

# Comments on Sites Reservoir Project EIR/EIS

Ellen Wehr <ewehr@gwdwater.org>

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

Cc:Ric Ortega <rortega@gwdwater.org>;

Dear Sites Project Authority and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation,

Grassland Water District and Grassland Resource Conservation District submit the following two comments on the Sites Reservoir Project ("Project") Draft EIR/EIS:

1. Page 14-52 of the Draft EIR/EIS states that the Project would only "replace" a portion of existing interim water transfers to wildlife refuges, to meet Incremental Level 4 refuge water requirements, and that the Project "would not change the volume of water delivered to the refuges." These statements appear to be inconsistent with the Water Storage Investment Program application submitted to the California Water Commission for the Project. The Project should not be limited to replacing existing sources of refuge water supplies, because existing supplies are insufficient to meet full Level 4 refuge water needs. The language in the EIR/EIS should be revised to delete the word "replace," and to state that the Project would not result in any decrease in existing Level 2 and Level 4 refuge water deliveries, but could result in increased deliveries of Level 4 refuge water supplies. All other similar representations in the EIR/EIS, such as in Table 6-5 and accompanying text, should also be revised so that existing Level 4 refuge deliveries do not necessarily decrease as a result of the Project providing Level 4 refuge water supplies.
2. Chapter 6, the Water Resources chapter of the Draft EIR/EIS, does not discuss the potential water supply implications if California's "area of origin" laws, Water Code section 11460 et seq., are invoked for that portion of the Project's new water supplies that would be delivered to water users in the Sacramento Valley. Any prioritization of the Project's water supplies under the area of origin laws could adversely affect the delivery of Central Valley Project water, including deliveries to CVPIA wildlife refuges, which would have negative environmental consequences. Please respond with an explanation that California's area of origin laws would not be invoked so as to de-prioritize or diminish deliveries of Level 2 CVP refuge water supplies.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments,

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