president of the board since 2006, said it represents the hard work and determination of the men and women of the district who strongly embrace the notion that they have the responsibility of planning for the future.

Hydroelectric power has been part of the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project from the beginning.

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation in 2011 awarded a lease of power privilege to the Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District, Colorado Springs Utilities and the Pueblo Board of Water Works. The

lease was signed in 2017 by the Southeastern District and Reclamation after the other partners chose not to participate.

Construction began at Pueblo Dam in September 2017. The plant was completed in the spring of 2019.

Its three turbines — “Baby Bear,” “Mama Bear” and “Papa Bear” — generate power using water flows of 35-810 cubic feet per second. The combined capacity of the turbines is 7.5 megawatts.

General Contractor for the plant was Mountain States Hydro of Sunnyside, Wash.

Power from the Broderick Hydro Plant will be sold to the city of Fountain and Fort Carson (through Colorado Springs Utilities) for the first 10 years, and exclusively to Fountain for the next 20 years.

Revenues from hydro will fund Southeastern Enterprise programs such as the Arkansas Valley Conduit, as well as repay construction costs. Hydroelectric power is a clean, renewable resource, and Broderick Hydro Plant will not reduce flows to the Arkansas River.

amestas@chieftain.com Twitter: @mestas3517

Chris Woodka Press Release:

James W. Broderick Hydropower plant at Pueblo Dam dedicated

[September 17, 2019](#) [Coyote Gulch](#) [Bureau of Reclamation](#), [Climate Change](#), [Colorado Water](#), [Energy Policy](#), [Fryingpan-Arkansas Project](#), [Hydroelectric/Hydropower](#)



Workers prepare a turbine and generator at the James W. Broderick Hydroelectric Power Facility at Pueblo Dam shortly before it began producing electricity this week. Photo credit: The Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District

Here's the release from the Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District (Chris Woodka):

The James W. Broderick Hydropower Plant at Pueblo Dam was dedicated on Monday, September 16, [2019], before a crowd of about 100 people.

The hydroelectric generating facility was completed in May 2019 and is named for James W. Broderick, executive director of the Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District.

Southeastern President Bill Long hailed Broderick's vision for pursuing the project under a Lease of Power Privilege with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. The process was started in 2011, and

culminated in 2017, when the lease was signed. Construction of the \$20.5 million plant took 18 months.

“Jim has given a lot more than his name to the James W. Broderick Hydropower Plant. It has been Jim’s vision to create this project, and to use the revenues generated by the plant to enhance the benefits of the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project,” Long said. “this is an example of the type of creative thinking and leadership that Jim brings to every aspect of his service to the Southeastern District.”

Broderick, in accepting the honor, credited his wife Cindy and their daughter Amy for his own success as a water leader not only in southeastern Colorado, but throughout the state and the western region. Broderick currently is president of the Colorado River Water Users Association, and has led other agencies within the state, including Colorado Water Congress and the Arkansas Basin Roundtable.

Broderick also recognized the Southeastern District’s early partners in the Lease of Power Privilege, Colorado Springs Utilities and Pueblo Water, for technical assistance and support in bringing the power plant project to completion. Other contributors during the planning and construction process included Black Hills Energy and Pueblo West.

[Those on] hand for the event [included] Brenda Burman, Commissioner of Reclamation, and Becky Mitchell of the Colorado Water Conservation Board...

Burman said the plant is one of 14 built on existing dams so far under a Lease of Power Privilege, and shows how maximum benefits can be realized from existing federal projects. Reclamation operates the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project in cooperation with the Southeastern District. The Project provides supplemental water for cities and farms in the Arkansas River basin by importing water from the Colorado River basin.

The Colorado Water Conservation Board provided a \$17.2 million loan to construct the hydroelectric plant. Mitchell hailed the plant, which

uses water to produce energy, as the type of project the state will become involved with as it moves in the future.

The power plant will generate, on average, 28 million kilowatt hours of electricity annually, enough to power 2,500 homes a year. It was constructed under a design-build contract with Mountain States Hydro of Sunnyside, Wash.

Power will be sold to the City of Fountain, and to Fort Carson, through Colorado Springs Utilities.