

The Los Angeles Aqueduct: 100th Anniversary

One hundred years ago, on Nov. 5, 1913, the first water flowed into Los Angeles from the new aqueduct. A celebration was held near Sylmar, where crowds gathered to watch as the channel gates were opened and the water started to flow down into the San Fernando Valley.

The Los Angeles Aqueduct is the first of the major water projects built in California. It is the only one of those projects in the state not built by Franklin Roosevelt or Gov. Pat Brown. Construction began in 1906 and was completed in 1913. Led by William Mulholland, the head of the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, the City of Los Angeles built what was called at the time, the greatest engineering project in the World.



Crowds watch as the gates are opened and the Los Angeles Aqueduct water begins to flow down into the San Fernando Valley, Nov. 5, 1913.

The aqueduct carries water 233 miles from the Owens Valley, and 338 miles from the Mono Lake Basin, by gravity, to the City of Los Angeles. In 1970, a parallel aqueduct was completed, which added another 50% capacity to the system. The two aqueducts deliver an average of 430 million gallons a day to the city. That is about 400,000 acre feet of water per year.—*Pat Ruckert*