

# RECLAMATION

*Managing Water in the West*

## **Draft FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

### **Temporary Transfer of Water from the Bella Vista Water District to Glide and Colusa County Water Districts in 2013**

**FONSI 13-10-NCAO**

Recommended by:

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Paul Zedonis  
Natural Resource Specialist  
Environmental and Natural Resources Division  
Northern California Area Office

Concurred by:

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rich Robertson  
Supervisory Repayment Specialist  
Water and Lands Division Chief  
Northern California Area Office

Concurred by:

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Don Reck  
Supervisory Natural Resource Specialist  
Environmental and Natural Resources Division Chief  
Northern California Area Office

Approved by:

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Brian Person  
Area Manager  
Northern California Area Office





# **Introduction**

In accordance with Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, the Northern California Area Office of the Bureau of Reclamation, has determined that an environmental impact statement is not required for the temporary transfer of up to 8,000 acre-feet (AF) of water from the Bella Vista Water District (BVWD) to Glide and Colusa County Water District's served by the Tehama Colusa Canal (TCC). This Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is supported by Reclamation's Environmental Assessment (EA) Number EA-13-10-NCAO, Temporary Transfer of Water from the Bella Vista Water District to Glide and Colusa County Water Districts in 2013, Mid-Pacific Region, which is incorporated by reference and attached.

# **Background**

The Bureau of Reclamation proposes to approve a 1-year transfer of up to 3,000 acre-feet (AF) of Central Valley Project (Project) water from the Bella Vista Water District (BVWD) to the Glide Water District (GWD) and up to 5,000 AF of Project water from BVWD to Colusa County Water District (CCWD) for a total of 8,000 AF. The source of the transfer water is a contractual entitlement under a Central Valley Project (Project) water service contract between Reclamation and BVWD. The GWD and CCWD are Project water service contractors in the same area of origin as BVWD, and therefore the transfers will be conducted in accordance with Section 3405(a)(1)(M) of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act. The water to be transferred will be provided by the BVWD and conveyed to GWD, located in Glenn County, and CCWD, located in Colusa and Yolo counties, via the Tehama-Colusa Canal (TCC).

The request from BVWD for transfer of Project water stems from the reduced rainfall during the winter and spring that resulted in reduced Project water allocations for agricultural use. Reclamation's April 2013 press release announced that north of the delta allocations are 100 percent for municipal and industrial (M&I) customers and 75 percent for agriculture. This quantity of water is insufficient to meet current year irrigation requirements.

# **Alternatives Including Proposed Action**

## **No Action Alternative**

The No Action Alternative would consist of Reclamation not approving the transfer of Project water from BVWD to GWD and CCWD. GWD and CCWD would be required to operate within the confines of the available water supply under its water service contract, use groundwater, or acquire water from other willing sellers

## **Proposed Action**

The Proposed Action is approval of transfer of up to 8,000 AF of Project water from the BVWD to GWD and CCWD from August through October of 2013. This transfer water is a contractual

entitlement under the water service contract between Reclamation and BVWD (Contract# 14-06-200-851-A-LTR1). Accounting for allocation reductions for agricultural use in 2013, the quantity of water available to the BVWD for agriculture is 13,432 AF, of which 8,000 AF is considered for transfer. The GWD and CCWD are also Project contractors in the same area of origin as BVWD, and therefore the transfer would be conducted in accordance with Section 3405(a)(1)(M) of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act.

The Project water to be transferred would originate at Trinity Lake, be diverted through Carr Tunnel into Whiskeytown Reservoir, through Spring Creek and Keswick Powerplants into the Sacramento River until being diverted at the screened Red Bluff Pump Station into the TCC. Once in the TCC, the water would flow to diversions points of each receiving district.

As a condition of approval, the water subject to transfer would be for irrigation purposes for GWD and CCWD lands irrigated within the previous three years and not lead to land conversion. Additionally, this water would be conveyed through existing facilities with no new construction or modification to facilities.

## Findings

The attached EA describes the existing environmental resources in the Proposed Action area and evaluates the effects of the No Action and Proposed Action Alternatives on the resources. Effects on several environmental resources were examined and found to be absent or minor.

This FONSI is based on the following:

1. The transfer will not cause any notable change in the flow in the Sacramento River from Keswick Dam or below the point of diversion at the TCC at Red Bluff in comparison to what the flow would be in the absence of this action.
2. Water would be applied to existing agricultural land and would be conveyed through existing facilities, which would avoid any adverse effects on unique geological features such as wetlands, wild or scenic rivers, refuges, floodplains, rivers placed on the nationwide river inventory, or prime or unique farmlands.
3. Reclamation has determined that the Proposed Action would have no effect on federally threatened and endangered species or proposed or designated critical habitat because:
  - a. Conditions of approval maintain existing land use practices;
  - b. Water subject to transfer would be for irrigation purposes for lands irrigated within the previous 3 years and not lead to land conversion;
  - c. Transfer water would be conveyed through existing facilities with no new construction or modification to facilities; and

- d. The quantity of water transferred over the period of time considered would be through screened facilities and would be very small relative to the total flow in the Sacramento River.
4. No negative impacts to cultural resources are anticipated because no new or additional land would be placed under irrigation nor would new facilities be constructed. Therefore, no properties listed or eligible to be listed in the National Register of Historical Places would be affected by the transfer.
5. The transfer would not disproportionately affect minority or low-income populations and communities.
6. No Indian Trust Assets are served by the water to be transferred under the proposed action, and therefore no Indian Trust Assets would be affected.
7. The Proposed Action will not impact and/or prohibit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites
8. The proposed temporary transfer will not result in any adverse cumulative impacts.