

Streams of Life

Water in the American West

ThinkQuest '99

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Project and Essay Ideas

Build a Dam

For more information see website

Comparison

Visit a local dam (or look at pictures of a dam) and then visit a local wild river (or pictures). Make sure that the river is wild and it is not dammed. Compare the two. What are the differences between the two rivers? The similarities? Which do you prefer? Which do you think other people prefer?

Ways the Depression Affected the Era of Great Dam Building

In a way, the Depression started off the era of great dam building. This is a good specific topic for an essay or a research report.

New Melones Dam

When New Melones Dam was being built there were many protests. One of the protests was by someone (you'll have to find out on your own) who chained himself to a rock in the area that the reservoir was going to cover. A search of newspaper archives might bring some useful information to light.

Topics for Papers and Essays

- San Francisco Bay
- Tulare Lake
- Mono Lake
- Owens Valley
- Colorado River
- Columbia River
- United States Bureau of Reclamation
- Powell
- Pike
- Dominy, Floyd
- Carter, Jimmy
- Agribusiness
- Central Valley
- San Fernando Valley
- Imperial Valley
- Colorado River Compact

Places to Start Your Information Search

- Cadillac Desert, by Marc Reisner, covers all of these topics. It's a really good place to start.
- Your local public library (of course)
- Encyclopedias (Britannica is the best in my opinion)

- University libraries (some, such as Stanford University, have a United States Government Library where you can find Bureau of Reclamation and Army Corps of Engineers documents)
- Newspaper archive (such as <http://www.newslibrary.com>)