

Reservoir Committee and Authority Board Meeting

Agenda Item 3.1: Final EIR/EIS, Part 1 of 3 Status
Briefing in Preparation for Approval of the Project

February 17, 2023



Final EIR/EIS Briefings in Preparation for Approval of Project

- February 2023, Part 1 of 3 – Today!
 - Review Final EIR/EIS requirements and format
 - Provide overview of changes to the project based on design refinements and operations
 - Discuss revisions to modeling
- March 2023, Part 2 of 3
 - Overview of key comments and master responses; ongoing public and local community outreach; ongoing tribal outreach and AB 52 consultation; and refinements to impacts and mitigation measures
- April 2023, Part 3 of 3
 - Overview of Findings, Statement of Overriding Considerations and MMRP
 - Request approval to publish Final EIR
- May 2023, Board Hearing
 - Any last items and next steps post EIR
 - EIR Certification
 - Decision to Approve Project

Final EIR Requirements

- CEQA requires that a lead agency prepare a Final EIR/EIS prior to approving a project
- The Final EIR must include:
 - The draft EIR or revision of the draft
 - Comments and recommendations received on the draft EIR, either verbatim or in summary
 - A list of persons, organizations, and public agencies commenting on the draft EIR
 - The responses of the Lead Agency to significant environmental points raised in the review and consultation process (CEQA Guidelines Section 15132)

Final EIR/EIS Format

- Volume 1 – Chapters
 - Include all chapters from RDEIR/SDEIS *with changes*
- Volume 2 – Appendices
 - Include all appendices from RDEIR/SDEIS *with changes*
- Volume 3 – Response to Comments
 - Master responses
 - Individual responses
- Comment letters will be posted on Authority's website

Key Refinements between RDEIR/SDEIS and Final EIR/EIS

- Preferred Alternative is now Alternative 3
 - Allows for Reclamation's investment of up to 25 percent
- Revisions to diversion criteria
 - Discussed more on next slide
- Incorporation of Mitigation Measure Fish-2.1 into Project
- Incorporation of updated modeling results
- Minor changes in facilities due to design refinements
- Corrections or clarifications needed in response to comments

No new or substantial greater impacts identified that would require recirculation

Key Changes to Diversion Criteria

- Bend Bridge Pulse Protection
 - Revised to base on projected flows
 - Includes off-ramp to allow for diversions with the 7-day pulse protection if flows are at or over 29,000 cfs at Bend Bridge
- Wilkins Slough Bypass Criteria
 - Revised to 10,700 cfs October 1 through June 14; 5,000 cfs September (not diverting from June 15 to end of August)
- Fremont Weir Notch Protection
 - No longer included. Revised Wilkins Slough criteria and Bend Bridge pulse protection provide protections for Fremont Weir Notch

Single Operational Criteria

- Final EIR/EIS continues to include a single operational criteria applied to all alternatives
- Single criteria allows for comparison of alternatives on a similar basis with operational criteria that meet the Project objectives to be cost-effective while being protective of fish
 - Inconsistent with CEQA to analyze alternatives that don't meet objectives and are not feasible (not affordable)
- Operational criteria have been refined over time to be protective of fish
 - Multiple operational criteria have been considered over the life of the Project

Other Revisions to the Modeling in the Final EIR/EIS

- Shasta Lake Operations – Expanded exchanges to include more opportunities for fall flow stability and spring pulse enhancement
- Deadpool Volume – Reduced from generally 120 TAF to 60 TAF
- Delta Salinity Accounting – Slightly refined based on revisions to Calsim II coding
- Period of Diversion to Sites Storage – Revised to only include Sept 1 to June 14 to match water right application
- South of Delta Water Delivery – Revised to allow in any year that capacity is available (previously limited to below normal, dry and critically dry years)
- Updates to Diversion Criteria – Revised diversion criteria incorporated

Next Steps in Briefing Process

- March 2023, Part 2 of 3
 - Overview of key comments and master responses
 - Ongoing public and local community outreach
 - Ongoing tribal outreach and AB 52 consultation
 - Overview of any refinements to impacts and mitigation measures
- April 2023, Part 3 of 3
 - Overview of Findings, Statement of Overriding Considerations and MMRP
 - Request approval to publish Final EIR

Final EIR Certification Targeted for May 2023

- May 2023, Board Hearing
 - Any last items
 - Adoption of Findings, Statement of Overriding Considerations and MMRP
 - EIR Certification
 - Decision to Approve Project
 - Next Steps
 - Local considerations with MOUs and Local Community Working Group
 - Tribal considerations with MOA and Tribal Working Group

Questions?