



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PUBLIC SCOPING OPEN HOUSE MEETINGS SCHEDULED
FOR SITES RESERVOIR PROJECT ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

MAXWELL, CA—The Sites Project Authority (Authority) in February will host two public scoping open house meetings to solicit input from the agencies, Tribes, and the public about the environmental review of the Sites Reservoir Project (Sites Project).

“Californians made a bold and innovative decision to invest in new water storage when they overwhelmingly approved Proposition 1 in 2014,” said Authority board president and Colusa County Supervisor Kim Dolbow Vann. “The Sites Project makes sense for California—which is why it has strong, diverse and bipartisan support across the state—and why it is important to move this environmental review forward.”

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) initiated the environmental review process under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in October 2001. At the same time the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) initiated the environmental review process under the federal National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Much has been accomplished in that time to refine and improve the project. Moving forward, and to align with the requirements of the state’s Water Storage Investment Program (created by Proposition 1), the Authority will act as the Lead Agency under CEQA in preparing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), in partnership with DWR as a Responsible Agency.

Reclamation is the Federal lead agency for the Federal Feasibility Study and is a cost sharing partner with the Authority to determine the federal interest and role in the project. Reclamation is the lead Federal agency under NEPA.

“Reclamation welcomes the Sites Project Authority as the lead CEQA agency and a valuable partner for the Sites Project. We are committed to evaluating the feasibility and environmental impacts of the Sites project,” said Pablo Arroyave, Acting Regional Director, Reclamation’s Mid-Pacific Region. “Storage projects like this one could be very important in providing additional water supply for future water resource management needs.”

The Authority is comprised primarily of local municipalities, water districts and reclamation districts. It was formed to maintain local leadership in developing the project. The Authority’s goal is to make the EIR available at the time it submits its

application for Water Storage Investment Program funds to the California Water Commission in June 2017.

The EIR will provide information about the potential environmental effects and mitigation measures associated with constructing and operating the Sites Project. The scoping process will provide an opportunity for the public to weigh-in on the contents of the EIR under CEQA to ensure that the full range of environmental issues related to implementation of the project is identified early.

Two scoping open house meetings will be held:

Wednesday, February 15, 2017

Sacramento Convention Center
1400 J Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
Room # 202
3:00 p.m.

Thursday, February 16, 2017

Sites Project Authority Office
122 Old Highway 99 West
Maxwell, CA 95955
6:00 p.m.

The scoping meetings will be an open-house format, with staff members available to provide information and answer questions about the scoping process. Written comments will be accepted at each open house, and through March 2, 2017.

Reclamation staff will be available to answer questions about their role in the study and project. The current Notice of Intent and 2013 Progress Report prepared by Reclamation remain valid and available online.

The Sites Project is the culmination of decades of planning and evaluations to optimize water supplies and deliveries throughout California and provide direct and real benefits to instream flows and the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta ecosystem. The Authority has spent the last six years working toward this goal by engaging the public, stakeholders, state and federal agencies and landowners, conducting feasibility studies and now, initiating the required environmental planning process.

For more information about the scoping process and the Sites Project visit <https://www.sitesproject.org/>. For questions about the Sites Project or open house meetings please contact: Janet Barbieri, Sites Project Authority, at 530-919-9306 or Mike Dietl, Reclamation, at 916-978-5070.

For more information about Reclamation efforts under the North of Delta Offstream Storage, Sites Reservoir effort visit: <https://www.usbr.gov/mp/nodos/index.html>.

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The Sites Project is an innovative and environmentally-focused offstream water storage solution. It creates a unique opportunity for direct and real benefits to instream flows, the Delta ecosystem, and water supply.

There are 34 participants in the Sites Project. The following compose the Sites Project Authority: Colusa County Water District, County of Colusa, County of Glenn, Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District, Maxwell Irrigation District, Orland-Artois Water District, Placer County Water Agency/City of Roseville, Proberta Water District, Reclamation District 108, Tehama-Colusa Canal Authority, Western Canal Water District, Westside Water District.

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