

THE BUILDING OF A DAM

SLIDE SHOW

[Building of a dam, the slide show](#)

INTRODUCTION

After over 40 years of trying various methods of securing the required funding Browns Valley Irrigation District was finally able to secure the necessary financing through a United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) loan to build the Virginia Ranch Dam (VRD).

On September 13, 1960 by a vote of 238 to 8, BVID voters approved the District to enter into a contract with the United States Department of Interior for a no interest loan for the construction of the VRD.

Most of the design and planning had been accomplished prior to the voters approving the contract and by spring of 1962 a contract was in place and construction was started. Unfortunately shortly after work started there was a northern Cal Labor Union strike which prevented any further work being accomplished that summer on placing of the embankment.

A Columbus Day storm in October of 1962 brought high winds and record breaking rains. Rains fell from Oakland to Alturas, with record-setting three-day rainfall. Gage stations at the VRD site recorded 11" of rain in one day. The high water caused considerable damage to the work that had been accomplished with the false start.

Early spring 1963 seen the contractor off to a running start toward a late fall completion and that winter Collins Lake started forming behind VRD. The following spring there was sufficient water behind the dam to meet the summer irrigation demands of the BVID.

Apparently there was not a good photo record kept during the construction of the Dam. I have located some photos, some of questionable quality, and am making them available in this slide show for your enjoyment.

Bob Bordsen, BVID Director Division I