

# Chapter 1 Introduction

This Final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIR/EIS) evaluates the potential environmental impacts of the construction and operation of the Sites Reservoir Project (Project). The Sites Project Authority (Authority) would develop the Project, an offstream surface water reservoir, to provide water supply for environmental, municipal, industrial, and agricultural needs throughout the State of California. The Authority is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) is the lead agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This Final EIR/EIS evaluates potential direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts on the environment that could result from implementing the Project. In addition, this Final EIR/EIS includes feasible mitigation measures to avoid, minimize, rectify, reduce, or compensate for significant adverse impacts.

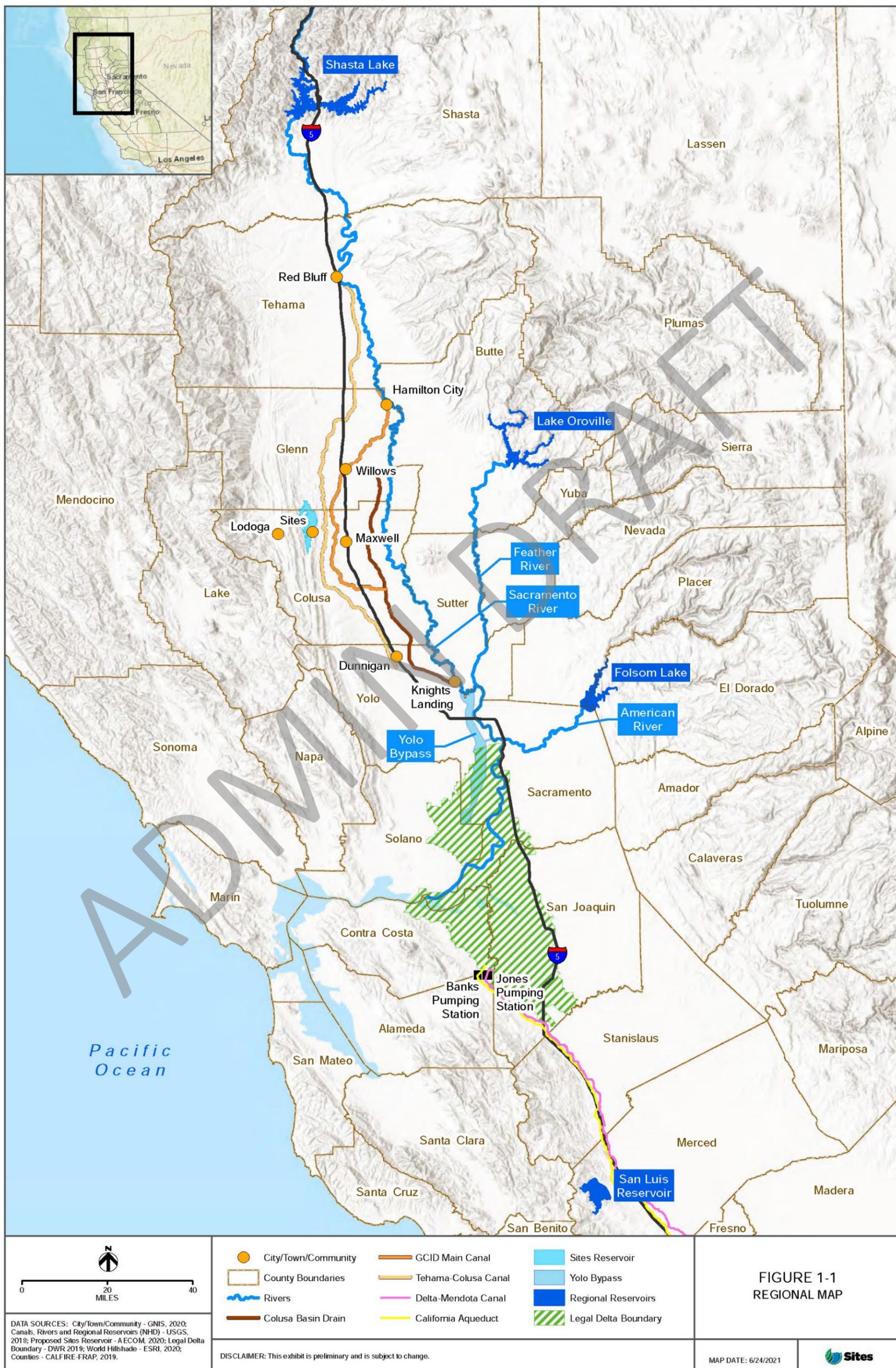
In August 2017, the Authority and Reclamation jointly issued a Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (2017 Draft EIR/EIS) for the Project pursuant to their respective lead agency obligations under CEQA and NEPA. In November 2021, the Authority and Reclamation issued a Revised Draft Environmental Impact Report/Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (RDEIR/SDEIS) as a complete revision of the 2017 Draft EIR/EIS (Sites Project Authority and Bureau of Reclamation 2017) to reflect changes to the Project that occurred since the issuance of the 2017 Draft EIR/EIS (Section 1.2.5, *Value Planning Process*). This Final EIR/EIS incorporates the whole of the RDEIR/SDEIS. Volume 3 of this Final EIR/EIS also includes the Authority and Reclamation's responses to all comments received during the public circulation of the RDEIR/SDEIS, while Volumes 1 and 2 have been revised to reflect changes and clarifications, including those based on comments received. These revisions are described in greater detail in Section 1.8, *Document Organization*.

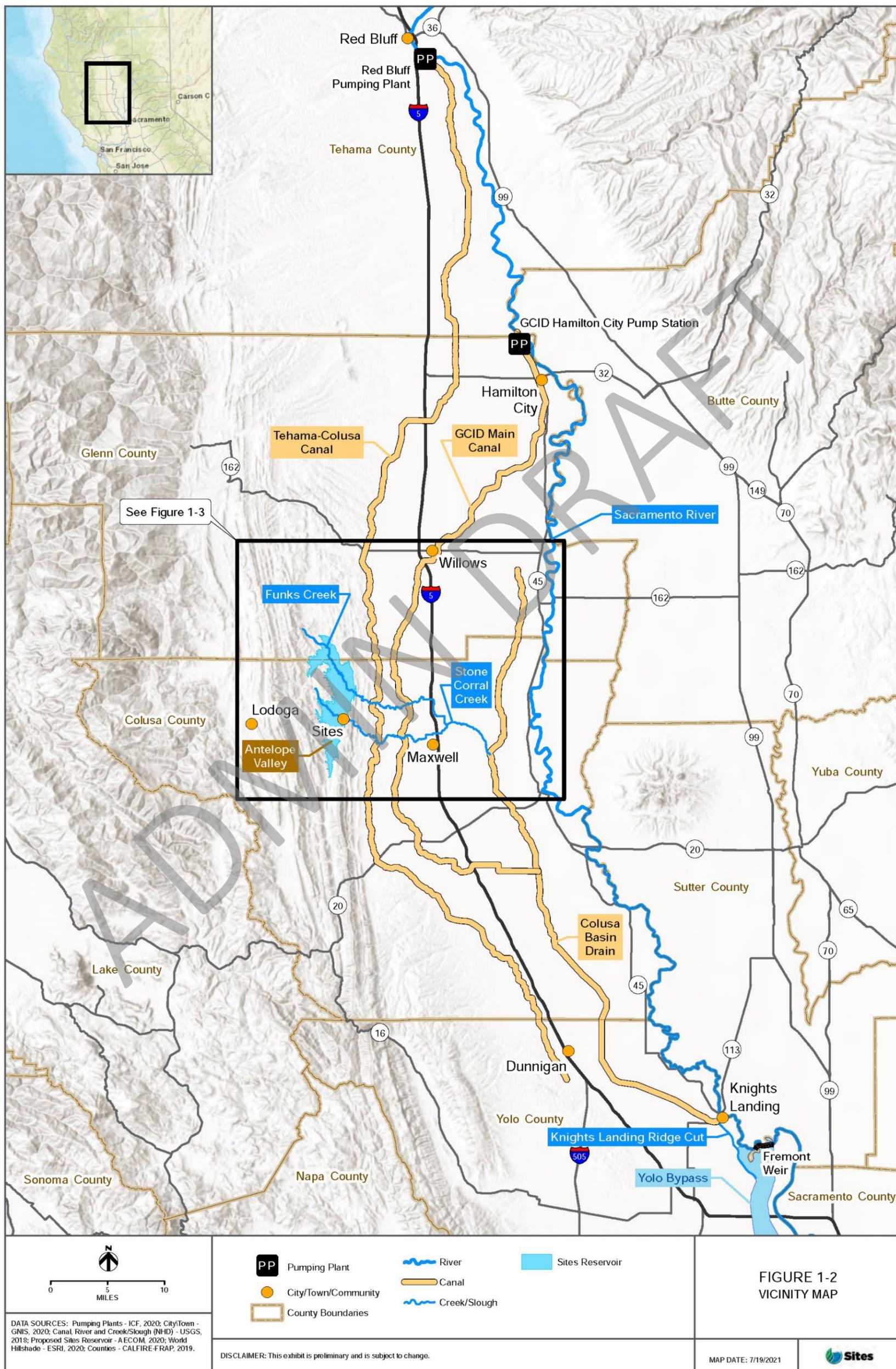
The Project is located in rural unincorporated Tehama, Glenn, Colusa, and Yolo Counties, California. Figure 1-1 is a regional map that shows the reservoir footprint in relation to county boundaries, cities and towns, and general hydrologic characteristics, including reservoirs, rivers, and canals. Figure 1-2 is a vicinity map depicts the reservoir footprint in Antelope Valley, towns, and smaller creeks. Figure 1-3 is a local vicinity map that shows a more detailed view of the reservoir footprint and surrounding area.

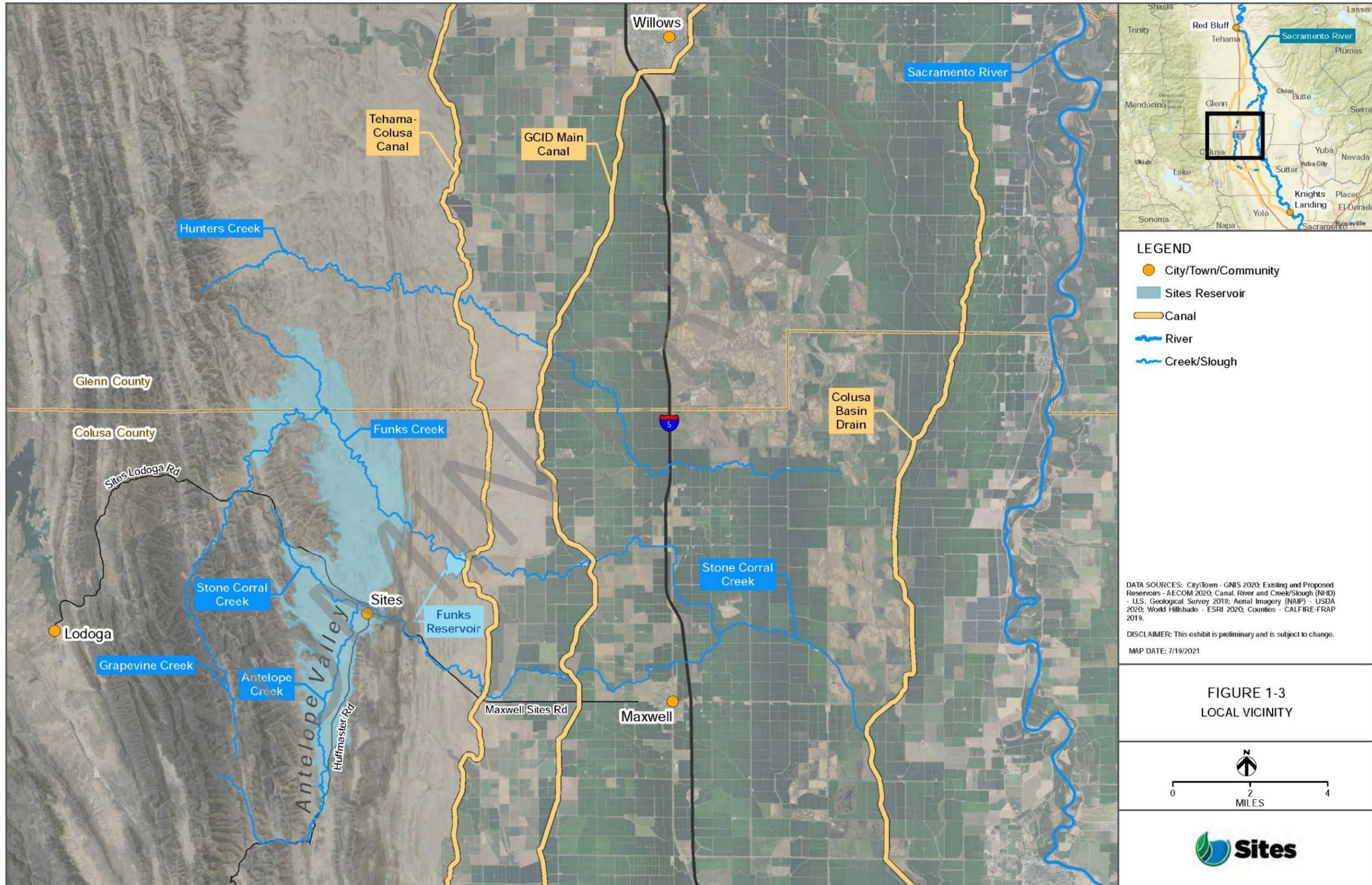
This chapter provides background on the Project, describes the CEQA objectives and NEPA purpose and need, explains the intended uses of this Final EIR/EIS, and describes the organization of this Final EIR/EIS. A detailed description of the Authority's proposed Project and the alternatives under evaluation is provided in Chapter 2, *Project Description and Alternatives*.

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ADMIN DRAFT







## 1.1 Sites Project Authority

The Authority, previously known as the Sites Joint Powers Authority, was formed as a California joint powers authority pursuant to state law on August 26, 2010. The mission of the Authority is to build and operate a climate-resilient, twenty-first-century water storage system to responsibly manage and deliver water, provide environmental benefits, and provide flood control and recreation benefits. The Authority would be responsible for all aspects of ownership and operations of the Project and Project facilities that are not currently owned by another entity (such as Reclamation or the Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District [GCID]).

The Authority currently is composed of the following public entities located and operating in the Sacramento Valley—City of Sacramento/Sacramento County Water Agency (share a seat), Colusa County Water District, County of Colusa, County of Glenn, GCID, Placer County Water Agency/City of Roseville (share a seat), Reclamation District 108, Tehama-Colusa Canal Authority (TCCA), and Westside Water District. Reclamation and the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) are ex-officio, nonvoting members. Western Canal Water District and TC 4 Districts (Cortina, LaGrande, Davis and Dunnigan) are associate, nonvoting members.

Twenty-three public water agencies currently comprise the Authority's Reservoir Committee. Reservoir Committee members would provide funding for the Project's construction and operations and would receive water supply benefits from the Project. Reclamation is a nonvoting member of the Reservoir Committee and may provide funding for the Project and receive water supply benefits dedicated to specific purposes such as environmental enhancement and wildlife refuges. DWR, which manages the State Water Project (SWP) on behalf of the State of California, is also a nonvoting member of the Reservoir Committee. The State of California would provide Water Storage Investment Program (WSIP) funding through the California Water Commission (CWC) for the Project and receive ecosystem, recreation, and flood control benefits from the Project. It is anticipated that DWR would administer the benefit agreements on flood reduction and recreation and that the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) would administer the benefit agreement for ecosystem improvements.

## 1.2 Project Background

California is a diverse and dynamic state. It was home to more than 39.5 million people in 2019—the most populous state and one of the most ethnically diverse states in the United States. The state has a diverse and rich natural environment, from the dense forests of the northern coast to the arid deserts of the southern portion of the state. The economy of California is equally diverse and robust, with major sectors of sales, manufacturing, and technology along the coastal regions and in southern California to predominantly agricultural sectors in the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys. The state's population, natural resources, and economic diversity are what many Californians have come to value but also make water and natural resource management in California challenging. California is home to the largest federal and state water projects, the Central Valley Project (CVP) and SWP, along with a number of substantial local water projects that all move water up to hundreds of miles from its source to its end use to sustain the state's

population, natural, and economic diversity. This diversity is increasingly at risk as the climate variability common in the state is further magnified by climate change.

The Project has long been envisioned as one tool in a toolbox of actions to assist the State in achieving the goals of water reliability for all users (including the environment) and adaptation to a changing climate. The key planning and funding efforts that form the foundation of the Project are described below.

### **1.2.1 CALFED Record of Decision**

The CALFED Bay-Delta Program is a cooperative, interagency effort of 18 state and federal agencies with management or regulatory responsibilities for the Sacramento–San Joaquin Delta (Delta). The CALFED Bay-Delta Program is an effort to build a framework for managing California’s water. Throughout the CALFED Programmatic Assessment process conducted between 1995 and 2000, the social and environmental effects of water shortages and reliability within California were thoroughly analyzed and documented, along with a diverse suite of potential solutions to be implemented at the local, state, and federal levels. The CALFED programmatic review entailed an extensive multi-stakeholder and public process that culminated with the issuance of the CALFED Programmatic Record of Decision (ROD) in August 2000 (CALFED 2000). The Preferred Program Alternative in the CALFED ROD identified eight program components to build a framework for managing California’s water resources into the future. The storage component identified the potential for groundwater and surface water storage as a method of improving water supply reliability, providing water for the environment at times when it is needed most, providing flows for water quality maintenance, and protecting levees through coordination with existing flood control reservoirs. Preliminary studies in support of the CALFED ROD considered more than 50 potential surface water storage sites throughout California, many previously studied, and recommended more detailed study of five locations. One of these recommended study locations was the Sites Reservoir Project, which was previously known as the North-of-Delta Offstream Storage (NODOS) Investigation. Consistent with the CALFED ROD, which identified that water storage north of the Delta was needed to support Delta fisheries and statewide water supply reliability, Reclamation and DWR began further investigation of the viability of the Project in 2001.

### **1.2.2 Proposition 1 of 2014—Water Storage Investment Program**

The California Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (Proposition 1) authorized \$7.545 billion in general obligation bonds to fund ecosystems and watershed protection and restoration and water supply infrastructure projects, including surface and groundwater storage and drinking water protection. Of the funds authorized in Proposition 1, \$2.7 billion were allocated to water supply infrastructure projects to fund the public benefits associated with these projects. The CWC administers the water supply infrastructure project funding through the WSIP. The CWC conducted an extensive and rigorous selection process that was open to the public from 2015 to 2018 to select water supply infrastructure projects that met the eligibility criteria and provided public benefits, such as flood control, ecosystem improvement, water quality improvement, emergency response, and recreation benefits. The selection process culminated in the CWC issuing maximum eligibility determinations for eight potential projects, including the Sites Reservoir Project, that would boost California water storage capacity by 4.3 million acre-feet (MAF) in July 2018.

The Project was conditionally awarded approximately \$816 million of Proposition 1 funds for its flood control, ecosystem improvement, and recreation public benefits. The CWC approved a request by the Authority to provide a portion of the Project's funding early to help complete environmental planning and permitting documents. Through remaining WSIP process steps, the CWC will determine whether all required feasibility studies, permits, and environmental documentation have been completed prior to determining the Project's final funding award. All applicable laws and regulations must also be met to receive and maintain WSIP funding. The Authority will also need to enter into a contract with the administering agencies for the public benefits prior to determining the Project's final funding award.

### **1.2.3 Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act of 2016**

The federal government has also recognized the challenges of existing water infrastructure and in 2016 Congress passed the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act (WIIN Act) (Public Law 114-322). Under the WIIN Act, Reclamation can participate in surface water storage projects that are constructed, operated, and maintained by a state agency or an agency organized pursuant to state law and that provide a benefit in meeting any obligation under federal law (including regulations). The Secretary of the Interior can participate in up to 25% of the total cost of a state-led project under the WIIN Act. Pursuant to Section 4007(c)(2)(C) of the WIIN Act, the Secretary of the Interior must find that a proportionate share of the project benefits are federal benefits, including water supplies dedicated to specific purposes such as environmental enhancement and wildlife refuges. As of January 2023, \$214 million has been appropriated to Reclamation under the WIIN Act to advance the Project.

Consistent with the requirements of the WIIN Act, in December 2020, Reclamation completed and transmitted to Congress a final feasibility report for the NODOS Investigation (Bureau of Reclamation 2020), which in essence is the Project. This final feasibility report notified Congress of the Secretary of the Interior's determination of feasibility for the Project. Additionally, the Project has met the WIIN Act requirement of "under construction" by December 16, 2021, pursuant to WIIN Act definition contained in Section 4011(f)(2) and therefore meets the legislation exception reference in Section 4013(2). WIIN Act Section 4011 defines the term *construction*: "The term 'construction' means the designing, materials engineering and testing, surveying...of water storage, exclusive of any federal statutory or regulatory obligations relating to any permit, review, approval, or other such requirement." Reclamation conducted geotechnical field investigations and testing in 2019, 2020, and 2021, to meet the referenced definition.

### **1.2.4 Governor's Executive Order N-10-19 and the Water Resiliency Portfolio**

Since the issuance of the CALFED ROD more than 20 years ago, the pressures on surface and groundwater resources in the state, as well as on the existing water supply infrastructure, have only intensified (California Executive Order N-10-19). In April 2019, Governor Newsom signed Executive Order N-10-19, which identified the state's current water challenges and emphasized that the "future prosperity of our communities and the health of our environment depend on tackling pressing current water challenges while positioning California to meet broad water needs through the 21st century." To that end, the order required the preparation of a water resilience portfolio by the California Natural Resources Agency, the California Environmental Protection Agency, and the California Department of Food and Agriculture, in consultation with

the Department of Finance, to meet the needs of California's communities, economy, and environment through the 21st century. The *2020 Water Resilience Portfolio* (Portfolio) was completed in July 2020 (California Natural Resources Agency et al. 2020).

The Portfolio identifies the need for tools and leadership to advance projects of statewide scale and importance and to help address challenges that are beyond the scope of any region (California Natural Resources Agency et al. 2020). The Portfolio embraces a broad, diversified approach and is organized into four categories of goals and actions: (1) maintain and diversify water supplies; (2) protect and enhance natural ecosystems; (3) build connections; and (4) be prepared. The Portfolio emphasizes that advanced planning, thoughtful investments, integrated management, and unprecedented collaboration are required to meet the substantial water challenges facing the state, and it acknowledges that no quick or singular fix will safeguard communities in the coming decades and preserve access to water for all Californians. To this end, the Portfolio identifies the need to expand smart surface water storage where it can benefit water supply and the environment. To achieve this important goal, the Portfolio proposes the acceleration of State permitting for projects selected under the WSIP that protect and enhance both fish and wildlife and water supply reliability. The Portfolio specifically identifies the Project as one of the smart water storage projects that should qualify for such expedited permitting.

### **1.2.5 Value Planning Process**

In October 2019, the Authority undertook a value planning process—an effort to identify and evaluate additional alternatives that could make the Project more affordable for the Project's Storage Partners while also addressing comments received on the 2017 Draft EIR/EIS. This decision was based on ongoing discussions with permitting agencies, expected Project costs and the cost per acre-foot (AF) of reservoir releases, and existing participation levels. The value planning process focused on meeting the following objectives: (1) improve water supply and water supply reliability; (2) provide Incremental Level 4 water supply for refuges; (3) improve the survival of anadromous fish; (4) enhance the Delta ecosystem; (5) provide opportunities for recreation; and (6) provide flood damage reduction. Through the value planning process, the Authority considered a number of different options to reduce Project costs while continuing to meet the Project objectives.

A key driver for the value planning process was the rising cost of the Project. The Project must be cost-effective for all Reservoir Committee Storage Partners, including those that are the most cost-sensitive due to their size, operating budget, and capital improvement plan. The facilities, the size of the reservoir, and the release volumes primarily drive Project costs (Sites Project Authority 2020).

In April 2020, the Authority accepted the *Value Planning Report* and its findings (Sites Project Authority 2020). The report focused on three options, termed VP5, VP6, and VP7. All three options included reservoir sizes from 1.3 to 1.5 million acre-feet (MAF), eliminated the pump-back hydroelectrical facilities, and focused on using existing facilities to the extent practical for the diversion and release from the reservoir. The three options ranged in cost from \$2.8 billion to \$3.0 billion in 2019 dollars with a range from \$592 to \$611 per AF, assuming the use of a low interest federal loan through the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act. At the same

time as acceptance of the Value Planning Report, the Authority also directed staff to analyze the environmental effects of the refined alternatives in the report.

## 1.3 Scoping and Public Comments

### 1.3.1 Scoping

DWR originally published a notice of preparation (NOP) for the Sites Reservoir Project EIR/EIS on November 5, 2001. The Authority assumed the role of CEQA lead agency in 2016 and issued a supplemental NOP on February 2, 2017. Reclamation issued a notice of intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS under NEPA on November 9, 2001. In addition to the scoping process in January 2002, the Authority conducted two scoping meetings in February 2017 following publication of the supplemental NOP. During both scoping periods, the public was invited to submit written comments by mail, fax, or email regarding the scope, content, and format of the environmental document. The Authority and Reclamation prepared an original Scoping Report, as well as a Supplemental Scoping Report, following the scoping meetings conducted in 2017. This information is included as Appendix 33B of this Final EIR/EIS.

### 1.3.2 Comments Received on the 2017 Draft EIR/EIS

The Authority and Reclamation released the Draft EIR/EIS in August 2017. The Authority, as the CEQA lead agency, issued a Notice of Availability on August 14, 2017. A Notice of Availability of the 2017 Draft EIR/EIS and notice of public meetings was also published in the *Federal Register* on August 18, 2017. The 2017 Draft EIR/EIS was initially made available for public review from August 14, 2017, to November 13, 2017. This review period was ultimately extended to January 15, 2018, to accommodate additional public review and comments. A total of 137 comment letters and emails were received on the 2017 Draft EIR/EIS, along with comments received at two public hearings held during the public review period. Comments and/or issues raised in these letters include:

- Project description and range of alternatives
- Modeling approach, modeling baseline, and modeling analysis
- Operational impacts on fisheries
- Impacts to Trinity River resources
- Indian Trust Assets and impacts on tribal cultural resources
- Impacts on terrestrial species
- Water quality
- Water rights
- Geotechnical and geological data and seismicity
- Additional cumulative impacts

Additional comments were received after the close of the public review period that generally raised similar issues and concerns to those received during the public comment period. All letters

with comments on the 2017 Draft EIR/EIS, including those received after the public comment period ended, have been reviewed. The Authority and Reclamation have taken into consideration all comments in developing the approach to the revised alternatives and the analysis included in the Final EIR/EIS.

### **1.3.3 Comments Received on the 2021 RDEIR/SDEIS**

The public review process for the RDEIR/SDEIS is described in Chapter 34, *Final EIR/EIS Document Distribution*. Comments and/or issues raised by commenters on the RDEIR/SDEIS include:

- Stakeholder engagement and public process
- Alternatives description and operations of the alternatives
- Surface water quality impacts
- Aquatic biological resources impacts
- Terrestrial wildlife and vegetation impacts
- Cumulative impacts

Since the close of the public comment period on the RDEIR/SDEIS on January 28, 2022, the Authority and Reclamation have reviewed the public comments and made changes between the RDEIR/SDEIS and this Final EIR/EIS based on comments received. The Authority and Reclamation have continued to consult with local jurisdictions and have continued to work closely with regulatory agencies with jurisdiction over some components of the Project. This consultation has resulted in Project refinements, updates to the impacts analysis, and revised mitigation measures.

## **1.4 CEQA Objectives and NEPA Purpose and Need**

Section 15124 of the CEQA Guidelines requires that a lead agency identify a statement of objectives to assist the lead agency in developing a reasonable range of alternatives for evaluation in the EIR and to aid decision makers in preparing findings or a statement of overriding considerations, if necessary. The U.S. Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) NEPA regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [C.F.R.] § 1502.13)<sup>1</sup> require a statement of the purpose and need to which the agency is responding. The statement of objectives/purpose and need should include the purpose of the project and may discuss the project benefits.

The Project objectives are as follows:

- OBJ-1: Improve water supply reliability and resiliency to meet Storage Partners' agricultural and municipal long-term average annual water demand in a cost-effective manner for all Storage Partners, including those that are the most cost-sensitive.

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<sup>1</sup> The NOI for which this Final Supplemental EIS is issued was published before September 14, 2020. Therefore, all references to CEQ regulations are to those regulations at 40 C.F.R. Parts 1500–1508 in existence as of the date the NOI was published in the Federal Register on November 9, 2001.

- OBJ-2: Provide public benefits consistent with Proposition 1 of 2014 and use WSIP funds to improve statewide surface water supply reliability and flexibility to enhance opportunities for habitat and fisheries management for the public benefit through a designated long-term average annual water supply.
- OBJ-3: Provide public benefits consistent with the WIIN Act by using federal funds, if available, provided by Reclamation to improve CVP operational flexibility in meeting CVP environmental and contractual water supply needs and improving cold-water pool management in Shasta Lake to benefit anadromous fish.
- OBJ-4: Provide surface water to convey biomass from the floodplain to the Delta to enhance the Delta ecosystem for the benefit of pelagic fishes<sup>2</sup> in the north Delta (e.g., Cache Slough).
- OBJ-5: Provide local and regional amenities, such as developing recreational facilities, reducing local flood damage, and maintaining transportation connectivity through roadway modifications.

Reclamation has identified the Project need as providing offstream surface water storage north of the Delta in a manner that is consistent with WIIN Act requirements and Reclamation law. The purpose of the Project is to provide:

- Increased water supply and improved reliability of water deliveries
- Increased CVP operational flexibility
- Benefits to anadromous fish by improving CVP operations consistent with the laws, regulations, and requirements in effect at the time of operation
- Incremental Level 4 water supply for CVP Improvement Act refuges
- Delta ecosystem enhancement by providing water to convey food resources

## 1.5 Type and Intended Use of This EIR/EIS

### 1.5.1 Type of Document

The Project previously was evaluated under CEQA and NEPA in the 2017 Draft EIR/EIS (Sites Project Authority and Bureau of Reclamation 2017). Through the publication of the RDEIR/SDEIS, the 2017 Draft EIR/EIS was revised to reflect changes to the Sites Reservoir Project and the RDEIR/SDEIS was recirculated for public review and comment in accordance with Section 15088.5 of the CEQA Guidelines. The RDEIR/SDEIS reflects a comprehensive and substantial revision to the prior 2017 Draft EIR/EIS and the analysis and findings in the RDEIR/SDEIS supplant and supersede the prior analyses and findings in the 2017 document in their entirety. Accordingly, reviewers of the RDEIR/SDEIS were asked to limit their comments only to the RDEIR/SDEIS and not present comments on the prior 2017 Draft EIR/EIS. Although the 2017 Draft EIR/EIS is part of the administrative record in this matter,

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<sup>2</sup> Pelagic fish are species that spend most of their life swimming in the water column, having little contact or dependency with the bottom.

prior comments submitted on the 2017 Draft EIR/EIS do not require a response under CEQA; the Authority only responded to those comments submitted in response to the RDEIR/SDEIS.

The RDEIR/SDEIS is a Supplemental Draft EIS in accordance with the CEQ NEPA regulations governing supplemental environmental review. The RDEIR/SDEIS evaluated potential environmental impacts, alternatives, and mitigation measures associated with construction and operation of the Project. Reclamation recirculated the SDEIS for public review and comment in accordance with 40 C.F.R. Section 1502.9. Reclamation has responded to comments submitted on the 2017 Draft EIR/EIS (see Volume 3, Appendix 4A, *Reclamation Responses to 2017 Draft EIS Comments*) and the RDEIR/SDEIS in this Final EIR/EIS as required by NEPA.

### **1.5.2 Intended Use of This Final EIR/EIS**

The purpose of this Final EIR/EIS is to disclose the potential direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of implementing the Project consistent with CEQA/NEPA requirements. This Final EIR/EIS serves as an informational document for decision makers, public agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and the general public regarding the potential direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental consequences of implementing any of the alternatives. The Final EIR/EIS has been prepared according to CEQA (California Public Resources Code § 21000 et seq.) and the CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3), as well as NEPA (42 U.S. Code [U.S.C.] § 4321 et seq.) and applicable federal regulations.

The Authority will review and consider this Final EIR/EIS, including public and agency comments on the revised, recirculated document, to understand the potential environmental impacts, alternatives, and mitigation measures before deciding whether to proceed with the Project.

Reclamation will review and consider this Final EIR/EIS, including the comments on the revised document, to understand the potential environmental impacts, alternatives, and mitigation measures before deciding whether to participate in the Project and issue approvals and agreements for the Project.

The CWC will use information in this Final EIR/EIS in combination with the feasibility report drafted by the Authority for the Project to determine if the Project continues to remain eligible for Proposition 1 funding. In addition, the CWC will use this Final EIR/EIS, including public and agency comments on the document, to evaluate if Sites Reservoir provides a net ecosystem benefit, in order to make a finding that the Project is consistent with Proposition 1, as required by the WSIP regulations. CDFW will also rely upon this Final EIR/EIS in approval of future Project permits and agreements.

A number of agencies may also use this Final EIR/EIS to issue permits or other regulatory approvals. Table 4-3 in Chapter 4, *Regulatory and Environmental Compliance: Project Permits, Approvals, and Consultation Requirements*, identifies agencies that may use this Final EIR/EIS.

## 1.6 Level of Detail and Scope of This Final EIR/EIS

This Final EIR/EIS provides a project-level analysis that focuses on potential environmental impacts associated with construction, operation, and maintenance of the Project and alternatives and mitigation measures that can minimize or avoid such impacts. This Final EIR/EIS evaluates the components of the alternatives in accordance with the level of detail that was available for these components at the time the environmental analysis was conducted. For those Project components where further engineering detail may be needed to define the component more precisely, the analysis is intended to capture the full range of environmental impacts that may result from construction and operation of such components.

## 1.7 Areas of Known Controversy

Several areas of controversy were identified through stakeholder meetings and during the preparation of the 2017 Draft EIR/EIS. These areas included impacts on property owners in the Project area whose property may be required for Project construction and impacts on tribal resources because Project construction may affect burials and other sensitive tribal resources. Concerns were also raised about potential impacts on golden eagles (*Aquila chrysaetos*) that have been identified in and around the inundation area and the potential for impacts on aquatic biological resources due to changes in flow patterns of the Sacramento River. Concerns have also been raised about the potential for the Project to result in changes to Reclamation's operations of the Trinity River Division of the CVP. The areas of known controversy remain the same and are addressed in specific chapters of this Final EIR/EIS.

Chapter 2, *Project Description and Alternatives*, describes the relocation of residents and the Reservoir Management Plan (RMP) that would be used to manage land resources and property once the reservoir was operational. Chapter 2 also describes that the Project would not affect or result in changes in the operation of the CVP Trinity River Division facilities (including Clear Creek); Reclamation would continue to operate the Trinity River Division consistent with all applicable statutory, legal, and contractual obligations. The Delevan Facility has been eliminated from the Project alternatives evaluated in this Final EIR/EIS. Chapter 10, *Wildlife Resources*, addresses potential impacts on golden eagles. Chapter 11, *Aquatic Biological Resources*, addresses potential impacts on aquatic biological resources. Chapter 22, *Cultural Resources*, discusses potential impacts on cemeteries and archaeological resources that may pertain to tribes. Chapter 23, *Tribal Cultural Resources*, documents tribal cultural resources that have been identified by tribes through the Assembly Bill 52 consultation process in which the Authority has been engaged.

## 1.8 Document Organization

Volume 1 of this Final EIR/EIS is organized into 34 chapters and an Executive Summary. Volume 2 contains technical appendices. Throughout Volumes 1 and 2, to the extent practical and for the convenience of the reader, a vertical line in the left- and right-hand margins indicates areas where substantive edits to text, tables, or graphics were made between the RDEIR/SDEIS

and the Final EIR/EIS. Appendices that are new or that have changes since the RDEIR/SDEIS but that do not have a vertical line in the margin include Appendices 2D1, 5B1 through 5B5, 5C, 6B1 through 6B5, 6C, 6D, 11I1, 11I2, 11M7 through 11M9, 15A, 17A, 20C1 through 20C3, and 21A. Minor editorial changes and clarifications are not identified. Volume 3 is newly added and includes responses to comments received on the RDEIR/SDEIS. The organization of this Final EIR/EIS is outlined below to assist the reader's review of the document.

- *Executive Summary* summarizes the contents and findings contained in this Final EIR/EIS. It also contains a brief description of the Project and the alternatives, the public review procedures, the areas of known controversy, the issues to be resolved, and a summary table listing the alternatives' impacts, mitigation measures to reduce significant impacts, and the level of significance of each impact following mitigation.
- Chapter 1, *Introduction*, provides Project background; identifies the Project's objectives, purpose, and need; and provides an overview of this Final EIR/EIS.
- Chapter 2, *Project Description and Alternatives*, contains the alternatives description and describes the Authority's preferred Project.
- Chapter 3, *Environmental Analysis*, documents the terminology used for the impact analysis and information regarding the organization of the impact analysis.
- Chapter 4, *Regulatory and Environmental Compliance: Project Permits, Approvals, and Consultation Requirements*, provides an overview of the regulations that would govern the alternatives, as well as the federal, state, and local approvals needed for the alternatives.
- Chapters 5 through 27 present the introductory context, describe the environmental setting, identify the methods of analysis, and provide the environmental analysis (and mitigation measures, if applicable) for each environmental topic as required by CEQA and NEPA.
- Chapters 28, *Climate Change*; Chapter 29, *Indian Trust Assets*; and Chapter 30, *Environmental Justice*, address topics that are unique to NEPA.
- Chapter 31, *Cumulative Impacts*, contains the cumulative impact analysis of all resources.
- Chapter 32, *Other Required Analyses*, contains discussions of additional environmental topics required under CEQA and NEPA: growth-inducing impacts, relationship between short-term uses and long-term productivity, and irreversible and irretrievable resource commitments.
- Chapter 33, *Consultation and Coordination and List of Preparers*, provides information about consultations and coordination performed and lists the Final EIR/EIS preparers.
- Chapter 34, *Final EIR/EIS Document Distribution*, identifies the distribution of this document.
- Appendices 1A through 33C contain technical and background information that supports this Final EIR/EIS. The appendices include descriptions of modeling methodologies, assumptions, and interpretation and technical information relevant to the methodology and analysis of resource topics described in Chapters 5 through 30.

- Volume 3 provides responses to comments provided on the RDEIR/SDEIS.

Chapters and appendices that have not changed since the RDEIR/SDEIS are not reproduced in the Final EIR/EIS and can be referenced in the RDEIR/SDEIS. These chapters and appendices are noted with a flysheet, and include:

- Appendix 2A, *Alternatives Screening and Evaluation*
- Appendix 2C, *Construction Means, Methods, and Assumptions*
- Appendix 8B, *Groundwater Modeling*
- Appendix 9A, *Special-Status Plant Species*
- Appendix 9B, *Vegetation and Wetland Methods and Information*
- Appendix 10B, *Wildlife Habitat Models and Methods*
- Appendix 12A, *Soils Survey Map*
- Appendix 12B, *Soils Map Units*
- Chapter 13, *Minerals*
- Chapter 19, *Noise*
- Appendix 19A, *Noise Definitions and Noise Calculations*
- Appendix 20A, *Methodology for Air Quality and GHG Emissions Calculations*
- Appendix 20C, *Ambient Air Quality and Health Risk Analysis Technical Report*
- Appendix 20D, *Photochemical Modeling Study to Support a Health Impact Analysis*
- Chapter 22, *Cultural Resources*
- Appendix 22A, *Cultural Resources*
- Chapter 24, *Visual Resources*
- Appendix 24A, *Landscape Character Photos and Associated Maps*
- Appendix 24B, *Regional and Project Landscape Description*
- Chapter 25, *Population and Housing*
- Appendix 27A, *Environmental Records Search*
- Appendix 33A, *2017 Draft EIR/EIS Chapter 36, Consultation and Coordination*
- Appendix 33B, *Previous Scoping Processes*
- Appendix 33C, *Appendix 33C, Planning Aid Memorandum*

## 1.9 References

### 1.9.1 Printed References

- Bureau of Reclamation. 2020. *North-of-the-Delta Offstream Storage Investigation Feasibility Report*. July. Available: <https://www.usbr.gov/mp/nodos/docs/final-fr/main-body-es-sites-feasibility-report-508-1-28-21.pdf>. Accessed: December 2, 2022.
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