



For Immediate Release

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Contact: Rebecca Nicholas

(916) 267-8856

rebecca@jb-comm.com

Water Commission Staff Release Revised Public Benefit Scores: Statement from Sites Project Authority Chairman Fritz Durst

Sites Project Now Eligible for \$933.3 million

Maxwell, CA – Staff for the California Water Commission today released revised public benefit scores to project applicants seeking Proposition 1 funding for new storage projects. The Sites Project Authority Chairman Fritz Durst released this statement regarding the announcement:

“The Sites Project offers the state an opportunity to manage a significant amount of water to benefit wildlife and native fish in the Sacramento Watershed. We are pleased to have received credit for our benefits to Delta smelt, and that the Sites Project is now eligible for \$933.3 million. We think there is still room for discussion with the Commission about the benefits we offer for salmon. We greatly appreciate the work done by staff to evaluate all of the Prop 1 applicants, and look forward to continuing to make our case with the Commission in May.”

The Sites Project Authority will meet with Water Commission staff on April 24 to receive additional information regarding the revised public benefit score and is expecting a final determination of the public benefit score from the Water Commissioners at their May 1-3 Commission meeting.

The public benefit score represents 33 percent of the overall Water Commission scoring and represents each applicant’s contribution to ecosystem, water quality, flood control, emergency response, and recreational improvements. In February, the Sites Reservoir Project received initial public benefit credit for wildlife refuge improvements, flood control, and recreation. But, Water Commission staff requested more information in order to determine the project’s environmental benefits for salmon and delta smelt. Today, the Sites Project public benefit score increased. The project is now eligible for \$933.3 million.

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About Sites

Sites is an offstream reservoir proposed north of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, where it would not dam a major river or block fish migration in any watershed. The reservoir would only be filled during major storm events, and would provide unique environmental benefits during dry and critical water years, and especially during extended drought periods, by conserving coldwater releases for salmon and delivering water through the Yolo Bypass to support delta smelt. Additional information can be found at: <https://www.sitesproject.org>. Follow the Sites Project on social media @SitesProject.