

Reservoir Committee and Authority Board Meeting

Agenda Item 3.1: Final EIR/EIS Status Briefing

April 21, 2023



Final EIR/EIS Briefings in Preparation for Approval of Project

- February 2023, Part 1
 - 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
 - Overview of key comments and master responses; ongoing public and local community, tribal and NGO outreach
- April 2023, Part 3
 - Overview of refinements to impacts and mitigation measures; Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
- May and June 2023, Part 3, continued
 - Overview of Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations
- July 2023
 - Any last items
- August 2023, Board Hearing
 - Next steps post EIR
 - EIR Certification
 - Decision to Approve Project

Determination of Impacts

- Lead Agency must consider direct and indirect effects
- Impacts determined by comparison to baseline physical conditions
- Impact determinations:
 - No impact – No change
 - Less-than-significant impact – No substantial adverse change
 - Less than significant with mitigation – Implementation of one or more mitigation measures would reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level
 - Significant and unavoidable impact – A potentially substantial adverse change in the physical conditions of the environment would result AND mitigation is not feasible or would not reduce impact to less than significant
 - Must make findings weighing these against the social, economic, legal, technical and other beneficial aspects of the Project

Determination of Impacts (cont)

- EIR/EIS provides an evaluation of impacts:
 - For all 3 alternatives
 - In 27 resource areas/chapters
- Resource areas with no impacts or where all impacts are less than significant
 - Surface Water
 - Fluvial Geomorphology
 - Groundwater Resources
 - Minerals
 - Recreation
 - Energy
 - Noise
 - Population and Housing
 - Public Services and Utilities
 - Public Health and Environmental Hazards

Summary of Significant + Significant and Unavoidable Impacts

Chapter (# and Title)	Significant Impacts Requiring Mitigation	Significant and Unavoidable Impacts
6. Surface Water Quality	All Alts – Construction effects related to potential to degrade surface water quality due to methylmercury; operational effects related to potential to degrade surface water quality due to methylmercury, metals and pesticides	All Alts – Increased methylmercury concentrations downstream of Sites Reservoir
9. Vegetation and Wetlands	All Alts – Construction effects on special-status plant species, wetlands, and potential conflicts with HCP/NCCP; operational effects on special status plant species, riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community, and wetlands	All Alts – Construction related effects to oak woodlands, primarily in the reservoir inundation area
10. Wildlife	All Alts – Construction effects on special-status species, potential conflicts with local policies and HCPs/NCCPs, interference with movement of species / wildlife corridors; operational effects due to use of pesticides and herbicides, interference with movement of species / wildlife corridors	All Alts – Construction related effects to golden eagle; interference with movement of native or migratory wildlife species or with established wildlife corridors

Summary of Significant + Significant and Unavoidable Impacts (cont)

Chapter (# and Title)	Significant Impacts Requiring Mitigation	Significant and Unavoidable Impacts
11. Aquatic Biological Resources	All Alts – Construction effects on special-status fish; operational effects on Delta and longfin smelt	None
12. Geology, Soils, Paleontology	All Alts – Construction effects on paleontological resources	Alt 1 & 3 – Paleontological resource impacts due to construction method for TRR East
14. Land Use	No feasible mitigation identified	Alt 2 – South Road (no bridge) physical divides Lodoga and Maxwell
15. Agricultural Resources	All Alts – Conversion of farmlands and Williamson Act lands	All Alts – Permanent conversion of farmland and Williamson Act Lands
18. Navigation, Transportation and Traffic	No feasible mitigation identified	Alt 2 – South Road (no bridge) will add substantial travel time for school bus travel to Lodoga (from 30 to 50 minutes)
20. Air Quality	All Alts – Increase in criteria pollutant for which region is nonattainment during construction; recreational boat emissions during operations	All Alts – Increase in criteria pollutant for which region is nonattainment during construction

Summary of Significant + Significant and Unavoidable Impacts (cont)

Chapter (# and Title)	Significant Impacts Requiring Mitigation	Significant and Unavoidable Impacts
21. Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG)	All Alts – Develop a GHG Reduction Plan to achieve net-zero emissions during construction and operations	None
22. Cultural Resources	All Alts - Impacts to historic/archaeological resources that will be addressed through identification, avoidance, protection and data collection	All Alts – Permanent loss of historic and archaeological resources due to construction, inundation and wave action
23. Tribal Cultural Resources	All Alts –Although not yet formally evaluated, the Authority has determined certain sites to be tribal cultural resources pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1.	All Alts – Permanent loss of tribal cultural resources due to construction, inundation and wave action
24. Visual Resources	All Alts – No feasible mitigation identified	All Alts – Inundation substantially degrades the existing visual character Alt 2 – Sacramento River discharge structure substantially degrades the existing visual character

Refinement to Impacts – Aquatics Chapter

- RDEIR/SDEIS
 - Included Mitigation Measure FISH-2.1 to reduce potential effects on salmonids by increasing the bypass flow requirement at Wilkins Slough
 - Minimum bypass flow requirement of 10,700 cfs at Wilkins Slough in March-May
- Final EIR/EIS
 - Bypass flow requirement at Wilkins Slough revised to 10,700 cfs at Wilkins Slough Oct-June
 - Bypass flow requirement is an integral component of Project operations and incorporated into project description rather than mitigation
 - Modeling performed for the Final EIR/EIS includes the revised diversion criteria
 - Eliminates the need for Mitigation Measure FISH-2.1 in the Final EIR/EIS
- Impacts now less than significant
 - Impact FISH-2, winter-run Chinook salmon
 - Impact FISH-3, spring-run Chinook salmon
 - Impact FISH-4, Central Valley steelhead

Other Minor Refinement to Impacts

- Only minor revisions have been made to 14 of the impact statements in response to comments and for clarification purposes
- Minor adjustments in impact analysis also due to revised modeling
- No new or substantial greater impacts identified, no changes in impact categories

Refinement to Mitigation Measures

- Mitigation Measure FISH-2.1 eliminated in the Final EIR/EIS
- Only minor changes, clarifications, additions to a few other mitigation measures
- No other major changes to mitigation measures
- No additional mitigation required

Refinement to Best Management Practices

- Numerous best management practices (BMPs), management plans and studies incorporated as part of the Project
- Refinements in the Final EIR/EIS include:
 - BMP-16, Traffic Management Plan – Added more detail on prohibiting construction traffic in the community of Maxwell while allowing construction traffic along Old Highway 99

Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP)

- Required under CEQA
- MMRP identifies
 - Impact and required mitigation
 - Timing for implementation
 - Responsible party (Authority as CEQA lead agency ultimately responsible but can delegate to contractors)
- MMRP would be adopted by Board after EIR certification

Next Steps for Implementing Mitigation

- Mitigation implementation strategy to clearly identify how all mitigation measures will be implemented
 - Measures implemented directly by Authority or delegated to contractors
 - Roles and responsibilities and decision-making process for implementing mitigation
 - Reporting process, timelines, and tracking system
 - Auditing process to ensure mitigation is being implemented
- Begin development later this calendar year
- Important to complete prior to issuance of any construction contract (including Dams CMAR package)

Next Steps in Briefing Process

- May 2023 and June, Part 3 (continued)
 - Overview of Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations
- July 2023
 - Any last items

Final EIR Certification Targeted for August 2023

- August 2023, Board Hearing
 - EIR Certification
 - Adoption of Findings, Statement of Overriding Considerations and Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program
 - Decision to Approve Project
 - Next Steps
 - Local considerations with MOUs and Local Community Working Group
 - Tribal considerations with MOA and Tribal Working Group

Questions?

