



For Immediate Release:

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California Certifies Sites Reservoir Under Senate Bill 149 for Streamlined Judicial Review

Decision Saves Time and Reduces Cost While Ensuring Key Environmental Safeguards

Maxwell, CA – The Sites Reservoir Project was certified today by Governor Newsom under Senate Bill 149. Signed by Governor Newsom earlier this year, SB 149 streamlines efforts for Governor-certified projects like Sites Reservoir to avoid months or even years of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) litigation delays.

The Sites Project Authority would like to commend and thank Governor Newsom for wasting no time in acting on the legislation enacted earlier this year to expedite critically important infrastructure.

Sites is the first project to receive the Governor’s SB 149 certification. In announcing his certification, the Governor commented “We’re cutting red tape to build more faster. These are projects that will address our state’s biggest challenges faster, and the Sites Reservoir is fully representative of the goal – making sure Californians have access to clean drinking water and making sure we’re more resilient against future droughts.”

“SB 149 provides a needed opportunity for essential water projects to move from planning to reality without years of legal delays,” said **Fritz Durst, chairman of the Sites Project Authority**. “Sites Reservoir has gone through a rigorous environmental review process and the project we are considering today will help the state meet key climate change goals and create a more resilient water supply for Californians and the environment.”

Earlier this year, the Authority applied for certification and provided detailed information on the Sites Project and how we are complying with each requirement in SB 149. The Authority is committed to fulfill its obligations under the applicable provisions of the law.

The streamlining provisions for certified projects include a 270-day judicial review period for a CEQA case, including all appeals, as feasible, and a requirement that public agencies prepare and certify the record of proceedings within five days of certification of the project.

Sites Reservoir provides an unprecedented opportunity to help the State maintain a resilient water supply in the face of climate change, extreme weather, and water scarcity. The locally led, multi-benefit, off-stream water storage project would responsibly capture and store Sacramento River water during high river flow events—after all other water rights and regulatory requirements are met—and make that water available to California’s environment, communities, and farms when it’s most needed—especially during times of drought. Sites Reservoir would have water storage capacity of approximately 1.5 million acre-feet, which is enough water to serve the water needs of approximately 3 million homes for a year. California can and must utilize all tools in our collective toolbox of measures to adjust and continue to prosper in the face of the growing challenges presented by climate change.

Sites is an off-stream reservoir proposed north of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, where it would provide unique water supply and environmental benefits during dry periods, especially during extended drought. Additional information can be found at www.sitesproject.org or on Facebook and Twitter at @SitesProject.

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