

# RECLAMATION

*Managing Water in the West*

**Draft Finding of No Significant Impact**

## **Storage and Conveyance of Non-Central Valley Project Water in Federal Facilities for the South of Delta Central Valley Project Contractors**

**FONSI-12-033**

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# Introduction

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) proposes to approve Warren Act contracts to requesting Central Valley Project (CVP) contractors within the Delta Division, San Luis Unit, and San Felipe Division to convey non-CVP surface water in federal facilities.

## Background

California has experienced severe droughts in recent years that have reduced water supplies to many water districts. South-of-Delta (SOD) Central Valley Project (CVP) water service contractors experienced reduced water supply allocations in 2007, 2008, and 2009 due to hydrologic conditions and legal constraints. While 2010 and 2011 had above normal rainfall, SOD CVP contractors received only 45% of their CVP agricultural contract supply in 2010 and 80% in 2011. Operations of the Federal Jones Pumping Plant will continue to be limited due to the various constraints on Delta operations, which will reduce available CVP contract supplies. SOD CVP contractors thus need to identify additional supplies to avoid shortages for their customers.

The Lower Yuba River Accord provides supplemental dry year water supplies to state and federal water contractors under a Water Purchase Agreement with the California Department of Water Resources (DWR). The San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority (Water Authority) proposes to purchase up to 30,000 acre-feet (af) of water made available by the Lower Yuba River Accord, on behalf of nine SOD CVP contractors. The water purchased, minus a 20% loss from carriage through the Delta, would be pumped and stored by DWR for the Water Authority in the O'Neill Forebay. The Water Authority has requested Reclamation execute Warren Act contracts to its participating member districts in order to store and convey this non-CVP water in federal facilities between July 2012 and June 30, 2013.

## Proposed Action

Reclamation proposes to issue Warren Act contracts to convey, store, or deliver up to 24,000 af (30,000 af, minus 20 percent for DWR's Delta carriage losses) of non-CVP water for the Water Authority's participating member districts (Table 1) during the period July 2, 2012 through June 30, 2013. Any remaining non-CVP Water in San Luis Reservoir after February 28, 2013 will be subject to available capacity and Reclamation's 2012 Rescheduled Water Guidelines. DWR would deliver the non-CVP water to the Federal share of O'Neill Forebay. The non-CVP water in O'Neill Forebay would either be pumped into the San Luis Reservoir for storage or delivered to the San Luis Unit contractors via the San Luis Canal (SLC), the Delta Division contractors via Delta-Mendota Canal (DMC), and to the San Felipe Division contractors via the Pacheco Tunnel, with a completion

date of June 30, 2013. There would be no new construction or excavation occurring as part of the Proposed Action. No native or untilled land (fallow for 3 years or more) would be cultivated with water involved with these actions. The Proposed Action would not increase or decrease water supplies that would result in development.

**Table 1 Participating Member Districts and Requested Non-CVP Water**

<b>Member District</b>	<b>Purchased Water Quantity (acre-feet)</b>	<b>DWR 20% Carriage Loss (acre-feet)</b>	<b>Warren Act Contract Request (acre-feet)</b>
Westlands Water District – Distribution District No. 1 (Broadview Water District assignment)	489	98	391
Del Puerto Water District	2,538	508	2,030
Eagle Field Water District	84	17	67
Pacheco Water District	183	37	146
Panoche Water District	1701	340	1,361
San Benito County Water District	645	128	517
San Luis Water District	2,607	521	2,086
Santa Clara Valley Water District	600	120	480
Westlands Water District	21,153	4,231	16,922
<b>Total</b>	<b>30,000</b>	<b>6000</b>	<b>24,000</b>

## Findings

In accordance with section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, Reclamation's South-Central California Area Office has determined that approval of the Proposed Action is not a major federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment and an environmental impact statement is not required. This Draft Finding of No Significant Impact is supported by Reclamation's Draft Environmental Assessment Number EA-12-033, *Storage and Conveyance of Non-Central Valley Project Water in Federal Facilities for the South of Delta Central Valley Project Contractors*, and is incorporated by reference.

## Water Resources

The Proposed Action would allow non-CVP water to be stored and conveyed in CVP facilities. The non-CVP water would supplement diminished CVP water supplies in 2012 and provide greater water supply reliability going into 2013. No new facilities would be needed as a result of the Proposed Action. There would be no construction or modification to any federal facilities; the capacity of the

facilities would remain the same. The Proposed Action would use only excess capacity for conveyance of non-CVP water. The Proposed Action would not interfere with the normal operations of federal facilities nor would it impede any SWP or CVP obligations to deliver water to other contractors or to local fish and wildlife habitat. Furthermore, the Proposed Action would not interfere in the quantity or timing of diversions from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay Delta. CVP operations and facilities would not vary considerably under either alternative.

Under existing conditions, water users would be subject to reductions in their water supply due to dry hydrologic conditions. Under the Proposed Action, additional water supply would benefit those participating water users. This increased water supply would be a beneficial effect, and would not be in excess of contract totals.

Depending on timing, the Proposed Action could help reduce the effects of low-point in San Luis Reservoir by increasing the water volume in the reservoir during the summer months.

These findings indicate that there would be no adverse impact to water resources resulting from the Proposed Action.

## **Land Use**

Land use would remain the same as described in the affected environment. The storage and conveyance of the non-CVP water through CVP facilities would not contribute to changes in land use. No new construction or excavation would occur as a result of the Proposed Action. No native or untilled land (fallow for 3 years or more) would be cultivated with water involved with these actions. The Proposed Action would not increase or decrease water supplies that would result in development.

There would be no impacts to land use resulting from the Proposed Action.

## **Biological Resources**

Effects of the Proposed Action are similar to those under the No Action Alternative. The action area consists of agricultural fields that provide some habitat values for a few Federally listed candidate, threatened, or endangered species; however, there is routine disturbance due to on-going farming practices. The Proposed Action would not involve the conversion of any land fallowed and untilled for three or more years. Since no natural stream courses or additional surface water pumping would occur, there would be no effects on listed fish species.

There would be no impacts to biological resources as a result of the Proposed Action.

## **Environmental Justice**

Warren Act contracts would allow the water districts to use non-CVP water for irrigation and M&I use in their service areas. The availability of this water could help maintain agricultural production and farm worker employment. Therefore implementing the Proposed Action would not cause any harm to minority or disadvantaged populations within the Proposed Action area.

There would be no adverse impacts to minority and low-income populations as a result of the Proposed Action.

## **Socioeconomic Resources**

Under the Proposed Action, participating districts could convey and store non-CVP water in CVP facilities to supplement their CVP water supply. The Warren Act contracts would allow the non-CVP water to be distributed to sustain permanent crops. This could help maintain the local agricultural economy.

There would be no adverse impacts to socioeconomic resources as a result of the Proposed Action.