

Water from Hebei eases Beijing water shortage

(Xinhua)

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After traveling ten days, water from three big reservoirs in neighboring Hebei province arrived on Sunday at Tuancheng Lake in the renowned Summer Palace in Beijing's northwest.

It's part of China's massive South-to-North Water Diversion Project which lasts from September 18 to March 10, 2009.

During the six months, some 1.3 million tonnes of water will arrive in Beijing everyday via a newly-dug 307-km underground canal, which forms part of the middle route of the project.

Ten monitoring stations were built along the canal to ensure water quality, said He Fengci, deputy director of the South-to-North Water Diversion Project Beijing Office.

The Chinese capital has seen nine consecutive years of drought since 1999 when demand for water grew substantially due to robust economic expansion and population growth.

The water shortage in Beijing is set to reach a crisis point in 2010, when the population is expected to top 17 million, or 3 million more than resources can support.

The South-to-North Water Diversion Project, consisting of eastern, middle and western routes, is designed to divert water from the water-rich south of the country, mainly the Yangtze River, up to the dry north.

The eastern and middle routes are already under construction.

The western route is still in the design stage. It is meant to replenish the Yellow River with water diverted from the upper reaches of the Yangtze River by digging tunnels in the high mountains of western China.

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