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**State's Water Resilience Portfolio Calls for Accelerated Permitting of Smart Storage Projects**

*Highlights Need to Advance Sites Reservoir to Enhance Environment & Water Reliability*

Sacramento, Calif. – In a suite of recommended actions to help California cope with more extreme droughts and floods, rising temperatures, declining fish populations, aging infrastructure and other challenges, California state agencies called for accelerated permitting and approvals for project selected under Proposition 1, including Sites Reservoir. The California Natural Resources Agency, California Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Food and Agriculture released its draft Water Resilience Portfolio in response to Governor Newsom's April 29, 2019, executive order directing the agencies to develop a portfolio of actionable steps to ensure long-term water supply reliability and ecosystem health. Sites Reservoir was included as an action to expand smart surface water storage where it can benefit water supply and the environment.

"A great deal of time and energy went into development of the Resilience Portfolio, and we thank the agencies behind this important effort," said Fritz Durst, chairman of the Sites Project Authority. "In many ways, California's water future is a great big puzzle, and these actionable steps go a long way towards fitting the many pieces together."

Located 10 miles west of the town of Maxwell in rural Glenn and Colusa counties, Sites Reservoir would be an off-stream storage facility that captures and stores stormwater flows in the Sacramento River—after all other water rights and regulatory requirements are met—for release in dry and critical years for environmental use and for California communities, farms and businesses when it is so desperately needed.

"Sites Reservoir offers a unique opportunity to expand water storage in California while providing much-needed environmental benefits," added Durst. "Sites will provide off-stream storage and add new water into the system, particularly during dry years, easing the strain of drought on people, farms and the environment."

Sites Reservoir will provide federal and state resource agencies with a dedicated and reliable supply of water they can manage to provide environmental benefits, especially during drier years. Up to half of the project's annual water supplies will be provided for environmental flows, which will help to improve conditions for Delta smelt; help preserve cold-water pools in Shasta later into the summer months to support salmon development, spawning and rearing; and improve the Pacific Flyway habitat for migratory birds and other native species.

"Sites Reservoir stands to play a crucial role in California's water future, and we look forward to continuing our work with state and federal agencies to secure the permits needed to start construction," added Durst.

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*Sites is an off-river 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.*

