

Proposition 17

Contributions in Fight Over Dam

Sacramento

The battle over the New Melones Dam was the top money proposition of the November 5 ballot, but the spending was small compared to proposition campaigns of past years, campaign reports showed yesterday.

The fight over the initiative, aimed at stopping construction of the dam on the Stanislaus river, drew a total of \$664,624 in contributions to both sides with foes outspending supporters about 2 to 1.

Backers of the initiative raised most of their money in small contributions, while opponents received about

half of their funds from three major contractors working on the dam.

Each side incurred bills slightly in excess of contributions, the reports said. Neither explained in the report how the excess would be paid.

Proposition 17 was rejected by voters — 2,615,225 in favor to 2,935,366 opposed. A no vote was to continue construction of the \$268 million project in the Sierra foothills, 30 miles east of Modesto.

Here are the totals on Proposition 17 as reported in documents on file with the secretary of state:

Supporters — Friends of

the River raised \$234,658.83 in contributions and spent \$246,988.49.

Foes — Californians Against Proposition 17 raised \$429,965.30 in contributions and spent \$442,040.04.

Guy Atkinson Co., Gordon Ball, Inc., and Arundel Corp., the three major contractors building the dam, jointly contributed \$175,000 to the campaign against Proposition 17 and Atkinson reported chipping in an extra \$25,000.

Five other contributors from the construction industry contributed another \$35,800 to the campaign against Proposition 17.

Although the Proposition 17 campaign drew more funds than all other 16 ballot propositions combined, it was still small compared to the million-dollar-plus proposition campaigns of previous years on issues such as the coastline, tax shifts and state employee salaries.

Supporters of two other successful propositions also reported raising in excess of \$50,000 in contributions. They were Proposition 1, which provided money to build new school buildings, and Proposition 5, which eliminated restrictions on policemen seeking to live outside of the cities where they work.