



SUPPLEMENTAL NOTICE OF PREPARATION

Environmental Impact Report for the Sites Reservoir Project

January 23, 2017

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Sites Project Authority (Authority) is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) on the proposal to construct and operate a new offstream water storage reservoir and associated facilities near the town of Maxwell, California. The proposed project is the same project that was the subject of a previous Notice of Preparation (NOP) to prepare an EIR under CEQA that was issued on November 5, 2001 by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR)¹ and a previous Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) that was published on November 9, 2001 by the United States Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation). This Supplemental NOP is being issued because the CEQA lead agency for the proposed Project has changed from DWR to the Authority. There is no change in the federal lead agency for the proposed Project, which continues to be Reclamation.

1.1 Background

The Sites Reservoir Project (previously known as the North of Delta Offstream Storage Project, or NODOS) was identified in the CALFED Bay-Delta Program approved in 2000 as an important potential surface water storage project warranting further consideration. The CALFED Program was a cooperative, interagency effort of more than 20 State and Federal agencies established to develop a long-term comprehensive plan for improving California's water supply and the ecological health of the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta.

After years of intensive study, the California Resources Agency and the California Environmental Protection Agency, along with the United States Department of Interior and various other Federal agencies, approved and executed the CALFED Record of Decision (ROD) on August 28, 2000. The ROD determined that expanding water storage capacity in the state is critical to the successful implementation of the CALFED Program. The ROD stated that additional water storage is not only needed to meet the needs of a growing population, but, if strategically located, also will provide much needed flexibility in the system to improve water quality and support fish restoration efforts. As the ROD recognized, water supply reliability depends upon capturing water during peak flows and during wet years, as well as more efficient water use through conservation and recycling.

¹ The November 5, 2001 NOP is available at <https://www.sitesproject.org/> and <http://www.water.ca.gov/storage/northdelta/>

As described by the ROD, the Sites Reservoir Project, in addition to providing other important water storage and operational benefits, can greatly increase the reliability of water supplies for a significant portion of the Sacramento Valley and elsewhere in the State. The ROD identified two actions for further evaluation of the proposed Sites Reservoir Project. The first was to create a partnership with local water interests, and the second was to complete the environmental review under CEQA and NEPA. The first of these actions has been completed. The Authority's preparation of an EIR under CEQA for the proposed Sites Reservoir Project is the state component of the second action identified in the ROD. The federal component of this second action identified in the ROD, the preparation of an EIS under NEPA, is being undertaken by Reclamation. The environmental document for the proposed Project will be prepared as a joint EIR/EIS to fulfill the requirements of both CEQA and NEPA.

Pursuant to the ROD, DWR issued a Notice of Preparation for an EIR under CEQA on November 5, 2001 and Reclamation published a Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS under NEPA on November 9, 2001. These notices described the proposed Sites Reservoir Project as an offstream reservoir and associated facilities near Maxwell, California, with two main dams – one constructed on Funks Creek and one constructed on Stone Corral Creek – and up to nine saddle dams. The notices also explained that the Sites Reservoir could include a number of source and conveyance options, including use of the existing Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District Canal and Tehama-Colusa Canal as well as a new diversion and conveyance facility near Moulton Weir, which is approximately 10 miles northeast of Maxwell. These components of the proposed Sites Reservoir remain the same as described in the prior notices.

In order to further the review and development of the proposed Sites Reservoir, the Authority was formed as a joint powers authority pursuant to state law on August 26, 2010. The Authority currently is comprised of public entities located and operating in the Sacramento Valley (namely, City of Roseville, Colusa County Water District, County of Colusa, County of Glenn, Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District, Maxwell Irrigation District, Orland-Artois Water District, Placer County Water Agency, Poberta Water District, Reclamation District 108, Tehama-Colusa Canal Authority, Western Canal District and Westside Water District).

Consistent with the Authority's purpose and in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 8 of California Proposition 1 (2014), which governs the Water Storage Investment Program administered by the California Water Commission, the Authority is now acting as the CEQA lead agency for the proposed Sites Reservoir Project in lieu of DWR.

1.2 Opportunities for Public Participation

Trustee agencies, responsible agencies and the public are invited to submit oral and/or written comments on the scope and content of the environmental analyses in the upcoming draft of the EIR. The comment period runs through March 2, 2017.

Scoping Meetings

Two scoping meetings will be held. The first scoping meeting will be held on February 15, 2017 at the Sacramento Convention Center, 1400 J Street, Room 202, Sacramento, CA 95814 starting

at 3 p.m. The second scoping meeting will be held on February 16, 2017 at 122 Old Hwy 99W, Maxwell, CA 95955 starting at 6:00 p.m.

The scoping meetings will include a brief presentation about the proposed Project and an opportunity to ask questions and learn about various aspects of the Project and the environmental review. There also will be an opportunity to provide oral comments, which will be recorded, and to submit written comments.

Written Comments

You may also submit written comments on the NOP via email or mail. Written comments on the NOP must be received by March 2, 2017. The comments may be emailed to ScopingComments@sitesproject.org or mailed to:

Scoping Comments Sites
Project Authority
P.O. Box 517
Maxwell, CA 95955

In accordance with section 15082(b) of the CEQA Guidelines, within 30 days of receiving the NOP, responsible and trustee agencies under CEQA shall provide the Authority with specific detail about the scope and content of the environmental information to be included in the draft EIR related to their area of statutory responsibility.

2.0 PROPOSED PROJECT

This section contains a description of the proposed Project and identifies the location of the Project.

2.1 Project Objectives

The project objectives have not changed materially since the 2001 NOP issued by DWR, although the Authority has elaborated on the objective stated in the 2001 NOP related to providing storage and operational benefits for water quality and other programs. The Authority also is considering a set of secondary project objectives.

The primary objectives for the proposed Sites Reservoir are to provide water storage north of the Delta in order to:

- Enhance water management flexibility in the Sacramento Valley;
- Reduce water diversion on the Sacramento River during critical fish migration periods;
- Increase reliability of water supplies for a significant portion of the Sacramento Valley;
and
- Provide storage and operational benefits for programs to enhance water supply reliability, benefit Delta water quality and improve ecosystems by providing:

- Net improvements in ecosystem conditions in the Sacramento River system and Delta;
- Net improvements in water quality conditions in the Sacramento River system and Delta;
- Net improvements in water supply reliability for agricultural and urban uses to help meet water demands during drought periods and emergencies or to address shortages due to regulatory and environmental restrictions; and
- Net improvements in water supply reliability for fish protection, habitat management, and other environmental water needs.

The secondary objectives for the proposed Sites Reservoir are as follows:

- Allow for flexible hydropower generation, in order to support the integration of renewable energy sources;
- Develop additional recreation opportunities; and
- Provide incremental flood damage reduction opportunities.

2.2 Project Description

The proposed Project has not changed materially since the 2001 NOP issued by DWR; this Supplemental NOP provides additional details and information about the proposed Project. The proposed Sites Reservoir Project would consist of a new offstream storage reservoir with a capacity of up to 1.9 MAF. The Sites Reservoir would be approximately 12,000-14,000 acres in size and would be created by inundating the area around the unincorporated community of Sites, California, which is referred to locally as Antelope Valley.

Up to eleven dams would be needed to create the proposed Sites Reservoir. There would be two main dams: the Golden Gate Dam on Funks Creek, and the Sites Dam on Stone Corral Creek. Both dams would have a height in the general range of 300 feet above the base. The Golden Gate Dam would have a crest length in the general range of 2,250 feet and the Sites Dam would have a crest length in the general range of 850 feet. There also would be up to nine saddle dams on the northern end of reservoir, between the Funks Creek and Hunters Creek watersheds. These dams would range from approximately 40 to 130 feet in height above the base, with crest lengths ranging from approximately 270 to 4,000 feet.

The Sites Reservoir Project also would include an inlet/outlet structure; a pumping plant, electrical switchyard and overhead power lines; and a tunnel approximately 4,030 feet in length connecting the pumping plant to the reservoir.

The principal features of the Project in addition to the main reservoir and associated facilities are described below. The proposed Project facilities are depicted in Figures 1 and 2.

Diversion and conveyance facilities. Primarily, two existing points of diversion would be used, and a new point of diversion would be established, to convey water from the Sacramento River to the Sites Reservoir.

Water would be diverted at the existing Red Bluff diversion and conveyed using the existing Tehama-Colusa Canal (T-C Canal). The existing Funks Reservoir – which is one mile downstream of the proposed Golden Gate Dam site and is used to regulate flows in the T-C Canal – would be expanded to form the new Holthouse Reservoir. The Holthouse Reservoir would be used to collect and regulate flows from the T-C Canal prior to conveyance to the Sites Reservoir. The new Holthouse Reservoir would be approximately 450 acres in size with a storage capacity of approximately 6,500 acre feet. Other proposed features associated with this diversion and conveyance include adding a pump to the existing Red Bluff Pumping Plant; modifying the existing T-C Canal to connect to the new Holthouse Reservoir; constructing various facilities at the Holthouse Reservoir (including a pumping station, electrical switchyard and overhead power lines; and a spillway, stilling station and spillway bridge); relocating an existing power line; and constructing an approach channel approximately 8,300 feet in length from the Holthouse Reservoir to the pumping plant for the Sites Reservoir.

Water would be diverted at the existing Hamilton City diversion and conveyed using the existing Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District Canal (GCID Canal). A new reservoir – the Terminal Regulating Reservoir (TR Reservoir) – would be constructed to the east of the new Holthouse Reservoir to collect and regulate flows from the GCID Canal. The TR Reservoir would be approximately 200 acres in size with a storage capacity of approximately 2,000 acre feet. Other proposed features associated with this diversion and conveyance include modifying the GCID Canal to connect to the TR Reservoir; constructing a pump station, electrical switchyard and overhead power lines at the TR Reservoir; and constructing a pipeline of approximately 3.5 miles in length to convey water from the TR Reservoir to the Holthouse Reservoir prior to conveyance to the Sites Reservoir.

A new screened diversion would be established at Sacramento River Mile 158.5, immediately downstream of the existing Maxwell Irrigation District intake and across the river from the Moulton Weir. The diversion facility would include a pumping plant, electrical switchyard and overhead power line as well as associated maintenance and electrical facilities and a forebay and afterbay. A pipeline approximately 13.5 miles in length (the Delevan Pipeline) would be used to convey water to the new Holthouse Reservoir prior to conveyance to the Sites Reservoir. The Delevan Pipeline could be constructed to divert water from the Sacramento River, to release water from the new Sites Reservoir system into the Sacramento River, or for both functions. For diversion, the capacity would be 2,000 cubic feet per second (cfs); for release, the capacity would be approximately 1,500 cfs.

Potential power generation. One or more of the pumping plants could potentially be used to move water for hydropower generation, which would be used to complement solar and wind power sources at times when such sources are not operating at full capacity.

Other facilities. The proposed Project would include the development of up to three recreation areas that could be used for boating, camping, picnicking, fishing, swimming and/or hiking. In addition, new roads and a bridge would be constructed to provide access to the proposed Project facilities and over the Sites Reservoir, and some existing roads would be relocated or improved. The proposed Project also would include a field office and maintenance yard. New overhead power lines would connect the pumping/generating facilities and their associated electrical switchyards to existing transmission lines in the proposed Project area.

Project operations. Operation of the proposed Project is anticipated to be coordinated with the operations of the existing Central Valley Project (CVP) and State Water Project (SWP) systems and facilities.

The proposed operations for the Project incorporate three primary components: (1) operating criteria for the diversion of water (rate, duration, season, water year type) from the Sacramento River; (2) operating criteria for timing and rate of releases from the Sites Reservoir based on water year type and other hydrological conditions; and (3) coordinating the operations of the proposed Project with operations of SWP and CVP reservoirs, including Trinity Lake, Shasta Lake, Lake Oroville, and Folsom Lake.

2.3 Project Location

The proposed Sites Reservoir would be located approximately 10 miles west of the town of Maxwell, in both Glenn and Colusa counties. Other proposed Project facilities would be located in Tehama, Glenn or Colusa counties. Maps showing the location of the proposed Project facilities are attached as Figures 1 and 2. In addition to land acquisition for the reservoir and other Project facilities, construction easements will be required to access project sites during project construction activities.

2.4 Project Alternatives

The alternatives under consideration have not changed materially from the 2001 NOP, which identified the following possible alternatives for further evaluation:

- The required No Project Alternative under CEQA, as well as the No Action Alternative under NEPA;
- The Sites Reservoir, with various source and conveyance options; and
- The Newville Reservoir, with various source and conveyance options. This alternative would develop an offstream reservoir with capacity between 1.9 and 3.0 MAF approximately 18 miles west of the City of Orland, California.

The Sites Reservoir Project options have since been refined and include the following alternatives:

- Alternative A: 1.27 MAF Sites Reservoir, new Delevan Pipeline (2,000-cfs intake and 1,500-cfs release), and capability to generate hydropower.
- Alternative B: 1.81 MAF Sites Reservoir, new Delevan Pipeline (1,500-cfs release only), and capability to generate hydropower
- Alternative C: 1.81 MAF Sites Reservoir, new Delevan Pipeline (2,000-cfs intake and 1,500-cfs release), and capability to generate hydropower.
- Alternative D: 1.81 MAF Sites Reservoir, new Delevan Pipeline (2,000-cfs intake and 1,500-cfs release), and capability to generate hydropower. Water operations would be conducted to provide for increased public benefits pursuant to Proposition 1 (2014) and

increased use of water locally to serve beneficial uses in the Sacramento Valley, as compared to exports of water to the South of Delta.

In addition, the analysis of alternatives will consider variables such as building the proposed Project without the capacity to generate hydropower, and potentially changing the alignment for the new power transmission lines serving the proposed Project from an east-west alignment along the proposed Delevan Pipeline to a north-south alignment roughly along Highway 45 to connect the new point of diversion on the Sacramento River near the Moulton Weir to a new substation near the City of Colusa, which would tie into an existing power line.

3.0 PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The probable environmental effects of the proposed Project include the following impact categories:

- Aesthetics
- Agricultural and forestry resources
- Air quality
- Biological resources
- Cultural and tribal resources
- Energy
- Geology and soils
- Greenhouse gas emissions
- Hazards & hazardous materials
- Hydrology and water quality
- Land use and planning
- Mineral resources
- Noise
- Population and housing
- Public services
- Recreation
- Transportation and traffic
- Utilities and service systems

Dated: 1-23-2017 —

SITES PROJECT AUTHORITY BOARD
REPRESENTATIVE



By: Kim Dolbow Lann
Board Chair



Proposed Sites Reservoir

FIGURE 1
Proposed Sites Reservoir Project Location
Supplemental Notice of Preparation



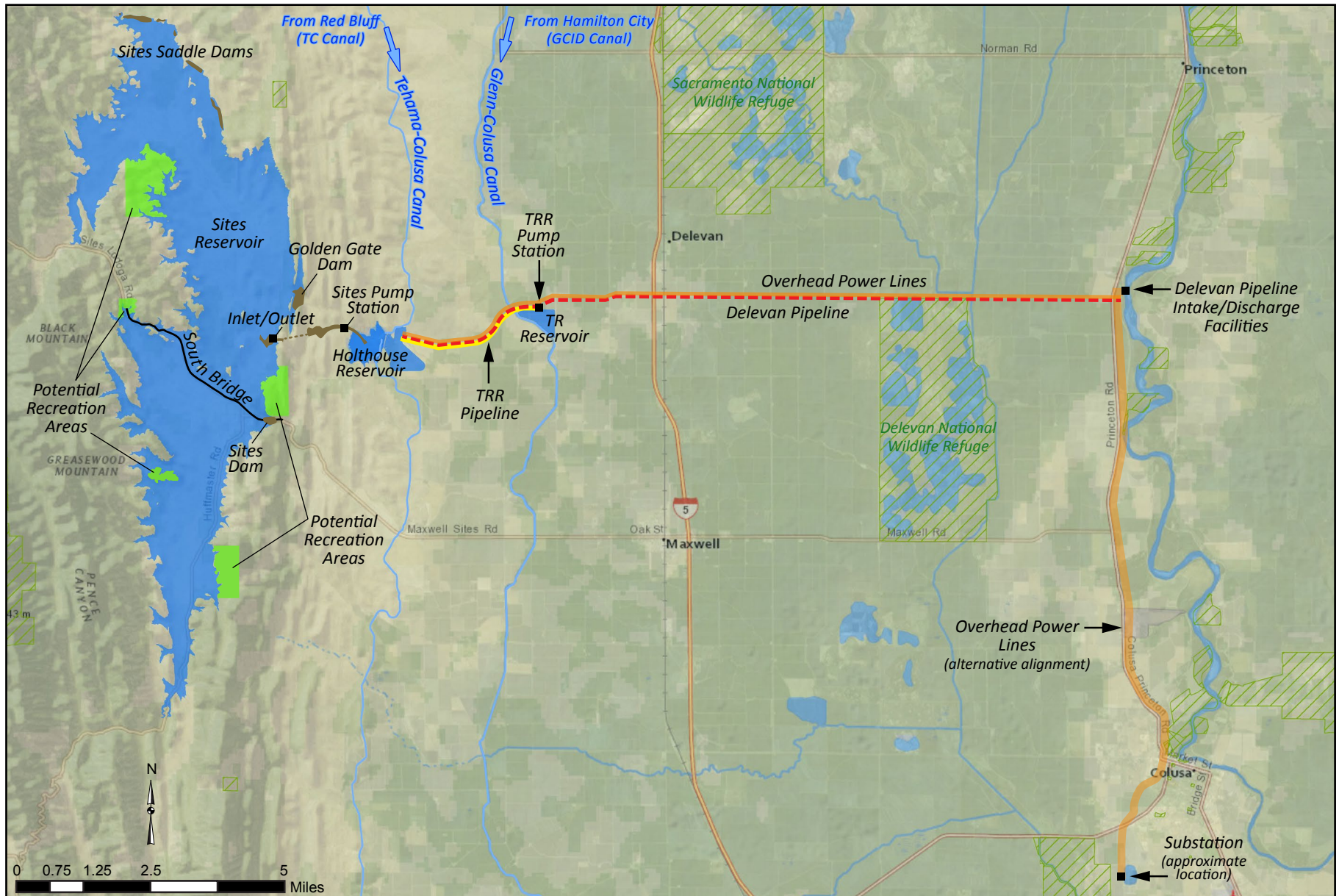


FIGURE 2
Proposed Sites Reservoir Project Facilities
 Supplemental Notice of Preparation