

# Sites Project Authority

## 2023 PROGRESS REPORT

2023 was a significant year for the Sites Reservoir Project thanks to our many partners working to move the project from planning to reality. We've continued our momentum toward construction and a more sustainable water supply for generations to come.

Last January, we set out to achieve significant funding, planning, and permitting goals for the Sites Reservoir Project in the year ahead. Through collaboration across diverse interests, visionary leadership from our Participants, robust local engagement, and support from our state and federal partners, we achieved key goals that are foundational to the project's success. These milestones were the direct result of our Participants, regional leaders, and local community coming together with the shared vision of a more secure water future for California.

Looking ahead to 2024 and 2025, we expect to hit our final critical milestones—securing a water right application and securing final funding with our local, state, and federal partners. We look forward to building a reservoir that will serve California for decades to come.

With Sites Reservoir, there can be significant benefits for California's communities, farms, and environment including:



### Off-stream Storage

Does not create a barrier to native fish migration



### Federal and State Agencies Manage Environmental Water

Adaptable to current and future conditions and priorities



### Local Leadership and Cooperation

Aligns with Sacramento Valley's values and fosters regional and statewide collaboration



### Recreational Opportunities

Provides northern Sacramento Valley with additional opportunities for recreation



### Cooperative Operation

Increases effectiveness and efficiency of existing water storage infrastructure



### Adaptable to Climate Change

Contributes to system reliability and performance with climate change



### Dry Year Water Supply

Reliable dry year water supply for California communities, farms and businesses



### Environmental Support

Provides environmental water in drier periods for native fish, and habitat for native species and birds

# 2023 Highlights and Milestones



## Affordable

### Submitted WIFIA Application

Administered by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA), WIFIA is a federal loan program with a statutorily required review process. After a robust application process, the Sites Project Authority submitted its application in March 2023 and is collaborating with US EPA to develop the loan documents. **OUTCOME →** A loan through the WIFIA program could dramatically reduce the costs to Participants in the Sites Reservoir Project.

### Obtained Substantial Federal Funding

Leveraging ongoing relationships with federal partners, the Sites Project Authority secured an additional \$30M in federal appropriations through the Infrastructure and Jobs Act and \$80M from the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act. **OUTCOME →** With the appropriation of these funds, the Sites Project Authority has now received roughly \$244M in federal appropriations to date from Reclamation.



## Buildable

### Conducted Mitigation Contractor Open House

In partnership with contractors throughout the nation, the Sites Project Authority hosted a Mitigation Contractor open house to seek input on the delivery of the Sites Reservoir Project. Following the open house, additional meetings were held to inform the project's mitigation strategy. **OUTCOME →** Now, there is increased certainty as the Sites Reservoir Project moves forward with a structure in place for project delivery.

### Adopted Baseline Program Schedule

The Sites Reservoir Project is progressing with the adoption of a 7-year baseline construction schedule that is in alignment with the Sites Project Authority's priorities and project needs. This schedule provides clarity and understanding to what areas are prioritized and why, and will keep the Sites Reservoir Project on target. **OUTCOME →** The Sites Project Authority is setting the stage to deliver critical infrastructure for California effectively, safely, and efficiently.



## Permittable

### Advanced to be the first project to be certified under Governor's Senate Bill 149

SB 149 streamlines efforts for projects like Sites Reservoir to avoid months, or even years, of CEQA litigation delays. **OUTCOME →** The Sites Project Authority remains committed to fulfilling its obligations under the applicable provisions of the law as efficiently as possible.

### Progressed Key Permit Applications

Working jointly with state and federal partners, the Sites Project Authority is advancing key permit applications, including the Operations Incidental Take Permit, Construction Incidental Take Permit, and Construction Biological Assessment. **OUTCOME →** The Sites Project Authority's advancement of permitting elements provides additional certainty to Participants that the Sites Reservoir Project is progressing on target toward construction. Resource agencies also gained improved understanding through the permitting progress made throughout 2023.



## Effective Organization

### Aligned Potential Future Participants

The Sites Project Authority experienced an unprecedented increase in requests from agencies throughout the state of California to participate in the Sites Reservoir Project. Staff hosted informational sessions to inform these interested parties of project progress. **OUTCOME →** The Sites Reservoir Project is a solution for communities across California to strengthen their water supply resiliency while providing generations yet to come with the opportunity to flourish.

### Conducted Outreach and Tours for Project Partners

Throughout 2023, Sites Project Authority staff hosted outreach and project tours for state, federal, and local partners that included information regarding permitting, funding, and governmental interests. **OUTCOME →** The Sites Project Authority also produced and distributed a virtual tour of the project, which was well-received by participants and partners.