



For Immediate Release:

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Sites Reservoir Responds to Revised Water Right Permit

Maxwell, CA – Today, the Sites Project Authority (Authority) issued the following statement regarding the revised water right decision and permit for the Sites Reservoir Project (Project) released by the State Water Resources Control Board's (State Board) Administrative Hearings Office (AHO):

“The revised permit represents another significant milestone in the steady progress of Sites Reservoir, one of California's most significant water storage projects. We appreciate the revisions that were made and can see a path forward that allows the Project to advance. We recognize the substantial work undertaken by the AHO and appreciate the thoughtful consideration of the Authority's and others' feedback on the March 2026 draft.

The revised draft terms and conditions can potentially support a viable Project. The revisions strike a better balance between competing beneficial uses of water, which better serves the public interest; without this, the Project would not be able to advance. Key areas of improvement include:

- **Approach to the Bay-Delta Plan - Update now addresses the Sites Project like all other new water rights** – The revised draft permit now addresses the Sites Project in the same way that all other new water rights are addressed in the anticipated Bay-Delta Plan Updates. This is important as the Sites Project is no longer singled out to disproportionately bear additional and overly burdensome requirements, but is instead treated like all other new water right permits. This change also makes it clear that the Sites Project can participate in the Healthy Rivers and Landscape Program, consistent with the process for onboarding new HRL parties in the Bay-Delta Plan Updates, in the future.
- **Diversion criteria adjustments balance beneficial uses** – The revised draft permit includes adjustments to the diversion criteria under which the Sites Project can divert water from the Sacramento River. These adjustments strike an important balance between all of the beneficial uses of Sacramento River water and allow for the Project to divert water in high flow conditions while maintaining strong protections for fish, wildlife, and the Sacramento River and Delta.
- **Continued consideration of Funks and Stone Corral Creeks** – The revised draft order and associated Notice of Bifurcated Hearing now allow for the continued consideration of Funks and Stone Corral Creeks as sources of water for the Sites Project. This establishes a near-term pathway for continued consideration of this local creek water for the benefit of local areas—a key component of the Project that is important to affordability for the Sacramento Valley.

As the process moves forward, we respectfully urge the AHO and State Board to preserve the important progress reflected in the revised draft. These improvements are what allow Sites Reservoir to operate as

intended and deliver the public benefits it was designed to provide; retaining them will be essential to the Project's success.

With a workable permit on the table, the Authority Board has chosen to advance the benefits and obligations period, an important next step that brings the Project closer to fruition. We look forward to extending commitment contracts to our participants and working alongside them to deliver this generational water storage project.

We will continue to work collaboratively to reach a final permit that reflects this progress and remain committed to ensuring that Sites Reservoir fulfills its promise as a 21st century storage solution and a generational investment in California's water future."

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.