

Flood Control Project Honored

March 1, 2010

SACRAMENTO, CALIF. — GEI Consultants Inc. has announced that the Feather River Setback Levee project has been recognized by the Sacramento Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) as the 2009 Flood Control Facility Project of the Year. Located in South Yuba County, Calif., and owned by the Three Rivers Levee Improvement Authority (TRLIA), the Feather River Setback Levee is the longest setback levee in the state.

The six-mile long setback levee, which was developed and constructed to provide 200-year flood protection to more than 40,000 residents in South Yuba County, was largely financed through State Proposition 1E Early Implementation Project funds. A key component in TRLIA's \$405 million levee improvement program, this project will lower water elevations by more than a foot during significant flood events, easing pressure on both the Yuba and Feather River Levees and providing increased flood protection to the cities of Marysville and Yuba.

This flood control project opened approximately 1,600 acres of additional land for expanded floodway and ecological habitat restoration, and it represents a key step toward achieving TRLIA's goal for Yuba County to be the first urban area in the Central Valley to offer 200-year flood protection.

"GEI has done a wonderful job of helping us quickly implement the strongest flood protection in the Central Valley," said Paul Brunner, TRLIA's executive director.

GEI Consultants' role included a feasibility evaluation and the geotechnical investigations for this project, in addition to the preliminary and final designs of the setback levee. GEI provided construction management services, secured the required environmental permits, provided support for right-of-way acquisitions, and designed a floodplain swale. The swale mitigates potential fish stranding and increases the frequency of floodplain inundation to gain associated ecosystem benefits.

"This is such an important project for South Yuba County from a safety, economic and environmental perspective," said Alberto Pujol, PE, vice president and project manager for GEI Consultants. GEI was also the prime consultant for TRLIA on the completed Bear River Setback Levee, which won ASCE awards from the Sacramento Section in 2007 and Region 9 (all of California) in 2008 as the Flood Control Facility Project of the Year. "We are proud to be on the winning team for a second year, and we are grateful for the collaboration and support received from all parties involved."

The annual ASCE awards dinner was held on Feb. 17.

For more information about GEI Consultants or the Three Rivers Levee Improvement Authority, please visit www.geiconsultants.com, or www.trlia.org, respectively.