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## State Water Resources Control Board

March 20, 2026

**Re: SITES RESERVOIR PROJECT, Petition for Assignment of State-filed Application 25517, Water Right Application 25517X01, and Petitions for Release from Priority of State-Filed Applications 25513, 25514, 25517, 22235, 23780, 23781, of Sites Project Authority.**

Dear Parties,

The Administrative Hearings Office (AHO) has prepared on behalf of the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board or Board) a Draft Decision and associated Draft Water Right Permit (Draft Permit) on the petition for assignment of State-filed Application 25517, accompanying water right Application 25517X01, and petitions for release from priority of State-filed Applications 25513, 25514, 25517 (unassigned portion), 22235, 23780, 23781 in favor of water right Application 25517X01 of the Sites Project Authority. While transmitted by the AHO, the Draft Decision and Draft Permit are the product of extensive deliberations by the Board Members during many closed sessions over the last two years. The Draft Decision and Draft Permit are attached hereto.

The Sites Project Authority seeks these approvals for the construction and operation of a proposed new surface water storage project, the Sites Reservoir Project, which would entail the diversion and storage of water from the Sacramento River for later use in northern and southern California for multiple purposes, including agricultural use, municipal use, and fish and wildlife protection. The water would be stored in a proposed new reservoir (Sites Reservoir), which would be located near the town of Maxwell, approximately 17 miles west of the Sacramento River.

The Board's AHO conducted the hearing in this matter. The administrative record for the hearing, which includes all evidence admitted into the evidentiary record, is available on the State Water Board's FTP site. The FTP folder for this proceeding may be accessed at <https://ftp.waterboards.ca.gov/>. Anyone may view and download documents from the FTP site. To access the FTP folder for this proceeding, please send an email to [sites-wr-application@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:sites-wr-application@waterboards.ca.gov) with "Request for Sites-ftp login credentials" in the subject line. The Draft Decision and Draft Water Right Permit have been uploaded to the ftp folder for this proceeding, in the folder Draft Decision, and posted on the AHO webpage for this proceeding at:

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E. JOAQUIN ESQUIVEL, CHAIR | ERIC OPPENHEIMER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

[https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/administrative\\_hearings\\_office/sites-project-authority.html](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/administrative_hearings_office/sites-project-authority.html)

*Written Comments and Tentative Schedule*

The Board will accept written comments on the Draft Decision and Draft Permit submitted to [sites-wr-application@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:sites-wr-application@waterboards.ca.gov) by end of day (11:59 p.m.), on **May 22, 2026**. With the release of the Draft Decision and Draft Permit, the evidentiary record for this proceeding is now closed. Written comments may address the evidence in the evidentiary record, or may address legal or policy matters relevant to the Board's consideration of the water right application and petitions for the Sites Reservoir Project. To the extent feasible, parties are encouraged to consolidate their written comments. Interested entities or members of the public may also submit written comments by the May 22, 2026 deadline. Interested persons are similarly encouraged to consolidate comments to the extent feasible.

Subject to the complexity and volume of comments received, the State Water Board intends to circulate a Revised Draft Decision and, if necessary, a Revised Draft Water Right Permit on approximately July 15, 2026, for a 30-day written comment period. Based on these timelines, the Board intends to consider adoption of the Revised Draft Decision and Draft Permit at the Board Meeting scheduled for September 1, 2026. These estimated dates are subject to revision.

Sincerely,



Nicole L. Kuenzi  
Presiding Hearing Officer  
Administrative Hearings Office

Attachments: Draft Decision (March 20, 2026)  
Draft Water Right Permit (March 20, 2026)

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