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Sites Reservoir Reaches Major Permitting Milestone with Clean Water Act Approvals

Maxwell, Calif. — Today, the Sites Project Authority (Authority) approved the execution of the Sites Reservoir Project's (Project) Section 404 authorization from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, following receipt of its Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the State Water Resources Control Board on September 10. This marks another major milestone, moving the Project from years of planning and permitting to construction.

"These permits reflect years of rigorous analysis, thoughtful collaboration, and a shared commitment to advancing a project that balances California's water supply needs with protecting the environment," said **Fritz Durst, Chair of the Sites Project Authority Board of Directors.** "Sites Reservoir has been a shared vision for generations, and these approvals affirm that we can strengthen California's water future security while safeguarding the lands, waters, and natural resources."

The Clean Water Act approvals establish requirements to protect water quality, wetlands, streams, and other aquatic resources during construction. They also allow the Authority to advance individual construction work packages as it completes permit conditions, mitigation measures, monitoring requirements, and other pre-construction steps.

The approvals build on years of environmental and permitting progress. In 2023, the Authority certified the Final Environmental Impact Report, a comprehensive analysis of how the Project would affect the surrounding environment. Since then, the Project has secured state Incidental Take Permits and completed federal Endangered Species Act consultation, establishing protections for threatened and endangered species. It also reached a Master Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement, which governs work in and around lakes and streams.

"We appreciate the tremendous work by the State Water Resources Control Board, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and our state and federal partners to reach this point," said **Jerry Brown, Executive Director of the Sites Project Authority.** "With these approvals in place, the Sites Project has the key permits and approvals necessary to initiate construction. Our focus now turns to completing final participation agreements and securing construction and operations funding commitments. With the approval of the water right, Sites Reservoir will become a reality—not because of any one agency or action, but because local, state and federal partners have come together to make it happen."

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 Improvements for the Nation Act. Additional information can be found at www.sitesproject.org or on Facebook, Instagram, and X at @SitesProject.