



# United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF RECLAMATION  
Phoenix Area Office  
6150 West Thunderbird Road  
Glendale, AZ 85306-4001

IN REPLY REFER TO:  
PXAO-1500  
2.1.4.17

VIA ELECTRONIC AND U.S. MAIL

Subject: Notice of Public Scoping for an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the Verde Reservoirs Sediment Mitigation Project (VRSMP) - PXAO-25-2-NOI (Comments due by August 13, 2025)

Dear Interested Party:

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) is leading the preparation of an EIS under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA; Public Law [Pub. L.] 91-190; 42 United States Code [U.S.C.] §§ 4321 et seq.) for the VRSMP in Maricopa and Yavapai Counties, Arizona (Figure 1). The VRSMP is a Feasibility Study authorized by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Pub. L. 117-58, Section 40902(a)(1)(B)(i). Reclamation, in coordination with the Salt River Project Agricultural Improvement and Power District and the Salt River Valley Water Users' Association (collectively SRP) as the lead non-federal cost-share partner, is preparing a Feasibility Report for the VRSMP, and the EIS will be included with the Feasibility Report. Reclamation is the lead Federal Agency and the United States (U.S.) Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Forest Service (USFS) are cooperating agencies.

In December 2021, Reclamation, in partnership with SRP, as the non-Federal cost-share partner and project sponsor, completed the [Verde Reservoirs Sediment Mitigation Study](#) (VRSMS) appraisal report. The objective of the VRSMS was to examine potential alternatives to resolve the issue of lost storage capacity at Horseshoe Dam and Reservoir due to sediment accumulation. The VRSMS also assessed opportunities to create additional benefits for each alternative analyzed. The appraisal report recommended that a feasibility study be carried out to determine the technical, environmental, economic, and financial feasibility of implementing one of the Bartlett Dam modification alternatives analyzed in the VRSMS.

The VRSMP will investigate and analyze potential activities to restore lost capacity from sedimentation at Horseshoe Reservoir and mitigate reservoir sediment accumulation while addressing future water supply resiliency through increased surface water yield from the Salt River Federal Reclamation Project's Verde River reservoir system, which consists of Bartlett and Horseshoe Dams and Reservoirs. Preliminary alternatives include (a) two Bartlett Dam modification alternatives identified as viable for feasibility-level analysis in the VRSMS; (b) at least one non-structural alternative; (c) a no action alternative; and (d) other alternatives developed through the NEPA process. The USFS would issue and/or modify Special Use Permits under the preliminary proposed alternatives, along with potentially amending the Tonto National Forest's Land and Resource Management Plan. Additionally, some Preliminary Proposed Alternatives require authorization from the USACE under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344) for the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S. For more information on the alternatives, please visit <https://www.virtualpublicmeeting.com/vrsmp-fr-eis>.

Reclamation is seeking public comments to identify significant issues, or effects to be addressed in the EIS and to identify information, studies, or analyses relevant to the ongoing development of action

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INTERIOR REGION 8 • LOWER COLORADO BASIN

ARIZONA, CALIFORNIA\*, NEVADA\*

\* PARTIAL

alternatives. The scoping period will be open from July 14 to August 13, 2025. Comments must be submitted by August 13, 2025.

Reclamation will host three in-person, open house scoping meetings and two virtual scoping meetings:

- Monday, July 28, 2025: 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., Virtual, see project website for registration details
- Tuesday, July 29, 2025: 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., Fountain Hills Community Center, Fountain Hills, Arizona
- Wednesday, July 30, 2025: 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., Escalante Multi-Generational Center, Tempe, Arizona
- Thursday, July 31, 2025: 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., Carefree Hampton Inn, Carefree, Arizona
- Friday, August 1, 2025: 12 p.m. to 2 p.m., Virtual, see project website for registration details

In addition to the scheduled meetings, the virtual public meeting website will also be accessible 24 hours a day to provide project information and allow visitors to submit comments. The VRSMP project website is <https://www.virtualpublicmeeting.com/vrsmp-fr-eis>. Comments may be submitted by mail, through the project website, or by email at [VRSMP@usbr.gov](mailto:VRSMP@usbr.gov). Written comments may be sent to Phoenix Area Office, Bureau of Reclamation, (ATTN: VRSMP EIS), 6150 West Thunderbird Road Glendale, Arizona 85306-4001.

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available. While you may request to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Questions regarding commenting can be sent to [VRSMP@usbr.gov](mailto:VRSMP@usbr.gov). Additional project information is available at <https://www.usbr.gov/lc/phoenix/programs/VRSMP.html>. If you are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability, please dial 7-1-1 to access telecommunications relay services.

Sincerely,

Acting  
For Alexander B. Smith,  
Area Manager



Figure 1. Project Vicinity.