United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
Mid-Pacific Regional Office
2800 Cottage Way
Sacramento, California 95825-1898

IN REPLY
REFER TO:
MP-700
PRJ-3.00

Interested Parties

Subject: Notice of Initiation of Federal Feasibility Studies

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen:

This letter is to inform you that the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), has initiated Federal Feasibility Studies for the following: (1) North of Delta Offstream Storage, (2) Los Vaqueros Expansion, and (3) Upper San Joaquin River Basin Storage Investigation. Authority for these Federal Feasibility Studies was provided in the Omnibus Appropriations Act of 2003 (Public Law 108-7).

Background
The CALFED Bay-Delta Program began in 1995 to address the complex issues that surround the San Francisco Bay-Delta. The CALFED Program is a cooperative, interagency effort of 24 State and Federal agencies that have management or regulatory responsibilities in the Bay-Delta. The CALFED Program produced a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report and, in August 2000, CALFED agencies signed a Record of Decision (ROD). The ROD recognized that expanding water storage capacity was critical to the successful implementation of all aspects of the CALFED Program. The ROD identified five surface storage projects to be pursued during the first stage of the CALFED Program. Reclamation received feasibility study authority for three of those projects as identified below.

Feasibility Studies
North of Delta Offstream Storage. As described in the CALFED ROD and Public Law 108-7, up to 1.9 million acre-feet of offstream storage at the proposed Sites Reservoir or other locations in the Sacramento Valley is being investigated. The proposed project would work with other projects in a balanced manner to enhance water management flexibility, increase the reliability of supplies, reduce diversions on the Sacramento River during critical fish migration periods, and provide storage and operational benefits to other CALFED programs including Delta water quality and the Environmental Water Account.

Los Vaqueros Expansion. As described in the CALFED ROD, Los Vaqueros Reservoir could be expanded by up to 400 thousand acre-feet to improve Bay Area water quality and water supply reliability. As an existing reservoir operated by the Contra Costa Water District (CCWD), the Los Vaqueros Reservoir is subject to a number of mandates and agreements. The California

Department of Water Resources and Reclamation are working with CCWD and interested stakeholders to assure that previous commitments, including local voter approval required for expansion are respected. A vote on whether or not to proceed with raising the existing dam is scheduled for March 2004. In order to respect the CCWD principle calling for a vote, environmental compliance that is to follow the existing studies will not be pursued unless CCWD receives positive feedback from its customers.

Upper San Joaquin River Basin Storage Investigation. As described in the CALFED ROD, an additional 250 to 700 thousand acre-feet of storage in the upper San Joaquin River watershed, through enlargement of Millerton Lake at Friant Dam or a functionally equivalent storage program, could be designed to contribute to restoration of and improve water quality for the San Joaquin River. This project would also facilitate conjunctive management and water exchanges that improve water quality of deliveries to urban communities. Other benefits would include increased hydropower production and flood control.

If you have any questions on the above information, please contact us at 916-978-5060, TDD 916-978-5608.

Sincerely,

Alan R Candlish

Alan Candlish
Regional Planning Officer