

Sites Project Authority

2024 PROGRESS REPORT

2024 marked the start of a new chapter for the Sites Reservoir Project with several major milestones that moved the Project closer to final design and construction. We successfully defended legal challenges to the environmental review process, made advancements in the permitting process, and began preparing for the next phase of the Project by initiating our first land purchase of property west of Maxwell and launching the selection process for a Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR) contractor for the Dams and Reservoir package, marking a critical step toward construction.

In 2025, we will work toward our next big milestones—selecting a CMAR contractor, moving from design to construction, additional real estate acquisitions, and securing our Water Right permit. With each milestone, we move one step closer to delivering a 21st century reservoir that provides water reliability, flexibility, and resiliency for generations 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

2024 HIGHLIGHTS AND MILESTONES



Permittable

Defended EIR litigation successfully

The Sites Project Authority cleared a major hurdle after courts rejected two legal challenges to the Sites Reservoir Project's CEQA process and the certification of the Final EIR. **OUTCOME →** The Yolo County Superior Court and the Court of Appeals found that the Sites Project Authority fully complied with CEQA in its review of the Sites Reservoir Project. Without the Sites Reservoir Project's certification under Senate Bill 149, the expediency of the Court's decision could have been delayed by several years.

Secured incidental take permits for construction and operations

In collaboration with the CDFW, the Sites Project Authority secured key permits, including the Construction and Operations Incidental Take Permits. **OUTCOME →** The advancement of permitting elements provides additional certainty to Participants that the Sites Reservoir Project is on target to construction.

Continued the Water Right process

Through ongoing coordination with the State Water Resources Control Board, the Sites Project Authority is progressing through the Water Right hearing process. **OUTCOME →** The Sites Reservoir Project is on track to obtain its Water Right Order and Permit.



Affordable

Received additional federal funding

The Sites Project Authority secured an additional \$273.1M in federal appropriations—\$205.6M in March 2024 through the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act and \$67.5M in May 2024 through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act/Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. **OUTCOME →** With the appropriation of these funds, the Sites Project Authority has received roughly \$517M in federal appropriations through 2024.

Progressed WIFIA Loan Agreement

Administered by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), WIFIA is a federal loan program with a statutorily required review process. The Sites Project Authority continued collaboration with the EPA to develop the loan documents. **OUTCOME →** The Sites Project Authority remains committed to securing a WIFIA Loan to help reduce the costs to Participants.



Effective Organization

Continued outreach and tours for partners and interested parties

Throughout 2024, the Sites Project Authority hosted Sites Reservoir Project tours for state, federal, and local partners that shared information about permitting, design, funding, and governmental interest. **OUTCOME →** The Sites Project Authority continues its commitment to transparent communication and keeping partners informed.

Informed potential future Participants

The Sites Project Authority continues to receive requests from agencies throughout California to participate in the Sites Reservoir Project. Staff kept these 16 interested parties informed of progress. **OUTCOME →** The Sites Project Authority has broad statewide support from cities, counties, water agencies, and irrigation districts throughout the Sacramento Valley, San Joaquin Valley, Bay Area, and Southern California. All are working together to advance the Sites Reservoir Project.

Remained steady through state and federal leadership changes

The Sites Project Authority continues to work with all representatives at the local, state, and federal levels to make the Sites Reservoir Project a reality. **OUTCOME →** Ongoing collaboration with local leadership and governmental partners has allowed the Sites Reservoir Project to continue transparent and synchronized progression toward construction.



Buildable

Completed preliminary design for all facilities

The Sites Project Authority completed the preliminary design (approximately 30% design) for all Sites Reservoir Project facilities and published the design drawings on its website. **OUTCOME →** The Sites Project Authority is setting the stage to move from planning to delivery.

Conducted contractor outreach

In partnership with contractors throughout the nation, the Sites Project Authority hosted contractor outreach events in February, April, and September 2024 to inform the delivery strategy for the Sites Reservoir Project. **OUTCOME →** Routine outreach helps keep the contracting community informed as the Sites Reservoir Project moves closer to construction.

HIGHLIGHT OF THE YEAR: Initiated Property Acquisition

In collaboration with local landowners who are willing sellers, the Sites Project Authority entered into an agreement in October 2024 to purchase approximately 817 acres where the Inlet/Outlet Tower, realigned Maxwell Sites Road, and several construction haul roads will be located. The Sites Project Authority entered into a second property acquisition agreement in November 2024 to purchase approximately 1,200 acres where the Golden Gate Dam and associated facilities are located.