



For Immediate Release:

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Sites Project Authority Statement on Revised Order for Sites Reservoir Water Right

Maxwell, CA – Today, the Sites Project Authority released the following statement after the State Water Resources Control Board (State Board) Administrative Hearings Office (AHO) released its revised Draft Decision and associated Draft Water Right Permit for the Sites Reservoir Project (Project):

“We are carefully reviewing the revised Draft Decision and Permit and will take the time necessary to fully evaluate the revisions. The final adopted permit must keep the Project feasible, affordable, and capable of delivering the benefits it is designed to provide.

When we reviewed the initial March 2026 draft, we identified several areas of concern. In our May 22, 2026 comments, we emphasized that some of the proposed conditions for the diversion and release of water greatly risked undermining the viability of the Project and needed to be addressed before the AHO submitted the proposed order to the State Board. As we complete our review of the revised draft, we will be looking closely at whether the revisions address those concerns and evaluating for any new concerns.

Following the release of the initial draft, the State Board received approximately 50 comment letters from a wide range of interested parties, including the Authority, the Bureau of Reclamation, the California Department of Water Resources, the California Natural Resources Agency, the California Environmental Protection Agency, the California Water Commission, and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. This level of participation underscores both the significance of this Project to California and the value of a transparent, deliberative process. We are grateful to everyone who took the time to weigh in on this critically important project.

In the coming weeks, interested parties will again have the opportunity to submit public comment to the State Board on the revised draft decision and permit. The Authority will actively participate in this process.

California's water challenges are intensifying, and the importance of new surface storage has never been clearer. The people of California emphasized the value of new water storage by overwhelmingly passing Proposition 1 in 2014. We remain committed to delivering this important project and working with state and federal agencies and participants across the state to advance the California Water Plan's goals for securing our future water supplies.”

Sites Reservoir is a 1.5 million acre-foot, off-stream reservoir proposed north of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta that would improve California’s water reliability and resiliency in drier years for farms, families, fish, and fowl. The Project is backed by a broad coalition of cities, counties, water agencies, and irrigation districts across California, as well as the State of California through the Water Storage Investment Program and the federal government under the 2016 Water Infrastructure and Investment for the Nation Act. Additional information can be found at www.sitesproject.org or on Facebook, Instagram, and X at @SitesProject.