

The Way We Used To Think



President Franklin D. Roosevelt

From the 1930s through the early 1970s, using American System methods, President Franklin D. Roosevelt (in office 1933-45) and California Gov. Edmund G. “Pat” Brown (in office 1959-67), built California’s amazing water-management system. It was a near 40-year building program, centered on great water projects, begun in 1935 by FDR, and completed in 1972.



Gov. Edmund G. “Pat” Brown

These projects contributed to the economic platform which transformed California from a relative backwater of the nation, into the seventh-largest economy in the world, and a powerhouse of scientific and technological progress for humanity.

On Aug. 18, 1962, President Kennedy joined Governor Brown at the groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of the San Luis Dam. In his remarks, in addition to addressing the necessity of water conveyance, Kennedy raised the concept of desalination, for which he backed large-scale nuclear power usage. “We must step up our program to convert cheap fresh water from salt water. There is no scientific breakthrough, including the trip to the Moon, that will mean more to the country which first is able to bring fresh water from salt water at a competitive rate.”¹—*Patrick Ruckert*

1. See larouhepac.com for six speeches by Kennedy in 1962-63, inaugurating water projects in the West.