

NEPA Process/Requirements Minutes



Date: June 25, 2020 **Location:** WebEx Link included in Outlook Invitation
 Call In by Phone: 1-510-338-9438;
 Access code: 126 943 6823; Password: 76872769

Time: 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM

Leader: Sites Integration/ICF **Recorder:** Sites Integration

Purpose: Assuming Federal Investment - Discuss Logistics of Preparing a Joint CEQA/NEPA Document

Attendees:

Monique Briard, ICF	Russ Grimes, Reclamation	Laurie Warner Herson, Sites Integration
Ryan Davis, Reclamation	Erin Heydinger, Sites Integration	Nicole Williams, ICF
Linda Fisher, Sites Integration	Nate Martin, Reclamation	Natalie Wolder, Reclamation

Agenda:

Discussion Topic	Topic Leader	Time Allotted
1. Introductions – Roll Call/Purpose of Meeting	Laurie	2 min
2. Prior Action Items	Laurie	5 min
a. Authority to more fully describe federal role		
b. Authority Team will prepare a comparison matrix of alternatives		
c. Reclamation Environmental to look at existing waivers and provide summary to ICF/Authority as to the scope/content of waivers (e.g., schedule, pages/length, other)		
d. Authority and ICF to develop a project schedule that includes Reclamation review process, including checking with other recent projects and sources and will coordinate with Reclamation to confirm assumptions		
e. ICF to follow up with additional questions regarding EIS format/requirements via email		
f. ICF to review recent Reclamation document(s) to develop 508 compliant template		
3. Status of Reclamation Feasibility Report	Ryan	10 min
4. Alternatives – Cross Walk Table	Laurie	10 min
5. Objectives/ Purpose and Need	Nicole	10 min
a. Revised CEQA Objectives		
b. NEPA Purpose and Need – update ?		
6. EIS Preparation	Nicole	10 min
a. Waivers - scope/content		
b. 508 compliance – schedule meeting with our technical specialists and the Reclamation contact		

7. Schedule	Linda	10 min
a. Reclamation Review Process/Steps		
b. Sites Constraints due to California Water Commission Deadline		
8. Next Steps	All	3 min

Meeting Minutes:

Agenda Item 1

- Authority provided introduction and purpose of meeting – continued discussion of joint EIR/EIS process under assumption that there is federal investment and joint EIR/EIS

Agenda Item 2

- Authority provided brief recap of action items with more detail to follow under other agenda items

Agenda Item 3

- Reclamation provided an update on the status of the Feasibility Report (FR)
 - FR in policy for review, primary concerns include:
 - Waiver required for environmental feasibility
 - Lack of detailed operations and water rights

Agenda Item 4

- Authority presented comparative cross walk table of alternatives, developed by ICF, illustrating differences between Authority's Alternatives 1 and 2 and Alternatives A and D from the 2017 EIR/EIS. Discussed the primary differences including size of reservoirs, limited hydropower (no pump back storage), no Delevan Intake and release to Colusa Basin Drain and/or Sacramento River via new pipeline from the Tehema Colusa Canal near Dunnigan.

Agenda Item 5

- ICF provided an overview of proposed revisions to the CEQA project objectives
- Discussion of NEPA purpose and need and changes in the 2020 FR objectives to replace the water quality objective with:
 - CVP Operational Flexibility (OpFlex)
 - Delta Ecosystem Enhancement
- Follow up focused discussion of NEPA purpose and need to be included in next meeting

Agenda Item 6

- Discussion of the existing waivers
 - Reclamation clarified that there is a page limitation waiver from the required limit of 150 pages for an EIS to 300 pages for this project; these page limits do not apply to appendices and Reclamation suggested liberal use of appendices in presenting information
 - Time limit waiver – project is currently paused in Reclamation's data base and time limits are suspended; current deadline for ROD is August 2021 but would be based on when project is reinitiated in Reclamation data base; suggested this be addressed closer to when the draft EIS is proposed to be released; however the project will need to be reinitiated in the database once Reclamation begins working in earnest on the document

Agenda Item 7

- Authority presented Sites EIR milestone schedule with Reclamation review process added
 - Need to meet California Water Commission deadlines requires release of Revised Draft EIR in July 2021; current schedule confirms ability to meet that w/ concurrent reviews
 - Preliminary comments from Reclamation indicate review timeframes are ok; removal of in-house briefing process – not an Authority task
 - Authority to update milestone schedule based on Reclamation preliminary comments and send out for more review and any further comments

Action Items

1. ICF (Nicole) to coordinate with Reclamation (Nate) to set up meeting regarding 508 compliance
2. Authority to forward schedule to Reclamation for comments