

Topic: **Sites Reservoir Project**

Subject: **Monthly Status Report**

Report Period: **2021 April**

Monthly Status Summary:

The development of the Sites Project continues to make progress in the critical areas including the following activities:

EPA Notice of Funding Availability for WIFIA Loans: The notice issued this month provides for up to \$5.5B in loans available under the WIFIA program this year. Two informational meetings have been conducted with EPA over the past 3 months to evaluate the probability of success in receiving a WIFIA loan for the Sites Project. Also, Sites participants that have received WIFIA loans previously have been briefing the team on the process. A Letter of Interest is planned for the Sites Project during this funding round and will come through the Budget and Finance Committee to the Boards in July. LOI's are due on July 23, 2021.

USDA Loan Update: The project team met with USDA staff to confirm the updated scope and schedule for the Sites project and the Maxwell Interties elements. USDA staff confirmed that the loan conditions could be adjusted, and they recommended waiting until summer 2022 to seek formal adjustment. Also, the loan interest rate is capped at 3.875% and if the loan was executed today the rate would be closer to 2.25%.

Environmental Planning and Permitting Update: Ongoing preparation of the RDEIR/SDEIS, including the following:

- Introductory Chapters 1-4 were reviewed by CEQA Responsible and NEPA Cooperating Agencies and comments were submitted in late April; revisions were initiated based on comments and will be completed in May.
- Updating Chapter 2, Preliminary Project Description and Alternatives based on design refinements and other input.
- Finalization of Group 1 Administrative Draft RDEIR/SDEIS chapters (submitted to the Authority for review on May 3, 2021) including chapters and appendices addressing fluvial geomorphology, energy, transportation and traffic groundwater, and cultural, wildlife and vegetation resources.
- Development of Group 2 and 3 Administrative Draft RDEIR/SDEIS chapters, to be submitted to the Authority for review on May 24 and June 1 respectively. These include revised versions of Batch 1A and 1B chapters as well as new chapters dependent on modeling results (e.g., surface water, aquatic species, air quality and greenhouse gases).
- Participation in meetings and coordination with non-governmental organizations and working to address key issues identified during these meetings.

- Coordination with legal counsel on key issues of concern, including tribal outreach and approach to mitigation.
- Continued coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on the Clean Water Act 404 permit application efforts and continued coordination with the 404 permitting working group.
- Continued coordination with the State Water Resources Control Board for preparation of the Clean Water Act Section 401 permit application and held Pre-Application meeting.
- Continued discussions with California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) on 2020/2021 meetings and workshops.
- Continued working with Reclamation on the Biological Assessment and approach to species analysis.
- Continued discussions with CDFW regarding take permit conditions and Prop 1 benefits.
- Continued mitigation planning and coordination with the mitigation and adaptive management small working group.