

**From:** [Richard Spotts](mailto:Richard.Spotts@sitesproject.org)  
**To:** [EIR-EIS-Comments@sitesproject.org](mailto:EIR-EIS-Comments@sitesproject.org)  
**Cc:** [wade.crowfoot@resources.ca.gov](mailto:wade.crowfoot@resources.ca.gov)  
**Subject:** My EIR-EIS comments: Please oppose the Sites Reservoir  
**Date:** Thursday, January 27, 2022 5:57:33 PM

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January 27, 2022

Dear Public Officials:

I urge you to oppose and deny the application for the proposed Sites Reservoir. I understand that the public comment period on the related environmental analysis ends tomorrow. Please include this email in the administrative record for that analysis. And please respond to my comments in the final EIR-EIS.

The climate and extinction crises are real, connected, and getting worse. Dramatic reforms are urgently required. Status quo management methods are no longer appropriate or sustainable.

In this context, the connected Sacramento River and Delta ecosystems are in ecological decline, under serious environmental stress, with dwindling salmon fisheries, and greater jeopardy to dependent species that are listed or proposed for listing under the federal and state endangered species laws. Indeed, the Delta smelt is on the verge of extinction. There are already many on and off-river reservoirs lining the Central Valley. Due to the mega drought, many of them are very low, and they all lose enormous amounts of water each year from evaporation. It would be foolish to divert precious Sacramento River water and diminish necessary Delta flushing flows to build yet another off-river reservoir that would likely be very low most years and suffer evaporation losses.

Changing the status quo must mean doing better at replicating natural processes as much as possible. In this case, it would save public money, water, and the energy to divert and pump water to the new reservoir by simply acquiring farmland along rural portions of the Sacramento River and perhaps some tributaries, lowering levees, and allowing the rare high flood flows to expand out of the river channel as they previously did for many thousands of years. This would restore critical habitats for migratory waterfowl and many ESA listed or proposed species, allow natural flows to generally move southward for fisheries passage, and replenish depleted groundwater aquifers. It would be working with rather than against nature. And it would create added wildlife habitats instead of destroying thousands of acres of existing habitats. Big ag interests love to spend exorbitant public money on massive water storage projects that largely benefit their private profits. They get

the gold and the general public, wildlife, and the environment get the shaft.

When are we going to learn from history and stop repeating the same mistakes over and over again? When are we going to realize that we waste enormous amounts of water and that we could save and reuse most of it through more aggressive and effective water conservation and reclamation programs?

The proposed Sites Reservoir is a relic of the foolish past way of thinking that we could somehow create water by building more dams and reservoirs. You can't drink water rights on paper or concrete. Nature provides our water, and less of it because of the climate change that we created through arrogant burning of fossil fuels. We need to change course, learn from nature, and strive to become a truly sustainable civilization.

Please oppose this project and don't destroy thousands of productive biodiverse acres for this boondoggle.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Richard Spotts  
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P.S. Although I am now retired and living in Utah, I was born and spent much of my life in California. I have relatives in California and I am a frequent visitor.

cc: Interested parties