



For Immediate Release

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Sites Project to Receive \$816 Million in State Funding

California one step closer to realizing the significant public benefits of new water storage

Maxwell, CA – The California Water Commission voted today to award the Sites Project \$816 million in state funding – the most of any Proposition 1 applicant – to provide environmental benefits for refuge water supplies, Delta smelt, recreational opportunities and localized flood control. In addition, the Water Commission agreed to provide \$40.8 million in early funding to assist in completing the necessary environmental analyses and obtaining permits.

“Sites is a smart and long overdue investment for California,” said Sites Project Authority (Authority) Chairman Fritz Durst.

“Today’s decision by the California Water Commission furthers the will of California voters, who overwhelming called for new water storage, by moving the Proposition 1 process closer to implementation,” said Durst.

“The Authority has invested a significant amount of time and resources in developing a viable proposal that meets the strict environmental requirements outlined in Proposition 1,” added Durst. “Today’s vote by the Water Commission is a clear endorsement of the substantial environmental benefits Sites provides to the state of California, particularly during inevitable future drought conditions. With state funding decisions made, we can finalize planning and move toward construction.”

As proposed, Sites will add up to 500,000 acre-feet per year of usable water to the state’s water system, which represents two-thirds of the total amount of annual storage being created through Proposition 1 funding. The state’s investment in Sites represents the most cost-effective water storage solution at \$47.50 per acre-foot (when amortized over 40-years) on a dollar per annualized acre-foot basis.

“Sites is the only project approved by the Water Commission that can improve water supply reliability within the Sacramento Valley Watershed while also increasing flows on the Sacramento River at times that are most critical to struggling fish populations,” said General Manager Jim Watson.

“The Sites Project offers the unique benefit of improving water quality and habitat conditions in the Sacramento River and Delta when and where it’s needed most,” Watson said. “The project will not block fish migration, does not dam a large river or stream, and will only be filled by storm events, when excess water is available in the Sacramento River and after all existing environmental requirements have been met.”

Today’s decision solidifies the Authority’s partnership with the state of California to manage a large block of water specifically for environmental purposes. The Authority will continue working with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to forge a similar partnership, while working with its 35-member agencies to secure the funding needed to complete necessary planning activities and authorize construction.

About Sites

Sites is an offstream reservoir proposed north of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, where it would provide unique water supply and environmental benefits during dry and critical water years, and especially during extended drought periods. Additional information can be found at: <https://www.sitesproject.org>. Follow the Sites Project on social media @SitesProject.

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