

2022 Highlights and Milestones

Remarkable achievements keep Sites Reservoir affordable, permittable, and buildable for all partners as the Sites Authority advances as an effective organization.

2022 was a year marked with crucial progress and enhanced collaboration with project partners—keeping the Sites Authority in alignment with its mission, vision, and values as it charts down the path to success both now and in the future.

AFFORDABLE

Obtained Substantial Federal Funding

Leveraging ongoing relationships with federal partners, the Sites Authority secured significant federal appropriations through two programs: \$30 million from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and an additional \$80 million from the Water Infrastructure Investments for the Nation (WIIN) Act. **OUTCOME:** With the allocation of these funds, the Sites Authority has now received roughly \$214 million in federal funding to date from the Bureau of Reclamation.

Increased the State Funding Award by \$39 million

Following the California Water Commission's (CWC) determination of feasibility, the Sites Authority worked with the CWC to increase the conditional Proposition 1 award by \$39 million. **OUTCOME:** The Sites Authority is working with state partners to secure the \$875 million of state funding to advance toward construction.

Enhanced Project Financing Action Plan

Building on the initial Financing Action Plan executed in 2020 and 2021, the Sites Authority conducted four public workshops and two series of one-on-one check-ins with Participants focused on the "three big questions" related to financing the project: "What do we get?", "What does it cost?", and "How do we pay for it?". This culminated in the adoption of the Final Guiding Principles and Preliminary Terms and other financial documents to support the Indicative Credit Rating for the Sites Authority's WIFIA Loan application. **OUTCOME:** A financing approach that works for all participants.

PERMITTABLE

Advanced Final EIR/EIS

Working jointly with Reclamation, the Sites Authority began development of master and individual responses to comments on the 2021 Revised Draft EIR/EIS while also advancing the administrative Final EIR/EIS. **OUTCOME:** The Sites Authority is on track to complete final environmental documentation in partnership with state, federal, and local agencies.

Progressing Key Permit Applications

In conjunction with state and federal partners, the Sites Authority is advancing key permit applications including the Operations Incidental Take Permit and Biological Assessment. **OUTCOME:** The Sites Authority's advancement of permitting elements is providing greater certainty to participants and improving understanding of the Sites Reservoir Project with resource agencies.

Submitted Water Right Application

Submitting the water right application is a key step in advancing the Sites Reservoir Project. The Sites Authority submitted the application in May 2022, which was accepted by the State Water Board in August 2022. In early January 2023, the Sites Authority also responded to additional information requests from the State Water Board. **OUTCOME:** The Sites Authority continues its commitment to partnering with the state to work through the water right process.

BUILDABLE

Conducted Construction Contractor Open House

In partnership with contractors throughout the nation, the Sites Authority hosted a Construction Contractor open house to seek input on the delivery of the Sites Reservoir Project. Following the open house, additional meetings were held to inform the project construction packages. In July 2022, the Sites Authority adopted its Contracting Strategy consisting of nine construction packages of varying sizes with delivery methods best suited to the facilities and schedule. **OUTCOME:** The Contracting Strategy sets the stage for the Sites Authority to develop a program baseline schedule to inform delivery of nearly \$4 billion of critical infrastructure for California.

Strengthened Geotechnical Program

The Sites Authority enhanced the project's geotechnical program by coordinating with the Department of Water Resources Division of Safety of Dams (DSOD) to identify exploration activities required to advance the reservoir design. Initial investigations in 2022 resulted in data supporting designs for the Terminal Regulating Reservoir, Sites Dam, and construction roads. **OUTCOME:** Together, the Sites Authority and DSOD are allocating resources to continually improve the buildability of Sites Reservoir.

EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATION

Aligned Potential Future Participants

With California's drought crisis, the Sites Authority experienced an unprecedented increase in requests from agencies throughout the state of California to participate in the Sites Reservoir Project. Staff hosted informational sessions to inform these interested parties of project progress. **OUTCOME:** Sites Reservoir is a solution for California communities to strengthen their water supply resiliency in the face of extreme weather.

Conducted Outreach and Tours for Project Partners and Interested Parties

Throughout 2022, Sites Authority staff hosted outreach and project tours for state, federal, and local partners including permitting, funding, and governmental interests. **OUTCOME:** The Sites Authority continues its commitment to keep its partners informed of project progress.



HIGHLIGHT OF THE YEAR

Sites Authority Invited to Apply for WIFIA Loan

In March 2022, the US EPA invited the Sites Authority to apply for a low-interest loan through WIFIA program for 49 percent of eligible project costs (currently estimated as \$2.2 billion).

Administered by the US EPA, WIFIA is a federal loan program with a robust statutorily required review process. WIFIA's aim is to accelerate investment in the nation's water infrastructure by providing long-term, low-cost federal loans for regionally and nationally significant projects. A loan through the WIFIA program could dramatically reduce the costs to participants in the Sites Reservoir Project, making it more affordable for cities, farms, and resource managers to have access to more water in dry years. With the expression of loan commitment, US EPA concluded that the Sites Reservoir Project will generate substantial benefits to California and that the Sites Authority's structure demonstrates a commitment to collaboration and local leadership.

A WIFIA loan would bring Sites Reservoir significantly closer to construction and completion.