SEA/FONSI Log Number: 07-117

SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
MADERA IRRIGATION DISTRICT PILOT RECHARGE AND RECOVERY PROJECT AT MADERA RANCH
Water 2025 Challenge Grant Program

South-Central California Area Office

Date: September 25, 2007

To:					
	Natural Resource Specialist	SCC 411	LM	L Myers	10/23/07
	Secretary	SCC 101	PE	P Escobar	10/25
	Acting Chief, Resource Division	SCC 400	LM	L Myers	10/23/07
	Deputy Area Manager	SCC 102	PE for WS	W Shipp	10/25/07
	Natural Resource Specialist	SCC 412	PE	P Clinton	10/26/07

Cost Authority Number: A10-1968-0006-MID-CA-7-E

From: Patti Clinton

Subject: Review and signing of FONSI

Please review the attached FONSI/SEA and route it according to the order on the list. When your review is finished, please date and initial this routing document, and sign on the first page of the FONSI if your name is listed. However, if you have comments or questions please contact the Environmental Team or the proponent of the action. When everyone has signed the FONSI, please return it to Patti Clinton.

Thank you.

Ready for Central Files 10/26/07

Copies to: MP-3730 (1 copy)
Project Proponent: D Woolley – SCC-418
RMD Files
E-Copy

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

MID-PACIFIC REGION

SOUTH-CENTRAL CALIFORNIA AREA OFFICE
FRESNO, CALIFORNIA

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
MADERA IRRIGATION DISTRICT PILOT RECHARGE AND RECOVERY PROJECT
AT MADERA RANCH

FONSI-07-117

Recommended by:

Patti Clinton Date: 10/23/07

Patti Clinton
Natural Resource Specialist
South Central California Area Office

Concurred by:

Laura Myers Date: 10/23/07

Laura Myers
Acting Resource Management Division Chief
South Central California Area Office

Approved by:

Will Shipp Date: 10/25/07

Will Shipp
Deputy Area Manager
South Central California Area Office

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
MADERA IRRIGATION DISTRICT PILOT RECHARGE AND RECOVERY PROJECT AT MADERA RANCH

In accordance with section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, the South-Central California Area Office of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), has determined that the approval of the Water 2025 challenge grant to approve funding for the Madera Irrigation District Pilot Recharge and Recovery Project is not a major federal action that will significantly affect the quality of the human environment and an environmental impact statement is not required. This Finding of No Significant Impact is supported by Reclamation's Draft Supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) Number SEA-117, *Supplemental Environmental Assessment, Madera irrigation District Pilot Recharge and Recovery Project at Madera Ranch,* and is hereby incorporated by reference.

BACKGROUND

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) proposes to award funding of a Water 2025 challenge grant towards the following features of the Madera Irrigation District Recharge and Recovery Project at Madera Ranch (Pilot Project):

- Administrative tasks for water delivery scheduling, project accounting, meetings and preparation of reports;
- MID board of directors meetings, meetings with the Madera Ranch Operations Committee, including meetings with the public and agencies providing project progress;
- Surface water delivery system operations;
- Operating and maintain monitoring and recovery wells;
- Power costs for recovery wells;
- Vehicle and transportation costs associated with operations and meetings; and
- Water procurement costs.

FINDINGS

Surface Water Resources: Under the Proposed Action, Reclamation will award partial funding of the 2025 Water Grant which will help in the furtherance of the Pilot Project. This will assist MID in preparing a more complete data base of the Pilot Project.

Groundwater Resources: The Pilot Project was previously approved by Reclamation. Award of Grant funding to be allocated in furtherance of the Pilot Project will have no impact to groundwater resources.

Land Use: The Proposed Action will not change land use conditions from existing conditions.

Biological Resources: Award of Grant funding for the Pilot Project will have no impacts on special-status plants, fish or wildlife resources.

Cultural Resources: Award of a Grant for the Pilot Project is not the type of activity with the potential to impact cultural resources eligible to the National Register of Historic Places.

Indian Trust Assets: There are no Indian Trust Assets affected by this action. This action will have no adverse impacts on Indian trust assets.

Socioeconomic Resources: Award of the Grant will not induce population growth, nor will seasonal labor requirements change. No adverse impacts to public health and safety will occur.

Environmental Justice: No impacts relevant to Environmental Justice are anticipated because the proposed action does not include any construction or development, or any change in operations that will affect the general public.

Cumulative Impacts: The award of 2025 Water Grant funding to support the Pilot Project will not adversely affect surface and groundwater resources. It will not change land use. Award will not adversely affect special-status plants, fish or wildlife resources. It will not adversely affect cultural resources, ITAs, socioeconomic resources, or environmental justice.

Approval will not have highly controversial or uncertain environmental effects or involve unique or unknown risks. Impacts associated with the proposed action are minor, short-term, localized and temporary in nature; therefore, there are no significant cumulative impacts associated with this project.

RECLAMATION
Managing Water in the West

Supplemental Environmental Assessment

Madera Irrigation District Pilot Recharge and Recovery Project at Madera Ranch

SEA-07-117

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Mid Pacific Region
South Central California Area Office
Fresno, California

September 2007

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List of Acronyms, Abbreviations, and Definition of Terms

af/y	acre-feet per year
EA	Environmental Assessment
FWCA	Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act
Grant	Water 2025 Challenge Grant
ITAs	Indian Trust Assets
MID	Madera Irrigation District
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
Pilot Project	Madera Irrigation District Pilot Recharge and Recovery Project at Madera Ranch
Ranch	Madera Ranch
Reclamation	Bureau of Reclamation

Section 1 Purpose and Need for Action

1.1 Background

In February 2007, Madera Irrigation District (MID) requested approval to use up to 11,000 acre-feet per year (af/y) of their Friant Unit Central Valley Project (CVP) contract supply for a pilot groundwater recharge and recovery project in which the water would be used to recharge the groundwater outside the MID service area in an area known as Madera Ranch. As a result of the request, Reclamation prepared an environmental assessment (EA), *Madera Irrigation District Pilot Recharge and Recovery Project at Madera Ranch* (Pilot Project), dated February 8, 2007 and signed a Finding of No Significant Impact on February 28, 2007.

Additionally, MID submitted a grant application for a Water 2025 Challenge Grant in May 2006 in order to receive funding for the pilot project as well as other preliminary data collection needs for their larger Water Supply Enhancement project. However, the grant was not approved until mid 2007 after the pilot project had already begun. The only federal action analyzed in the EA was Reclamation's approval to allow water to be used outside the district's service area boundary. Therefore, the federal action of providing partial funding of the pilot project was not analyzed in the EA.

1.2 Purpose and Need

Reclamation proposes to award a Water 2025 Challenge grant to MID for their Pilot Recharge and Recovery Project at Madera Ranch. As stated earlier, the Pilot Project was analyzed in a previous EA. The purpose of the SEA is the award of the Grant to continue on with the Pilot Project. As previously mentioned, the Pilot Project was approved February 2007; MID has funded most of that effort. Under the grant proposal, the funding would be used to accomplish parts of the Pilot Project that remain to be completed and were included in the original request to Reclamation (e.g., water quality data needs). Generally, the funding would support water procurement costs, power usage costs and labor cost associated with the manual operation and monitoring of the Pilot Project. MID needs this funding to progress with the Pilot Project activities.

1.3 Potential Issues

- Surface Water Resources
- Groundwater Resources
- Land Use
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Indian Trust Assets
- Socioeconomic Resources
- Environmental Justice

Section 2 Alternatives Including Proposed Action

2.1 Alternative A – No Action

Reclamation would not award funding from a Water 2025 challenge grant to support the Pilot Project. MID would continue to look into other funding programs to help support as much of the total needs of the Pilot Project as possible. Due to permits and processes required, the Pilot Project would proceed as planned, with or without additional funding.

2.2 Alternative B - Proposed Action

Reclamation proposes to award funding from a Water 2025 challenge grant towards the following features of the Pilot Project:

- Administrative tasks for water delivery scheduling, project accounting, meetings and preparation of reports;
- MID board of directors meetings, Madera Ranch Operations Committee, including meetings with the public and agencies providing project progress;
- Surface water delivery system operations (procurement, diversion and flow monitoring of Friant water into the pilot area, followed later by the operation, maintenance and flow monitoring of the existing irrigation wells for recovery of banked water.);
- Operating and maintain existing monitoring and recovery wells;
- Power costs for existing recovery wells;
- Vehicle and transportation costs associated with operations and meetings; and
- Water procurement costs.

Section 3 Affected Environment & Environmental Consequences

3.1 Affected Environment

The affected environment for the No Action and Proposed Action alternatives is the same as identified in the February 2007 EA and is hereby incorporated by reference.

3.2 Environmental Consequences

3.2.1 Surface Water Resources

No Action
Under the No Action alternative, Reclamation would not approve of Grant funding for the furtherance of the Pilot Project. Surface water resources would be the same as the existing conditions as described in the February 2007 EA.

Proposed Action
Under the Proposed Action, Reclamation would approve partial funding of the 2025 Water Grant which would help in the furtherance of the Pilot Project. This would assist MID in preparing a more complete data base of the Pilot Project.

Cumulative Effects
Approval of funding for the Pilot Project has no cumulative impacts to surface water resources.

3.2.2 Groundwater Resources

No Action
Under the No Action alternative, Reclamation would not approve of Grant funding for the furtherance of the Pilot Project. Groundwater resources would be the same as the existing conditions as described in the February 2007 EA.

Proposed Action
The Pilot Project was previously approved by Reclamation. Award of Grant funding allocated in furtherance of the Pilot Project would have no impacts to groundwater resources. Award of Grant funding would not alter the Pilot Project groundwater resources.

Cumulative Effects
Approval of Grant funding would not contribute to cumulative impacts associated with the Pilot Project.

3.2.3 Land use

No Action
Under the No Action alternative, Reclamation would not approve of Pilot Project Grant funding. Land use would be the same as the existing conditions as described in the February 2007 EA.

Proposed Action
The Proposed Action would not change land use conditions from existing conditions. Award of Grant funding would not alter the Pilot Project land use.

Cumulative Effects
As land use conditions would not change from existing conditions, there are no cumulative effects. Approval of the funding would assist MID with going forward with the Pilot Project.

3.2.4 Biological Resources

No Action
MID would continue with Pilot Project activities but would not receive Grant funding towards those activities.

Proposed Action
Approval of Grant funding for the Pilot Project would have no impacts on special-status plants, fish or wildlife resources.

Cumulative Effects
Grant funding would not contribute to cumulative impacts on biological resources.

3.2.5 Cultural Resources

No Action
Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no impacts to cultural resources as no modifications to existing facilities and no new facilities would be constructed. There would be no potential to affect historic properties.

Proposed Action
In February 2007, Reclamation reviewed the EA and concurred that the activities associated with a pilot groundwater recharge and recovery project in which the water would be used to recharge the groundwater outside the MID service area in an area known as Madera Ranch would have no potential to affect historic properties.

Given the previous review and administrative nature of the proposed action, Reclamation concludes that the proposed action has no potential to affect historic properties pursuant to 36 CFR 800.3(a)(1). Therefore, no additional consideration under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act is required.

Cumulative Effects
As the Proposed Action does not have the potential to impact cultural resources eligible to the NRHP, approval of the Grant would not contribute to cumulative effects.

3.2.6 Indian Trust Assets

No Action
Conditions would remain the same as existing conditions under the No Action Alternative; therefore, there would be no impacts to Indian Trust Assets (ITAs).

Proposed Action
There are no Indian Trust Assets affected by this action. This action would have no adverse impacts on Indian Trust Assets.

Cumulative Effects
The Proposed Action when added with other past, present, and future actions would not contribute to cumulative effects to ITAs.

3.2.7 Socioeconomic Resources

No Action
Socioeconomic conditions under this alternative would not change. No additional impacts are associated with this alternative.

Proposed Action
Award of the Grant would not induce population growth, nor would seasonal labor requirements change. No adverse impacts to public health and safety would occur.

Cumulative Effects
As the Proposed Action does not have the potential to impact socioeconomic resources, award of the Grant would not contribute to cumulative effects.

3.2.8 Environmental Justice

No Action
The No Action Alternative would have no impact on environmental justice.

Proposed Action
The Proposed Action would not disproportionately impact economically disadvantaged or minority populations. No impacts relevant to Environmental Justice are anticipated because the proposed action does not include any construction or development, or any change in operations that would affect the general public.

Cumulative Effects
The award of the Grant would not have cumulative effects on minority or disadvantaged populations in conjunction with other activities.

Section 4 Consultation and Coordination

While no impacts to endangered species or to historic/cultural resources have been indicated by the Proposed Action, consultation and coordination was conducted with the agencies and mandates considered below.

4.1 Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 USC . 651 et seq.)

The Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (FWCA) requires that Reclamation consult with fish and wildlife agencies (federal and state) on all water development projects that could affect

biological resources. The Proposed Action does not involve construction or diversions of water. No consultation is required.

4.2 Endangered Species Act (16 USC. 1521 et seq.)

Section 7 of this Act requires Federal agencies to ensure that all federally associated activities within the United States do not jeopardize the continued existence of threatened or endangered species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of the critical habitat of these species. Action agencies must consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which maintains current lists of species that have been designated as threatened or endangered, to determine the potential impacts a project may have on protected species.

Reclamation determined that the Proposed Action would have no affect on federally proposed or listed threatened and endangered species or their proposed or designated critical habitat. No further consultation is required under Section of the Endangered Species Act.

4.3 National Historic Preservation Act (15 USC 470 et seq.)

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires federal agencies to evaluate the effects of federal undertakings on historical, archaeological and cultural resources. Due to the nature of the Proposed Action, there would be no impacts to any historical, archaeological or cultural resources, and no further compliance actions are required.

Section 6 List of Preparers and Reviewers

Patti Clinton, Natural Resource Specialist, SCCAO
Laura Myers, Natural Resource Specialist, SCCAO
Shauna McDonald, Wildlife Biologist, SCCAO
Tamara LaFramboise, Natural Resource Specialist, MP Region
Amy Barnes -Archaeologist – Mid Pacific Region
Patricia Rivera, Indian Trust Representative, Mid Pacific Region

Section 7 References

Reclamation. 2006. *Madera Irrigation District Appraisal Study, Final Water Supply Enhancement Project*. November 2006

From: Patricia Rivera
To: Clinton, Patricia
Date: 9/28/2007 4:24:34 PM
Subject: SEA-07-117

I have reviewed the proposed action for a supplemental environmental assessment for the Madera Irrigation District Pilot Recharge and Recover Project at Madera Ranch. The proposal is to approve funding of a Water 2025 challenge grant towards the Pilot Project.

I concur the proposed action does not affect Indian Trust Assets. The nearest ITA to the proposed site is approximately 28 miles ENE and it the Table Mountain Rancheria.

Patricia

From: Adam Nickels
To: Clinton, Patricia
Date: 9/26/2007 2:38:15 PM
Subject: Re: Draft Supplemental EA-07-117 MID Pilot Project

Patti,

Your project has been logged as 07-SCAO-412 in our project Tracking database. We appear to have worked on a similar EA earlier this year under tracking No. 07-MPRO-092. Amy was the lead on that Project so I have put her name as the contact for this project. She will get to it as soon as she can.

Adam

>>> Patricia Clinton 9/26/2007 10:41 AM >>>
Cost Authority: A10-1968-0006-MID-CA-7-E

Good morning,

Attached is the subject SEA for your review and concurrence.

Thank you.

Patti Clinton
Natural Resources Specialist
South-Central California Area Office
Bureau of Reclamation
1243 'N' Street
Fresno, CA 93721
(559) 487-5127

From: Amy Barnes
To: Clinton, Patricia
Date: 9/27/2007 1:42:06 PM
Subject: EA-07-117 MID Pilot Recharge and Recovery Program at Madera Ranch (07-SCAO-412)

Tracking #07-SCAO-412

Project: EA-07-117 MID Pilot Recharge and Recovery Program at Madera Ranch

Location: Madera County.
Township 13 South, Range 15 East, Sections 14, 15, 16, 21, 22.

In February 2007, Reclamation reviewed the EA and concurred that the activities associated with a pilot groundwater recharge and recovery project in which the water would be used to recharge the groundwater outside the MID service area in an area known as Madera Ranch will have no potential to affect historic properties. This concurrence is attached for your convenience. The supplement EA prepared for this project additionally analyzes Reclamations' proposed expenditure of funds.

Given the previous review and administrative nature of the proposed action, Reclamation concludes that the proposed action has no potential to affect historic properties pursuant to 36 CFR 800.3(a)(1). Therefore, no additional consideration under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act is required.

Thank you for the opportunity to review the proposed action. Please place a copy of this concurrence with the EA.

Amy J. Barnes
Archaeologist
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Mid-Pacific Region
2800 Cottage Way, MP-153
Sacramento, CA 95825
916-978-5047
abarnes@mp.usbr.gov

From: Amy Barnes
To: LAFRAMBOISE, Tamara
Date: 2/1/2007 2:44:17 PM
Subject: MID Pilot Recharge and Recovery Program at Madera Ranch (07-MPRO-092)

Tracking #07-MPRO-092

Project: Madera Irrigation District (MID) Pilot Recharge and Recovery Program at Madera Ranch

Location: Madera County. Township 13 South, Range 15 East, Sections 14, 15, 16, 21, 22.

Reclamation proposes to approve MIDs' use of their 2006-2009 Central Valley Project (CVP) Friant water allocations to provide data on recharge rates in the area, the ground water aquifer, and its suitability for future recharge and banking operations. The proposed pilot project is being administered by the Madera Irrigation District, but requires Reclamations' approval for the recharge of CVP water outside MIDs' service area based on contractual requirements, in compliance with State and Federal law.

MID has been conducting this pilot project for the last two years to recharge surface water beneath the property known as Madera Ranch. Results of the project will be used to determine the suitability of the Madera Ranch for MIDs' long term and larger Water Supply Enhancement Project. CVP water will be conveyed through existing facilities. No new construction will be required. MID will continue to release water for recharge via the existing natural upland drainage and a portion of the Gravelly Ford Canal only to the extent that the landscape is already inundated. For these reasons, Reclamation concludes that the use of CVP water for this pilot recharge study has no potential to affect historic properties.

As the proposed action has no potential to affect historic properties, no additional consideration under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act is required.

Thank you for the opportunity to review the proposed action. Please place a copy of this concurrence in your project file.

Amy J. Barnes
Archaeologist
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
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Sacramento, CA 95825
916-978-5047
abarnes@mp.usbr.gov

CC: mp153; Robles, John; Slavin, Tracy