

Sites Reservoir Project

Virtual Public Meeting

Revised Draft Environmental Impact Report
/Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact
Statement

December 15, 2021, 6:00—8:00 PM
December 16, 2021, 9:00—11:00 AM



Meeting Agenda

Project Presentation	9:00—9:35 AM
Questions and Answers	9:35—9:55 AM
RDEIR/SDEIS Public Comment	9:55—11:00 AM

This meeting is being recorded.

Project Presentation

Ali Forsythe, Sites Project Authority

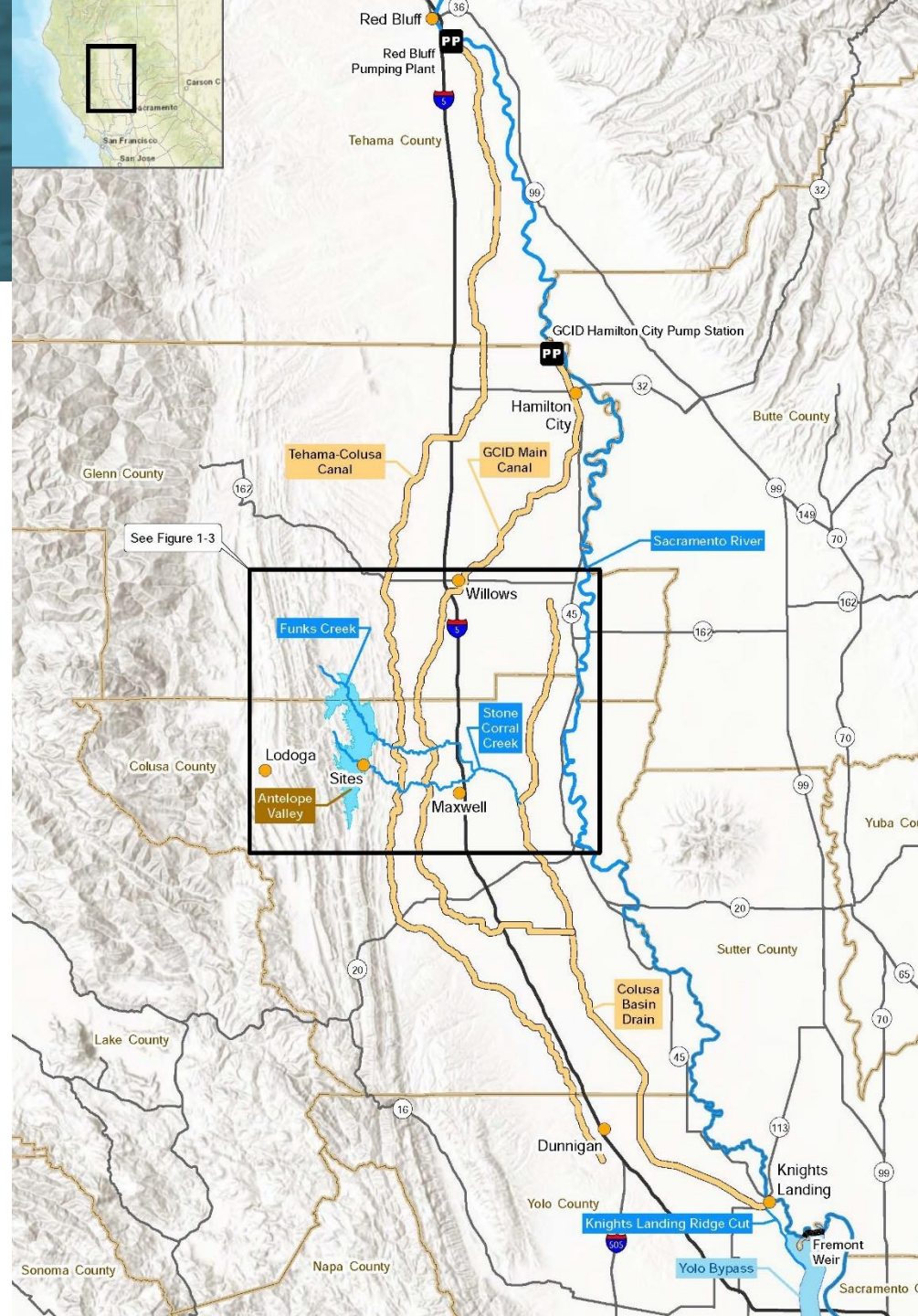


Presentation Agenda

- Sites Reservoir
 - Overview
 - Changes since 2017
 - Project today
- California Environmental Quality Act and National Environmental Policy Act
 - Purpose
 - Authority and Reclamation's role
- Revised Draft EIR/Supplemental Draft EIS
 - Preliminary findings
 - How to provide comments

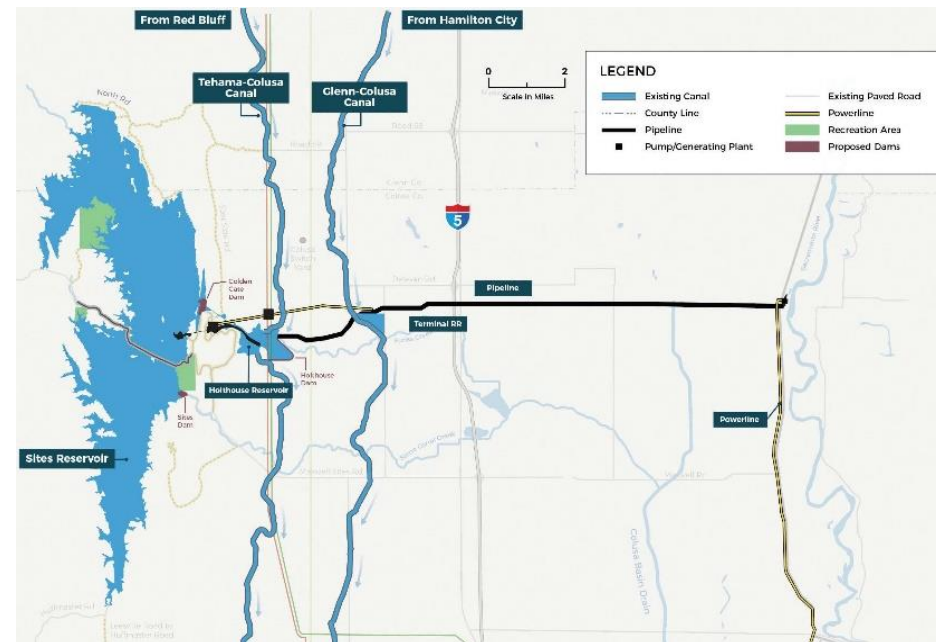
Sites Reservoir

- Proposed off-stream reservoir west of Maxwell, CA
- Divert water from the Sacramento River in higher flow conditions
- Store water in the new Sites Reservoir for later use by farms, cities, and the environment
- Funded by State and Federal governments and public water agencies
- A tool to help the state restore flexibility, reliability, and resilience to our statewide water supply



As Envisioned in 2017

- 2017 Project
 - 1.8 million acre-foot reservoir
 - 3 intakes (about 6,000 cfs diversion capacity in total)
 - New Delevan Pipeline and intake
 - Pump/generation facility
- 2017 Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR)/ Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)
 - Released August 2017
 - 137 Comments Letters



Refinements in 2019/2020

- Cost considerations and environmental impacts lead to rethinking the Project in 2019/2020
 - 16 new / modified configurations considered
- Key changes to the Project
 - Changes in facility footprints and new footprint areas
 - Changes in operations
 - Changes in diversion criteria
 - Reduction in diversion ability from 6,000 cfs to 3,900 cfs
 - Changes in conveyance (removal of Delevan pipeline, addition of Dunnigan pipeline)
 - Full or partial release to the Colusa Basin Drain

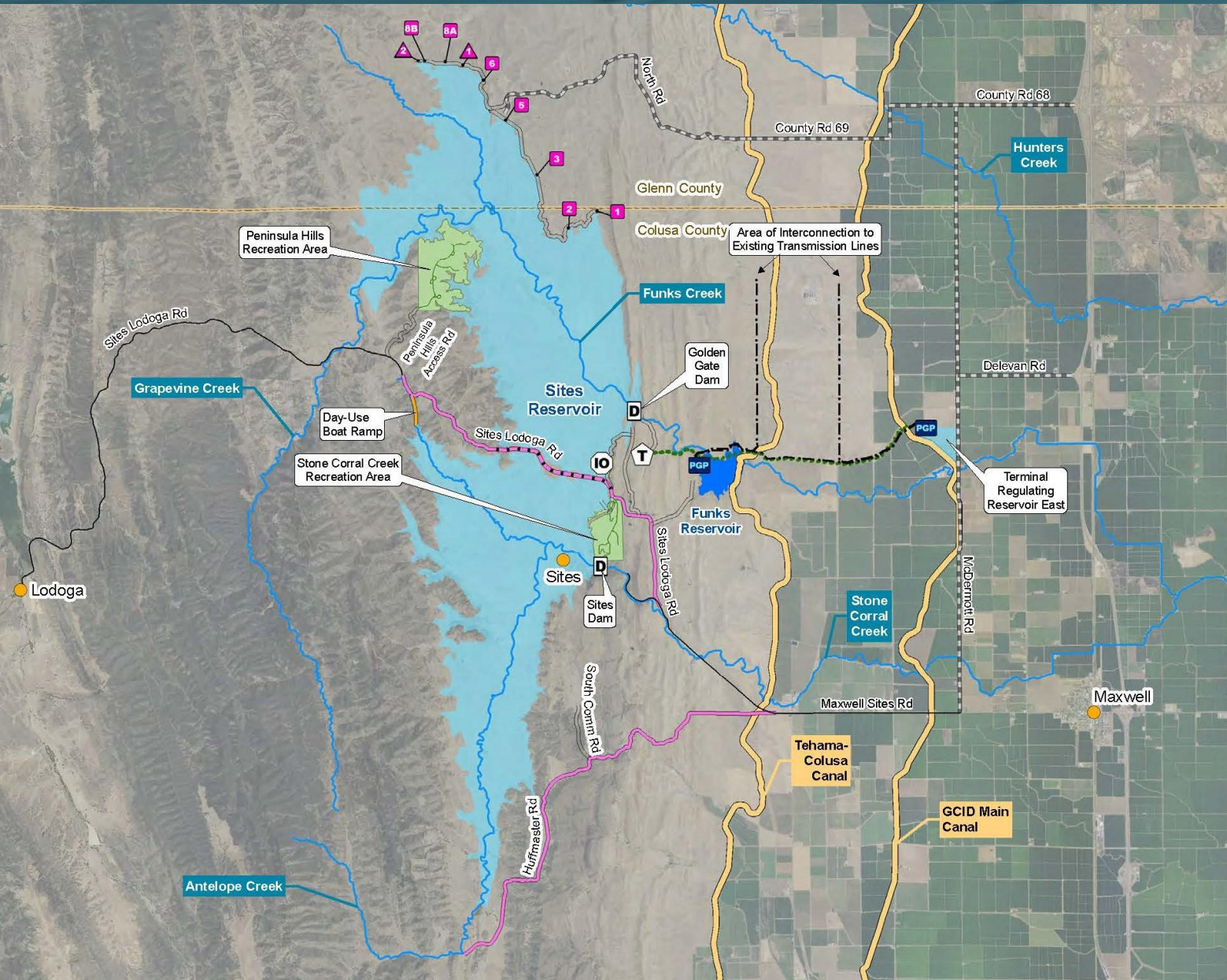
Decision to Revise and Recirculate Draft EIR and Supplement Draft EIS

- Revisions to the Project resulted in the identification of new alternatives not previously analyzed in the 2017 Draft EIR/EIS
- Preparation of a Revised Draft EIR/Supplemental Draft EIS allows the Authority and Reclamation ability to:
 - Address changes to the Project
 - Update modeling baseline
 - Update existing conditions and cumulative projects
 - Prepare an analysis that takes into consideration the comments received on the 2017 Draft EIR/EIS

Alternatives Considered in the Revised Draft EIR/Supplemental Draft EIS

Facilities / Operations	Alternative 1 – Authority's Preferred Project	Alternative 2	Alternative 3
Reservoir Size	1.5 MAF	1.3 MAF	1.5 MAF
Hydropower	Incidental upon release	Same as Alt 1	Same as Alt 1
Diversion Locations	Red Bluff Pumping Plant and Hamilton City	Same as Alt 1	Same as Alt 1
Conveyance Release / Dunnigan Release	1,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) into new Dunnigan Pipeline to Colusa Basin Drain	1,000 cfs into new Dunnigan Pipeline to Sacramento River. Partial release into the Colusa Basin Drain	Same as Alt 2
Reclamation Involvement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Funding Partner 2. Operational Exchanges <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Within Year Exchanges b. Real-time Exchanges 	Operational Exchanges <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Within Year Exchanges b. Real-time Exchanges 	Same as Alt 1, but up to 25% investment
DWR Involvement	Operational Exchanges with Oroville and storage in SWP facilities South-of-Delta	Same as Alt 1	Same as Alt 1
Route to West Side of Reservoir	Bridge across reservoir	Paved road around southern end of reservoir	Same as Alt 1

Alternative 1 and 3 Facilities



- City/Town/Community
 - Existing Roads
 - Canal
 - Creek/Slough
- Project Features**
- Inundation Area (1.5 MAF)
 - Underground Pipeline (total of 4)
 - Access Roads
 - Road Improvements
 - Road Realignment
 - Transmission Line
 - Day-Use Boat Ramp
 - Recreation Areas
 - D Main Dam
 - IO Inlet/Outlet Tower
 - T Transition Manifold
 - PGP Pumping Generating Plant
 - ▲ Saddle Dikes (total of 2)
 - 1 Saddle Dams (total of 7; 8B includes spillway)
 - Bridge with Prism Fill

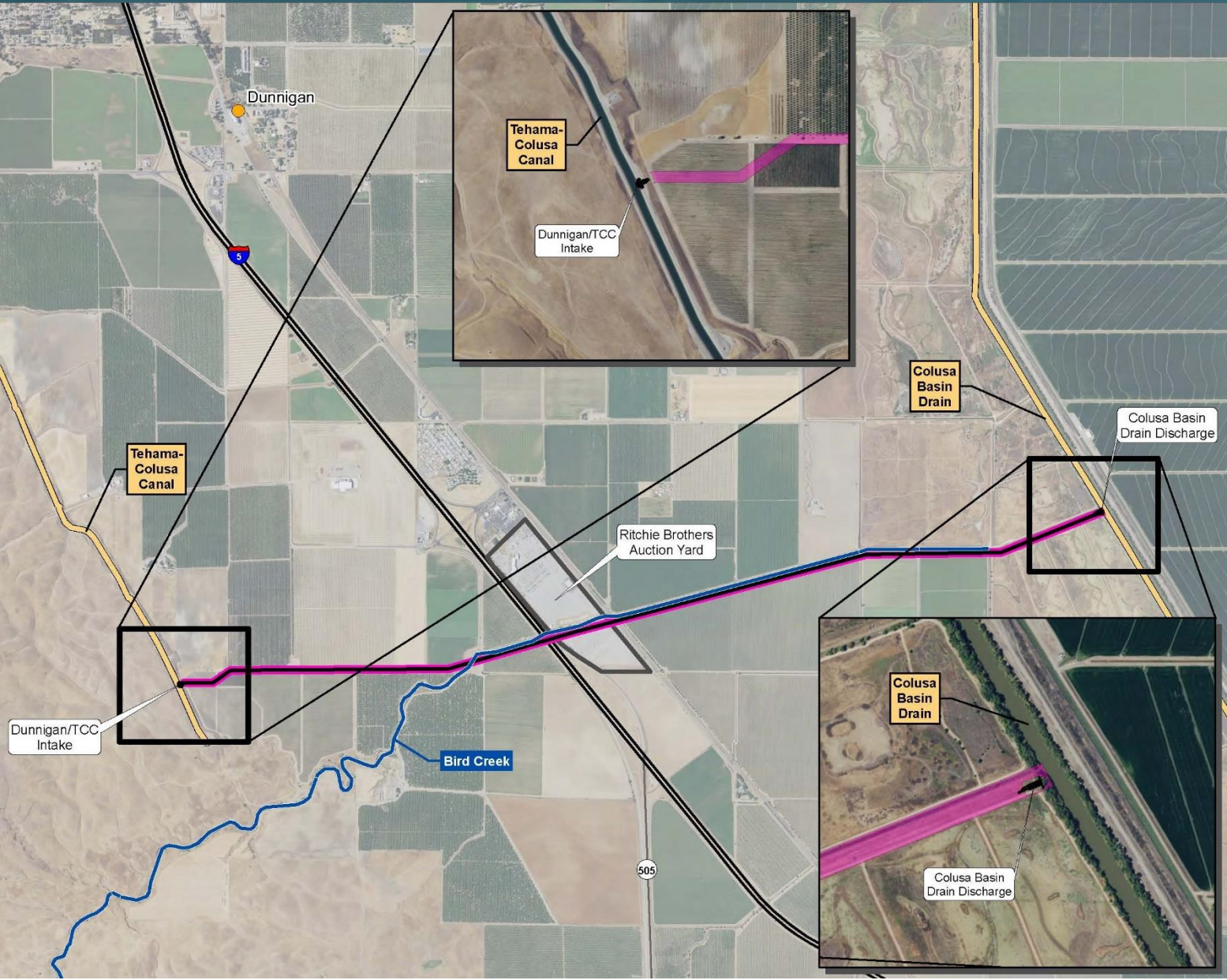
DATA SOURCES: Inlet/Outlet Tower and PGP - ICF, 2020; City/Town - ONIS, 2020; Project Features - AECOM, 2020; Canal, River and Creek/Slough (NHD) - USGS, 2018; Aerial Imagery (NAIP) - USDA, 2020; Counties - CALFIRE/FRAP, 2019.

DISCLAIMER: This exhibit is preliminary and is subject to change.
MAP DATE: 7/9/2021

FIGURE 2-1
ALTERNATIVES 1 AND 3 REGULATING RESERVOIRS AND CONVEYANCE AND SITES RESERVOIR FACILITIES



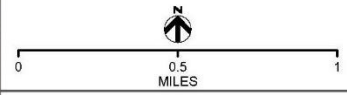
Alternative 1 and 3 Facilities (cont)



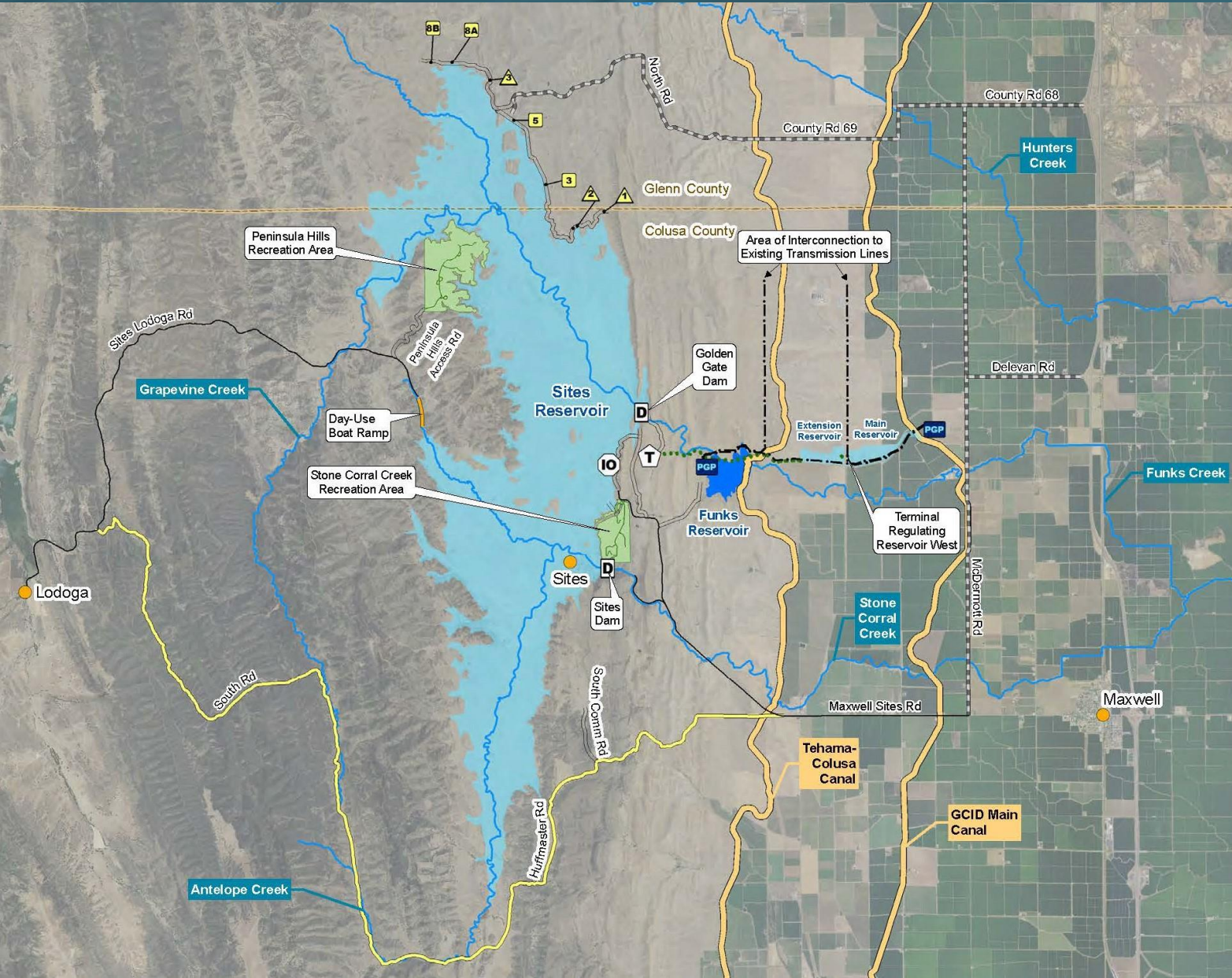
- LEGEND**
- City/Town/Community
 - Bird Creek
 - Dunnigan Underground Pipeline

DATA SOURCES: City/Town - GNS, 2020; Project Features - AECOM, 2020; Canals (NHD) - USGS, 2018; Aerial Imagery (NAIP) - USDA, 2020.
 DISCLAIMER: This exhibit is preliminary and is subject to change.
 MAP DATE: 9/22/2021

FIGURE 2-2
 ALTERNATIVES 1 AND 3
 CONVEYANCE TO SACRAMENTO
 RIVER COMPONENTS



Alternative 2 Facilities



Legend

- City/Town/Community
- Existing Roads
- Canal
- Creek/Slough

Project Features

- Inundation Area (1.3 MAF)
- Underground Pipeline (total of 4)
- Access Roads
- Road Improvements
- Road Realignment
- Transmission Line
- Day-Use Boat Ramp
- Recreation Areas

Facility Symbols

- D: Main Dam
- IO: Inlet/Outlet Tower
- T: Transition Manifold
- PGP: Pumping Generating Plant
- ▲: Saddle Dikes (total of 3)
- 1: Saddle Dams (total of 4; 8B includes spillway)

DATA SOURCES: Inlet/Outlet Tower and PGP - ICF, 2020; City/Town/Community, GIS, 2020; Project Features - AECOM, 2020; Canal, River or Creek/Slough (NHD) - USGS, 2018; Aerial Imagery (NAIP) - USDA, 2020; Counties - CALFIRE-FRAP, 2019.

DISCLAIMER: This exhibit is preliminary and is subject to change.
MAP DATE: 7/21/2021

FIGURE 2-3
ALTERNATIVE 2
REGULATING RESERVOIRS AND
CONVEYANCE AND
SITES RESERVOIR FACILITIES



Alternative 2 Facilities (cont)



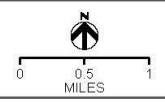
- LEGEND**
- City/Town/Community
 - Bird Creek
 - Dunnigan Pipeline

DATA SOURCES: City/Town - GIS, 2020; Project Features - AECOM, 2020; Canals (NHD) - USGS, 2018; Aerial Imagery (NAIP) - USDA, 2020

DISCLAIMER: This exhibit is preliminary and is subject to change.

MAP DATE: 6/24/2021

FIGURE 2-4
ALTERNATIVE 2 CONVEYANCE TO SACRAMENTO RIVER COMPONENTS



Recreation Components

- Water-related and water-based recreation at 3 new recreation areas
 - Stone Corral Recreation Area – 235 acres, east side of Sites
 - 50 camp sites
 - 10 picnic sites
 - Hiking trails
 - Boat launch
 - Peninsula Hills Recreation Area – 373 acres, west side of Sites
 - 200 camp sites, 1 group camp
 - 10 picnic sites
 - Hiking trails
 - Day Use Boat Ramp – 10 acres, west side of Sites
- Phased approach to match interest – Stone Corral and Day Use Boat Ramp constructed first

Flood Control Components

- Local flood control benefits to town of Maxwell and adjacent agricultural lands
- Provides 100-year flood protection to most of Maxwell and about 4,025 acres of agricultural land
- Reduce flooding of Interstate 5 in 100-year flood event

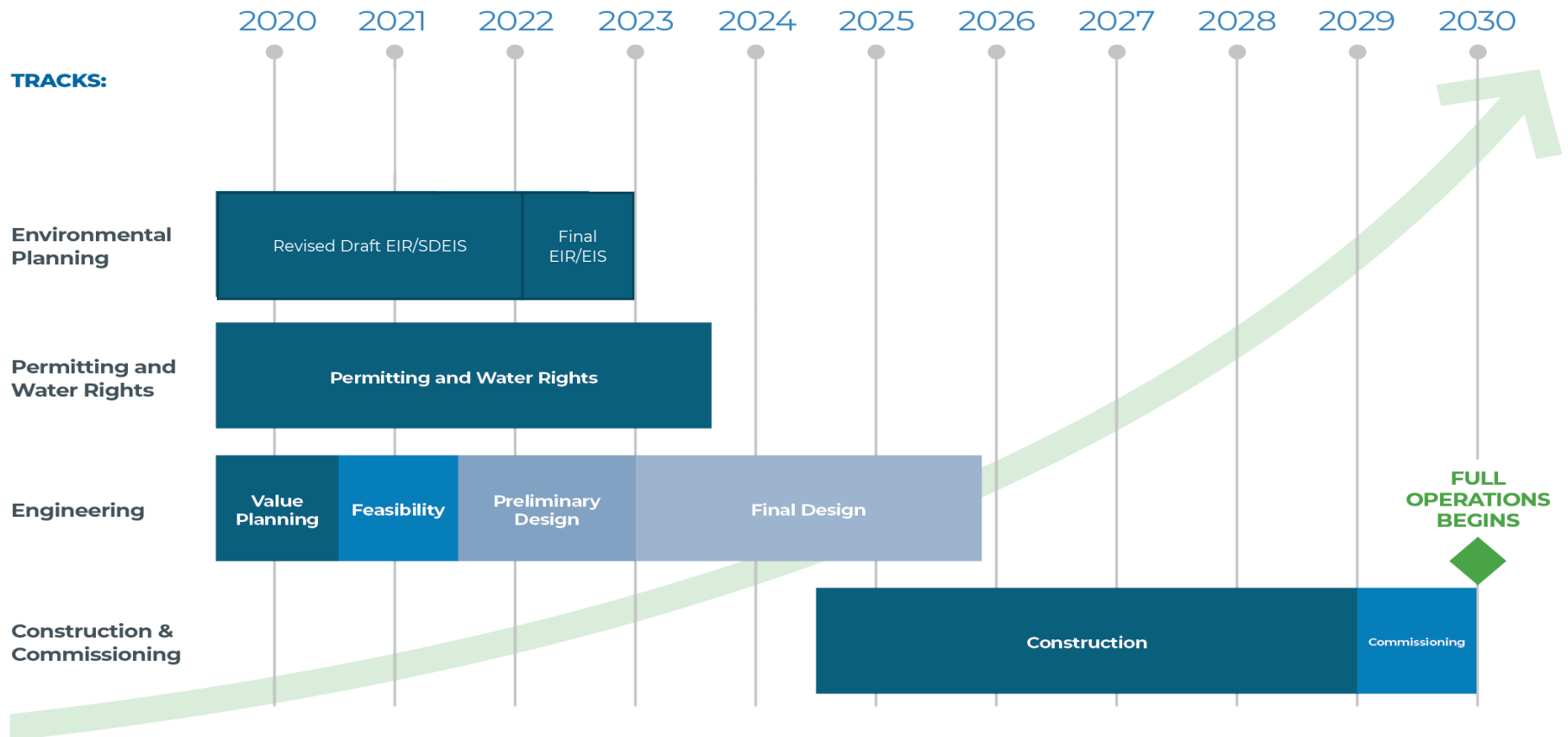


**Flooding in Maxwell,
CA in Feb 2017**

Photo by Hector Iniguez, SF Gate

Project Schedule

Sites Reservoir Project Schedule



California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

- CEQA and NEPA are intended to provide decision makers and the public with information about a proposed project's effects on the environment and to:
 - Prevent avoidable damage to the environment
 - Foster informed public decision making
 - Ensure transparency in governmental decision-making process
 - Encourage public participation
- CEQA is the State law and applies to discretionary approvals by California governmental agencies
- NEPA is a Federal law and applies to discretionary approvals by Federal governmental agencies

Environmental Impact Report (EIR) / Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

- Required when a proposed project would have one or more significant or adverse impacts on the environment
- Informational document which is intended to inform public agency decisionmakers and the public
 - Environmental effects of a project
 - Identify possible ways to minimize the effects
 - Describe reasonable alternatives to the project
- Authority is the Lead Agency for the EIR
- Reclamation is the Lead Agency for the EIS

EIR/EIS Process and Schedule

EIR/EIS Process	Schedule
Issue Notice of Preparation / Notice of Intent	November 2001
Issue Second Notice of Preparation	February 2017
Conduct Scoping	February 2017
Release Draft EIR/EIS	August 2017
Public and Agency Review	August 14, 2017 – January 15, 2018
Prepare and Recirculate Revised Draft EIR/Supplemental Draft EIS	November 2021
Public and Agency Review	November 2021 – January 2022
Prepare Final EIR/EIS	January – October 2022
Release Final EIR/EIS	October 2022
Agency Decision (No Earlier Than)	November 2022

Analyses in the Revised Draft EIR/ Supplemental Draft EIS

- Introductory Chapters
 - Ch. 1, Introduction
 - Ch. 2, Project Description and Alternatives
 - Ch. 3, Environmental Analysis
 - Ch. 4, Regulatory and Environmental Compliance
- Analysis of impacts to environmental resources in 26 chapters and 73 corresponding appendices
- Additional chapters address cumulative, growth-inducing and other required analyses

Determination of Impacts

- Agency must consider direct and indirect effects
- Impacts determined by comparison to baseline physical conditions
- Impact determinations:

CEQA Terminology

- ✓ No Impact
- ✓ Less than significant impact
- ✓ Less than significant with mitigation
- ✓ Significant impact

NEPA Terminology

- ✓ Beneficial
- ✓ No effect
- ✓ No adverse effect
- ✓ Adverse effect
- ✓ Substantial adverse effect

Resources with No Effect, No Adverse Effect, or Less than Significant Impacts

- Fluvial Geomorphology
- Groundwater Resources
- Minerals
- Recreation
- Energy
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services and Utilities
- Public Health and Environmental Hazards

Resources with Impacts Requiring Mitigation

- Aquatic Biological Resources
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Indian Trust Assets

Resources with Significant and Unavoidable Impacts / Adverse and Substantial Effects

- Surface Water Quality
- Vegetation and Wetland Resources
- Wildlife Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Land Use
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Navigation, Transportation and Traffic
- Air Quality
- Cultural Resources
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Visual Resources
- Environmental Justice and Socioeconomics

Highlight Area – Water Quality

- Analyzed inflows (Sacramento River, Funks and Stone Corral Creeks), in-reservoir processes, and outflows for metals, pesticides and temperature
- Less than significant / no adverse effects
 - No substantial increases in salinity or temperature in or downstream of the reservoir or violations of Delta or other water quality objectives
 - Levels of nutrients, organic carbon, and dissolved oxygen in releases would not violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements
 - Harmful algal bloom occurrences are expected and would be addressed via monitoring and public notification
- Significant but reduced to less than significant with mitigation
 - Elevated concentrations of some metals and pesticides in Yolo Bypass as a result of redirection of some of the Colusa Basin Drain water from the Sacramento River to the Yolo Bypass
 - Elevated concentrations of some metals in Stone Corral Creek
- Significant and unavoidable / adverse and substantial effects
 - Increased methylmercury concentrations downstream of Sites Reservoir during the initial filling and for up to 10 years after

Highlight Area – Fisheries (Salmonids and Steelhead)

- Diversion criteria revised to be more protective
 - Wilkins Slough bypass flows
 - Pulse flow protection
 - Fremont Weir protection
 - When Sacramento River is not fully appropriated
 - During Delta “excess conditions”
 - Flows available above those needed to meet applicable laws, regulations, biological opinions, incidental take permits, and court orders in place at the time of diversion
- Significant operations effects to salmonids and steelhead
 - Reduced to less than significant with mitigation
 - Project diversions from Sacramento River in March through May of all water year types would not occur if flows in the River are or would be below 10,700 cfs at Wilkins Slough
 - Effectively modifies Project diversion criteria

Highlight Area – Trinity River

- No effect or changes in the operations of the Central Valley Project (CVP), Trinity River Division facilities (including Clear Creek)
- Reclamation would continue to operate consistent with all applicable statutory, legal and contractual obligations, including but not limited to:
 - Trinity River Record of Decision (ROD)
 - 2017 ROD for the Long-Term Plan for the Lower Klamath River
 - Provisions of the Trinity River Division CVP Act of 1955

Highlight Area – Tribal Coordination

- Authority – Compliance with Assembly Bill 52
 - Reached out to 7 tribes in 2020
 - Tribes traditionally or culturally affiliated with lands in the Project footprint
 - Sent letters, emails, and called
 - 2 tribes responded and in on-going consultation
 - Reached out to 7 additional tribes in 2021
 - Tribes traditionally or culturally affiliated with locations where Project operations have the potential to change river flows as compared to current conditions
 - Sent letters, emails, and called
 - No response to date from these tribes
 - On-going consultation with 2 tribes
 - Tribal consultation efforts under AB 52 identified in detail in Chapter 23
- Reclamation – Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act
 - Reached out to 9 tribes in 2021
 - One response received recently
 - Planning additional outreach in 2022

Most Effective Comments

- Comments should focus on the substantive content of the RDEIR/SDEIS
- Comments should be limited to the environmental analysis in the RDEIR/SDEIS and not the prior 2017 Draft EIR/EIS
- All comments on the RDEIR/SDEIS must be postmarked or received by 5:00 PM PST on January 11, 2022
- Authority and Reclamation will respond to all substantive comments received in the comment period in the Final EIR/EIS

Submitting Comments

- Provide verbal comments at this meeting
 - After the question and answer session
- Submit written comments
 - Email comments to:
 - EIR-EIS-Comments@SitesProject.org
 - Mail written comments to:
 - Sites Project Authority, P.O. Box 517, Maxwell, CA 95955
 - Bureau of Reclamation, 2800 Cottage Way, W-2830, Sacramento, CA 95825