

Authority Board Meeting

Agenda Item 3.2: Final EIR/EIS Update

August 24, 2022



Roles

- Authority Lead Agency under CEQA
 - Takes first CEQA action
 - Members making decision in the context of the Authority's decision (not their own agency's decision)
- Each Reservoir Committee Member is a Responsible Agency under CEQA
 - Takes follow on CEQA action prior to final decision to invest in Project
 - Important that each Member Agency can make this decision based on the Authority's Final EIR/EIS

Final EIR/EIS Development

- RDEIR/SDEIS released November 12, 2021
- Close of public review January 28, 2022
- Ongoing efforts since January:
 - Coordination with Reclamation and legal counsel on approach to Final EIR/EIS, including format, key comments and additional technical analysis
 - Identification of any changes to the Project, both facilities and operations
 - Incorporating revised diversion criteria and revised modeling results
 - Continuing AB 52 consultation and other public outreach
 - Developing master and individual responses to comments

Final EIR/EIS Format

- Volume 1 – Chapters
 - Include all chapters from RDEIR/SDEIS that need to be revised
- Volume 2 – Appendices
 - Include all appendices from RDEIR/SDEIS that need to be revised
- Volume 3 – Responses to Comments on RDEIR/SDEIS
 - Master responses and individual responses to all comments received

Key Changes To Date

- Changes between RDEIR/SDEIS and Final EIR/EIS to date:
 - Minor changes in facilities due to design refinements
 - Revisions to Diversion Criteria
 - Corrections or clarifications needed in response to comments
- No new or substantial greater impacts identified that would require recirculation

CEQA Decision Process (In Order)

1. Certification of the Final EIR completed in compliance with CEQA and reflects agency's independent judgment
2. Adopt CEQA Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations
 - Significant Impact – Written findings accompanied by a brief explanation of the rationale
 - Significant and Unavoidable Impacts – Statement of Overriding Considerations
 - Balance, as applicable, the economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits, including region-wide or statewide environmental benefits, of a proposed project against its unavoidable environmental risks
 - Water Quality, Vegetation and Wildlife, Agriculture, Air Quality, Cultural Resources, Tribal Cultural Resources
 - Adopt Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan
3. Decide whether to approve the Project

Next Steps

- Completion of Administrative Final EIR/EIS in October and concurrent review by Reclamation, legal counsel and responsible and cooperating agencies
- Preparation of the complete Final EIR/EIS in early 2023
- Federal review and approval for publication
- Preparation of CEQA Findings, MMRP and Statement of Overriding Considerations
- Authority Board public meeting to decide to adopt CEQA document, make findings and approve project