



Topic: **Authority Board Agenda Item 3.3**

2020 June 24

Subject: **Proposed Objectives and Alternatives for the Revised EIR/EIS**

Requested Action:

Review and comment on the objectives and alternatives for the Revised Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) to focus efforts in developing a more complete project description on schedule.

Detailed Description/Background:

Staff has begun work on preparation of the revised and recirculated Draft EIR (Revised EIR). As part of this effort, the project objectives and action alternatives are being revised based on the Value Planning Report for the Revised EIR/EIS as described in more detail below and attached.

It is important that the Reservoir Committee and Authority Board review and comment on these recommended revisions at this early stage so staff and the consultant team can focus our efforts on development of more complete descriptions of these alternatives for the Revised EIR/EIS, permitting effort, and feasibility design currently underway. Staff anticipates returning to the Reservoir Committee and Authority Board in September with the Revised EIR/EIS project description, including any changes to the objectives based on initial analysis, a more complete description of the action alternatives, along with a recommendation for a Preferred Project. Staff will be seeking Reservoir Committee and Authority Board approval of this Revised EIR/EIS project description and the recommended Preferred Project in September.

Section 15124(b) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines requires that a project description contain a clear statement of the project objectives including the underlying purpose of the project. Revisions to the Project objectives are needed from those contained in the 2017 Draft EIR/EIS to: (1) better reflect the goals of the Reservoir Committee and Authority Board as reflected in the Value Planning Report along with Sites Project messaging and informational materials adopted by the Authority Board in April 2020; and (2) add additional clarity and specificity on what the Project is focused on achieving to improve understanding of the foundational components that lead to formulation of Project alternatives. The revised objectives are being reviewed by the Ad Hoc Environmental Planning and Permitting Work Group at their June 18 meeting and the outcome of this review, including any changes will be reported at the Reservoir Committee meeting.

The CEQA Guidelines require that an EIR analyze a reasonable range of alternatives to the project which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project. Staff is recommending revisions to the Project

Status:	Final	Preparer:	Ali Forsythe	Phase:	2	Version:	A
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Notes:				Page:	1	of	2

action alternatives from those contained in the 2017 Draft EIR/EIS to better align with the Value Planning Report and the alternatives contained therein. Two action alternatives are being recommended that combine components of VP5, VP6, and VP7 from the Value Planning Report to simplify the EIR and streamline its preparation and review by the public. The recommended revised action alternatives are being reviewed by the Ad Hoc Environmental Planning and Permitting Work Group at their June 18 meeting and the outcome of this review, including any changes will be reported at the Reservoir Committee meeting.

The recommended revisions to the project objectives and the action alternatives are within the scope allowed by CEQA to complete a Revised EIR and do not trigger any new process. Staff is working with Legal Counsel on the recommended revisions and Legal Counsel will continue to be involved in the development of the project description and Revised EIR.

Staff is coordinating the Revised EIR with similar changes Reclamation is or will be making to the EIS document.

Prior Action:

April 2020 Board Meeting - The Authority Board approved the Sites Project Value Planning Alternatives Appraisal Report (Value Planning Report) and the recommendations contained in that Report. The Value Planning Report included substantial changes in the recommended Project, VP7, as compared to Alternative D in the 2017 Draft EIR/EIS. At the same meeting, the Authority Board directed staff to begin preparation of a Revised EIR to analyze the environmental effects of the options identified in the Value Planning Report.

Fiscal Impact/Funding Source:

Development of the recommended project objectives and action alternatives is within the Amendment 1B work plan currently and sufficient funds are available to complete the project description. Completing the Revised EIR is part of the Amendment 2 work plan

Staff Contact:

Ali Forsythe

Attachments:

Attachment A - Recommended Revised EIR Objectives.
Attachment B - Recommended Revised EIR/EIS Alternatives.

Sites Reservoir Project
Preliminary Revised CEQA Objectives
June 12, 2020

- Improve environmental, agricultural, and municipal water supply reliability in a cost-effective manner for Project Participants;
- Improve cold water pool management in Shasta Reservoir through coordination and exchanges with Reclamation to benefit anadromous fish;
- Enhance the Delta ecosystem by providing water to convey food resources from the floodplain to the Delta thereby improving the food chain and quality of the Delta's estuarine habitat for the benefit of pelagic fishes¹ in the north Delta (e.g. Cache Slough);
- Provide improvements in state-wide water supply reliability to enhance opportunities for fish protection, habitat management, and other environmental needs; and
- Provide local and regional amenities, including developing recreational facilities, reducing local flood damage, and maintaining community connectivity through roadway modifications.

¹ Pelagic fish are species that spend most of their life swimming in the water column, having little contact or dependency with the bottom.

**Sites Reservoir Project
Preliminary Revised Draft EIR/EIS Alternatives
June 12, 2020**

Facilities/Operations	Action Alternative 1 (Derived from VP7)	Action Alternative 2 (Includes Parts of VP5 and VP6)
Diversion/Reservoir Infrastructure Details		
Reservoir Size	1.5 MAF	1.3 MAF
Dams [Scaled to the size of the reservoir]	Two main dams (Golden Gate and Sites) and 8 or 9 saddle dams (to be determined in design)	Two main dams and 7 saddle dams
Spillway	One spillway, design and location to be determined	Similar to Alternative 1*
Funks Reservoir and Funks Pumping Generating Plant	Pumping from the existing Funks Reservoir to Sites Reservoir through new Funks Pumping and Generating Plant and new Funks pipeline; operation will be modified and Funks Reservoir may be dredged. Footprint as described in Value Planning Report.	Similar to Alternative 1
Terminal Regulating Reservoir (TRR); TRR Pumping Generating Plant; TRR Pipeline	Pumping from the GCID Main Canal to Sites Reservoir requires construction of the TRR facilities; footprint as described in Value Planning Report	Same as Alternative 1
Holthouse Reservoir/Fletcher	Eliminated facilities from 2017 Draft EIR/EIS and pumpback generation	Same as Alternative 1
Hydropower	Power generation incidental upon release	Same as Alternative 1
Diversion(s)	Diversion from Sacramento River into exiting Tehama-Colusa Canal at Red Bluff and the existing GCID Main Canal at Hamilton City Adding 2 pumps in existing bays at the plant at Red Bluff	Same as Alternative 1
Emergency Release Flow [Function of the size of the reservoir]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Releases into Funks and Stone Corral creeks; and 2. Emergency outflow works pipeline and structure to release north to Hunters Creek Watershed 	Similar to Alternative 1*

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Preliminary Revised Draft EIR/EIS Alternatives
June 12, 2020**

Facilities/Operations	Action Alternative 1 (Derived from VP7)	Action Alternative 2 (Includes Parts of VP5 and VP6)
Flood Control	Flood damage reduction benefit for local watersheds from reservoir storage	Same as Alternative 1
Reservoir Management	Reservoir Management Plan (To be developed)	Same as Alternative 1
Electrical Facilities	Transmission Lines, Substations, Switchyards; Interconnection with WAPA or PG&E	Same as Alternative 1
Operations		
One Operational Criteria	Option based on Value Planning Report Table 3.1 Scenario B but anticipated to be modified by future modeling efforts	Same as Alternative 1
Reclamation Involvement	Two Options: 1. Funding Partner 2. Operational Exchanges a. Within Year Exchanges b. Real-time Exchanges	Same as Alternative 1
State Water Project (SWP) Involvement	Operational Exchanges with Oroville and storage in SWP facilities South-of-Delta	Same as Alternative 1
Bypass Releases		
Bypass Releases into Funks Creek and Stone Corral Creek	Develop specific bypass criteria to protect downstream water right holders and ecological function	Same as Alternative 1
Conveyance Release		
Dunnigan Release	Release 1,000 cfs into new pipeline to Colusa Basin Drain	Release into new pipeline to Sacramento River, partial release into the Colusa Basin Drain to fulfill the Proposition 1 needs

**Sites Reservoir Project
 Preliminary Revised Draft EIR/EIS Alternatives
 June 12, 2020**

Facilities/Operations	Action Alternative 1 (Derived from VP7)	Action Alternative 2 (Includes Parts of VP5 and VP6)
Recreation		
Facilities Consistent with WSIP Application	Phased implementation consistent with WSIP application. Two primary areas with infrastructure: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Peninsula Hills Area 2. Stone Corral Creek One day-use boat ramp w/parking located on the west side of the reservoir and south of the bridge	Same as Alternative 1
Transportation/Circulation		
Provide Route to West Side of Reservoir	Bridge and road to residents at the south end of reservoir (does not go to Lodoga)	Road to south residents continues to Lodoga; no bridge
Other Maintenance and Access Roads	Sites Reservoir Road Modifications Plan – In development	Similar to Alternative 1*

* May have minor differences due to reservoir size