

# Comments on Sites DEIR/S and Draft Feasibility Report

jbyron@sbcfoundation.org

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To: EIR-EIS-Comments <eir-eis-comments@sitesproject.org>;

Mr. Jim Watson  
Sites Project Authority  
P.O. Box 517  
Maxwell, CA 95955

Mr. Mike Dietl  
Bureau of Reclamation  
2800 Cottage Way, W-2830  
Sacramento, CA 95825

Via Email: [EIR-EIS-Comments@SitesProject.org](mailto:EIR-EIS-Comments@SitesProject.org)

Re: Comments on Sites DEIR/S and Draft Feasibility Report

Dear Mr. Watson and Mr. Dietl:

Please accept these comments in response to the Sites Reservoir Project DEIR/S and Feasibility Report. The DEIR/S assessment of impacts on the river are based on the erroneous belief that current flow and water quality standards for the river are adequate. Actually, current standards are inadequate to protect and restore at-risk fish and wildlife species or maintain the river's dynamic, flow-based ecosystems on which these species depend. Please withdraw this inadequate environmental document and revise it to better assess and mitigate project impacts on the Sacramento River, downstream water quality (in the river and Delta), and on natural and cultural resources that would drown under the reservoir footprint.

Major dam and water projects in California killed off what was once a very valuable salmon fishery, destroyed wetlands and riverside habitat, and degraded water quality. Because the Site project will depend on Prop. 1 water bond funding, its DEIR/S must *prove* to the public that Sites will avoid adverse environmental impacts and in fact, provide net public benefits.

The Sites DEIR/S admits that the project will destroy 15,000 acres of oak woodlands, grassland, wetlands, riparian habitat, and croplands, with significant unavoidable impacts on the protected Golden eagle, paleontological and cultural resources, and air quality (through generation of greenhouse gas emissions). Potentially significant impacts on rare plants and other resources appear to have been low-balled in the DEIR.

The project will depend on coordinated operation with Trinity, Shasta, Oroville, and Folsom dams on the Trinity, Sacramento, Feather, and American Rivers to do less damage to endangered salmon downstream of these dams by storing water for later releases, but the DEIR/S reports that coordinated operations between Sites and other dams will on average improve salmon runs by only 2-4 percent, at a cost of at least \$1.6 billion.

Where is the evidence that Sites water allocated to maintain Delta water quality will do so? The State Water Board estimates that the Delta needs 35-75 percent of its previously unimpaired flows, but there is no information in the Sites DEIR/S as to how project diversions and releases will achieve this. The DEIR/S fails to adequately assess the impact of climate change and reservoir evaporation on projected yield.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,

Juan Byron

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Woodside, CA 94062

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