

# Summary of Scoping Comments

*for:*

**Draft Environmental Impact Statement/  
Environmental Impact Report  
Joint Operations Center Relocation Project, California**

*Prepared by:*



**Lead Agencies  
U.S. Department of the Interior,  
Bureau of Reclamation, Mid-Pacific Region  
and the  
California Department of Water Resources**



# Summary

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), California Department of Water Resources (DWR), and National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service (NWS) propose to relocate their joint operations center (JOC) from the interim existing facility near Watt Avenue in 2015. The relocation would allow the agencies to address essential service requirements, safety and physical security requirements, and future expansion space requirements that cannot be met at the existing facility. Two locations are being considered: a Reclamation-owned property near Nimbus Fish Hatchery and a representative commercial site on Kilgore Road near Sunrise Boulevard (which, if selected, would require an open bidding process to identify a specific site). A no-action alternative is also being evaluated.

Two design options are being evaluated at the Nimbus Site: (1) a "campus-style" layout option with two two-story buildings (to house up to 600 Reclamation and DWR/NWS employees) and two one-story buildings (for Reclamation's and DWR's Project Operations Centers and DWR's Flood Operation Center), and (2) a three-story layout option with one three-story building and two one-story buildings. At the Kilgore Site, only the campus-style option is being evaluated.

Reclamation and DWR are preparing an environmental impact statement/environmental impact report (EIS/EIR) in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The EIS/EIR will describe the potentially significant and significant environmental impacts of the JOC relocation project. The full range of environmental issues will be addressed. Mitigation measures will be recommended wherever feasible to reduce potentially significant impacts.

Four types of public involvement are being conducted for the JOC EIS/EIR:

- ▶ public scoping before NEPA/CEQA analysis to determine the scope of issues and alternatives to be addressed in the EIS/EIR;
- ▶ public outreach via a project Web site, news releases, and newspaper advertisements;
- ▶ collaboration with Federal, State, local, and tribal governments; and
- ▶ public review and comment on the draft alternatives developed to frame the analysis of the EIS/EIR evaluation and on the draft EIS/EIR, which analyzes likely environmental effects and identifies the preferred alternative.

This report documents the results of the public scoping process and information received to date through government collaboration and public outreach.

## Public Scoping Activities

Scoping allows agencies, stakeholders, and interested parties to identify or suggest resources to be evaluated, issues that may require environmental review, reasonable alternatives to consider, and potential mitigation (ways to reduce or avoid environmental impacts) if significant adverse effects are identified. Scoping also allows Reclamation and DWR to clearly set the parameters of the environmental review process by determining which issues will be addressed in the environmental documentation and by providing a rationale for those determinations. Lastly, scoping provides decision makers with insight into the analyses that the public believes should be considered as part of the EIS/EIR process. The formal public scoping process for the JOC EIS/EIR began on January 19, 2011, with the publication of the notice of intent (NOI) in the *Federal Register* and a press release announcing the notice of preparation (NOP) published in the *Sacramento Bee*. The NOI and NOP initiated the public scoping process and notified the public of the agencies' (Reclamation and DWR) intent to develop an EIS/EIR for the JOC relocation project.

The public was notified of the scoping meetings by several media. The project Web site at <http://www.usbr.gov/mp/cvo/joc.html> provided information about the project through a project timeline, maps and photographs of the planning area, copies of public information documents (e.g., NOI, NOP, fact sheet), and press releases. The Web site also posted information about the scoping meetings and contact information for providing written or oral comments. Reclamation and DWR provided notice of the meetings in the *Sacramento Bee* and published a notice in the on-line events calendar of the *Rancho Cordova Post*. The agencies also sent postcards to residents of the Classics at Gold River and The Bluffs subdivisions adjacent to or overlooking the Nimbus Site.

Two public meetings were held on February 3, 2011, at the Sacramento State Aquatic Center. Fifty-one people attended these meetings, which are described in greater detail below. Attendees were encouraged to provide written comments, either on flipcharts or on comment forms provided at the meetings.

Separate presentations were provided at meetings of the Classics at Gold River and The Bluffs Home Owners Associations at their request.

## Public Scoping Results

Written comments were submitted by 99 commenters as of March 4, 2011, including 12 agencies and organizations. Each submittal was read and categorized by the issues and concerns raised. All comments will be considered to formulate alternatives and prepare the draft EIS/EIR for the project.

## Issue Summary

Most comments focused the site selection process and criteria, traffic, visual resources, biological resources, and recreation. Section 3 contains a summary of the issues identified in those comments.

## Future Steps

Reclamation and DWR will use the scoping report to evaluate the issues raised by the public and agencies and to ensure that all relevant topics are evaluated in the draft EIS/EIR. Although Reclamation and DWR welcome public input at any time during the planning process, the next official public comment period will begin when the draft EIS/EIR is published, which is anticipated to be in June 2011. Further opportunity to comment on the proposed project will occur at that time, with a 60-day public review period and two public meetings, as well as opportunities to provide written comments. Release dates and comment periods will be published in the *Sacramento Bee* and displayed on the project Web site. Availability of the draft EIS/EIR and draft alternatives will also be published in the *Federal Register*, along with meeting schedules.

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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DWR	California Department of Water Resources
EIS/EIR	environmental impact statement/environmental impact report
HOA	Home Owner Association
JOC	joint operations center
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NOI	notice of intent
NOP	notice of preparation
NWS	National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service
Reclamation	Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation

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# 1.0 Introduction

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), California Department of Water Resources (DWR), and National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service (NWS) propose to relocate their joint operations center (JOC) from the existing interim facility near Watt Avenue in 2015. The relocation would allow the agencies to address essential service requirements, safety and physical security requirements, and future expansion space requirements that cannot be met at the existing facility. Two locations are being considered: a Reclamation-owned property near Nimbus Fish Hatchery and a representative commercial site on Kilgore Road near Sunrise Boulevard (which, if selected, would require an open bidding process to identify a specific site). A no-action alternative will also be evaluated.

Two design options are being evaluated at the Nimbus Site: (1) a "campus-style" layout option with two two-story buildings (to house up to 600 Reclamation and DWR/NWS employees) and two one-story buildings (for Reclamation's and DWR's Project Operations Centers and DWR's Flood Operation Center), and (2) a three-story layout option with one three-story building and two one-story buildings. At the Kilgore Site, only the campus-style option is being evaluated. Reclamation and DWR are preparing an environmental impact statement/environmental impact report (EIS/EIR) in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The EIS/EIR will describe the potentially significant and significant environmental impacts of the JOC project. The full range of environmental issues will be addressed. Mitigation measures will be recommended wherever feasible to reduce potentially significant impacts.

## 1.1 Overview of the National Environmental Policy Act, California Environmental Quality Act, and Public Involvement Process

Under NEPA (Public Law 91-190, 1969) and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations for implementing NEPA, Federal agencies must consider the environmental impacts of their proposed actions before taking action. Actions that are subject to NEPA include those involving Federal funding or requiring Federal permits, those involving Federal facilities and equipment, or those affecting Federal employees. The actions that Reclamation and DWR would propose as part of the EIS/EIR are subject to the requirements of NEPA and CEQA. Pursuant to NEPA and CEQA, the lead agencies will fulfill the requirements of an EIS and EIR with an integrated EIS/EIR document for the JOC relocation project.

Public involvement is a component of NEPA, which requires that Federal agencies involve the public in the decision making process while considering environmental factors. Guidance for implementing public involvement is codified in 40 Code of Federal

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Regulations (CFR) Section 1501, Part 7 (40 CFR 1501.7), thereby ensuring that Federal agencies make a diligent effort to involve the public in preparing NEPA documents.

Four types of public involvement are being conducted for the JOC EIS/EIR:

- ▶ public scoping before NEPA/CEQA analysis to determine the scope of issues and alternatives to be addressed in the EIS/EIR;
- ▶ public outreach via a project Web site, news releases, and newspaper advertisements;
- ▶ collaboration with Federal, State, local, and tribal governments; and
- ▶ public review and comment on the draft alternatives developed to frame the analysis of the EIS/EIR evaluation and on the draft EIS/EIR, which analyzes likely environmental effects and identifies the preferred alternative.

This report documents the results of the public scoping process and information received to date through government collaboration and public outreach.

Scoping is a process designed to determine the scope of issues and alternatives to be addressed in a NEPA document. Under CEQA, scoping is not required (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15082[c]), but is still considered to be a useful tool in identifying and developing alternatives, mitigation, and significant effects associated with a proposed project (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15083).

The scoping process has two components: internal scoping and external scoping. Internal scoping is conducted within an agency or with cooperating agencies to determine preliminary and anticipated issues and concerns. Internal scoping meetings were held with an interdisciplinary team of Reclamation and DWR resource specialists to identify the anticipated planning issues and the methods, procedures, and data to be used in compiling the EIS/EIR. These data were compiled into a list of potential issues and constituted the first attempt to identify the issues that Reclamation and DWR may address in this EIS/EIR.

External scoping is “an early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed and for identifying the significant issues related to a proposed action” (Reclamation 2003). The public process is designed to determine and frame the scope of issues and alternatives to be addressed in a NEPA document. External scoping helps ensure that issues are identified early and that they are studied, that the project is focused on the most important issues, and that the proposed action and alternatives are balanced, thorough, and can be implemented.

The purpose of this report is to review and summarize written comments received from the public during the official scoping period (January 19, 2011, through March 4, 2011). These issues will be considered during the planning process to develop the proposed action and alternatives. Issues include concerns, needs, and resource use, development, and protection opportunities to consider when preparing the EIS/EIR.

## 1.2 Purpose of and Need for the EIS/EIR

The purpose of the EIS/EIR is to evaluate the potential significant environmental impacts of the project. The EIS/EIR will be used to support Reclamation and DWR's decisions regarding whether to approve the project. After deciding whether to approve the project, Reclamation will issue a record of decision in fall 2011. Also in fall 2011 DWR will consider whether to certify the EIR and approve the project. These decisions will be based on numerous factors, including the potential environmental impacts and mitigation measures addressed in the EIS/EIR, permitting requirements, and implementation schedule.

The EIS/EIR may also be used by NEPA cooperating agencies and CEQA responsible agencies and trustee agencies to ensure that these agencies have met the requirements of NEPA and CEQA before deciding whether to issue discretionary permits over which they have authority. The EIS/EIR may also be used by other Federal, State, regional, and local agencies that may have an interest in resources that could be affected by the project.

## 1.3 Description of the Scoping Process

Reclamation and DWR follow the public involvement requirements according to the CEQ regulations set forth in 40 CFR 1501.7, which states, "there should be an early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed and for identifying the process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed during the planning process." Reclamation and DWR request comments from agencies and the public, organize and analyze all of the comments received, and then review the comments to identify issues to address during the planning process. These issues, and issues identified by Reclamation, DWR, and NWS staff, are the scope of analysis for the EIS/EIR and are used to develop the project alternatives.

### 1.3.1 Notice of Intent

The formal public scoping process for the JOC relocation EIS/EIR began on January 19, 2011, with the publication of the notice of intent (NOI) in the *Federal Register* and a press release announcing the notice of preparation (NOP) in the *Sacramento Bee*. The NOI and NOP initiated the public scoping process and notified the public of Reclamation and DWR's intent to develop an EIS/EIR for the JOC relocation project. Under CEQ regulations, the public comment period must last for at least 30 days, but Reclamation extended this public comment period until March 4, 2011, providing 45 days. After the formal comment period ended, Reclamation will continue to consider all comments received during the environmental review process. The NOI and NOP were provided for public consideration at the two scoping meetings and were posted on the project Web site.

### 1.3.2 Project Web Site

The project Web site at <http://www.usbr.gov/mp/cvo/joc.html> provides information about the project through a project timeline, maps and photos of the planning area, copies of public information documents (e.g., NOI, NOP, fact sheet), and news articles. The Web

site also posts information about the scoping meetings and contact information for providing written or oral comments.

### **1.3.3 News Release and Newspaper Advertisement**

A legal notice was published in the *Sacramento Bee*, which notified the public of the project, announced the public meetings, requested public comments, and provided contact information. A news release also was issued to various media on January 31, 2011, to inform the public of the extended comment period. Information about the scoping meetings was posted in the on-line events calendar of the *Rancho Cordova Post*.

### **1.3.4 Scoping Meetings**

On February 3, 2011, from 2 to 4 p.m. and from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., public meetings were held at the Sacramento State Aquatics Center on 1901 Hazel Avenue. As described above, the meetings were advertised in local media. Additionally, a postcard advertising the meetings was mailed to residents of The Classics at Gold River and The Bluffs.

Scoping meetings were conducted in an open house format. Project team members from Reclamation and its consultants staffed informational work stations and interacted with meeting participants to provide information and to answer questions. An open house format was chosen over the more formal public meeting format to encourage broader participation, to allow attendees to learn about the project at their own pace, and to enable people to ask questions of Reclamation representatives in an informal, one-on-one setting. Fact sheets, comment forms, and copies of the NOI and NOP were provided. Site and resource maps were displayed illustrating the current conditions and uses practiced among different resources and land areas. A slide presentation given by the DWR project manager highlighted key issues and summarized the planning process. The Sacramento State Aquatic Center was chosen for its prominent, handicap-accessible, and local facilities in an informal setting to encourage broad participation. Fifty-one people attended these meetings.

Separate presentations were provided at meetings of the Classics at Gold River and The Bluffs Home Owners Associations at their request. After a brief presentation of the project, attendees were invited to provide comments.

### **1.3.5 Mailing List**

Reclamation and DWR compiled a list of individuals, agencies, and organizations that have participated in past Reclamation projects, that are known stakeholders for this project, or who requested to be on the mailing list. Requests to be added to or remain on the official JOC EIS/EIR mailing list will continue to be accepted throughout the planning process.

## **1.4 Agency Coordination**

The benefits of enhanced collaboration among agencies in preparing NEPA/CEQA analyses include disclosing relevant information early in the analytical process, applying available technical expertise and staff support, avoiding duplication with other Federal,

State, tribal, and local procedures, and establishing a mechanism for addressing intergovernmental issues. Coordination with other agencies facilitates this sharing of ideas and public input.

To initiate the collaborative planning process, Reclamation and DWR notified Federal, State, regional, local, and tribal agencies and organizations of the project by providing them with the NOI/NOP and invited them to attend the scoping meetings scheduled for Thursday, February 3, 2011.

In addition, three agencies were invited to act as cooperating agencies under NEPA:

- ▶ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Weather Service;
- ▶ California Department of Parks and Recreation; and
- ▶ California Department of Fish and Game.

Cooperating agency status provides these agencies with early input and review opportunities in the environmental process.

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## 2.0 Meeting Overview

Reclamation and DWR hosted two scoping meetings on February 3, 2011. These meetings followed an open house format, with a brief presentation to introduce the project. A welcome table was positioned by the door to allow visitors to sign in, to provide general information and materials, and to introduce the meeting. Tables and display information were staged around the meeting room to present information on the project location and project description, the NEPA/CEQA process, natural resources, recreation, visual resources, and traffic. Resource specialists from Reclamation, DWR, and the consulting team were positioned at the tables.

Approximately 30 minutes into each meeting, all visitors were guided to a central area to watch a short presentation. The Reclamation resource/project manager, Elizabeth Vasquez, welcomed everyone and introduced the project team. DWR's lead architect/project manager, John Engstrom, then presented a slideshow summary of the project purpose and need, site selection process, key issues, and ways in which the public can become involved. Visitors were then directed to the tables to discuss any questions or to provide comments, either on written comment forms or on flipcharts provided at each table.

Issues raised during these meetings are listed in Table 1 and are being considered during preparation of the draft EIS/EIR (because these comments were received verbally they are not presented verbatim). Commenters were encouraged to provide written comments in addition to their verbal discussions to ensure their intent was received accurately.

<b>Table 1 Flipchart Comments from February 3 Scoping Meetings</b>
Visual simulations of buildings from bluff
Security/Potential additional security
▶ Fencing – height
▶ Gates
▶ Access road – would it be subject to closure?
Parking lot – available for shared Parkway parking for parkway users?
Valley elderberry longhorn beetle
Endangered species?
BR would not cut a firebreak but now wants to build?
Safety concerns with traffic, bikes, etc., funneling into Hazel
Lack of time between notification of meeting and meeting (1 day)
Stopped communication and ideas between attendees by having NO questions aloud from the audience! Why?

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<b>Table 1 Flipchart Comments from February 3 Scoping Meetings</b>
Come up to The Bluffs. Talk to all of the hundreds of residents at our clubhouse. Look down on your proposed development.
Where is funding coming from? How much will the project cost?
Evaluate impacts to traffic and bicyclists at intersection of Gold Country and site access roads
Consider Hazel Avenue road construction and traffic - Phase 2 widening – refer to website
What are the power reliability/issues at the Kilgore Site
Details about the communications tower
Schedule a meeting with The Bluffs Homeowners Association
Locate downtown/ valley, near canals
Increased traffic
Visual impacts along parkway
▶ Don't want to see "big buildings"
▶ No microwave tower
Visual impacts from Bluff
Would like to keep the natural environment intact – Relocate into more appropriate area
Timeline for environmental process seems quick
How did these two sites get selected?
Make available the DGS study of siting criteria?
Concern that meeting broke up rather than hearing concerns of other community members
Why wasn't GSA involvement mentioned?
Post cards didn't arrive on time
Nimbus is not a 20-minute commute
Received the NOP by UPS next day mail – is this expense typical?
Consider all biological resources – deer, Swanson's hawk (in backyard)
Evaluate all permits needed for Nimbus site - 401, 404, 106
Conduct visual simulations
Drive from Nimbus to downtown greater than 20 minutes
Monitoring requirements in the existing NPDES permit for juvenile trout?
Consider appropriateness of office complex in the setting
Traffic congestion is bad enough. What will the impact be with 600 more people working in the Gold River/Hazel area?
Many people use the area trails; where will they go?
Air quality, noise, light, safety for construction workers, vibration from foundation construction, welfare of nearby residents – damage to homes

<b>Table 1 Flipchart Comments from February 3 Scoping Meetings</b>
Wildlife: jack rabbits, foxes, turkey vultures, deer, rattlesnakes
Incompatible with adjacent development
No current access from light rail station – too far from station and no walking route
Concern of traffic congestion on Gold County Boulevard/Hazel Avenue
Traffic congestion on Hazel Avenue would cause additional impacts
Bridges in Sacramento County and earthquake safety – how to get people to the facility from north of the river in an earthquake
McClellan as an alternative, also Old Sac Army Depot site, Mather Air Field: All have built-in security possibilities
Is the project funded? Who will fund the project?
Concerned that Nimbus site is located in an extremely sensitive area
Nimbus site is not located 20 minutes from downtown
Nimbus site will diminish the aesthetic view
What is the earthquake rating of Folsom Dam?
Where will the wastewater or stormwater be discharged?
Will an NPDES permit be needed?
Nimbus site is not intended for commercial or industrial use
Concerned rattlesnakes will be disturbed by construction noise and move into the community (backyards)
Damage to homes from construction dust
Operational noise and lights
What will be done with the mine tailings/materials on the site?
Disturbance to wildlife during and after construction – deer, turkey, jackrabbits, coyotes, birds, fox, mountain lions

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## 3.0 Comment Summary

### 3.1 Methods of Comment Submittal

The NOI/NOP scoping period ended on March 4, 2011. All submitted comments received as of that date have been incorporated into this scoping summary report. These comments—submitted by government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and members of the public—will be considered in alternative formulation and preparation of the EIS/EIR. Individuals were encouraged to submit comments in writing. Reclamation will continue to accept comments throughout the planning process. Submissions were received by U.S. mail, fax, e-mail, and hand delivery to the scoping meetings.

### 3.2 Summary of Public Comments Received

#### 3.2.1 Comments from Public Agencies and Organizations

During the scoping period, comments were received from the following public agencies and organizations:

- ▶ Bluff City Home Owner Association (HOA)
- ▶ California Department of Transportation, Office of Transportation Planning--South
- ▶ California Department of Parks and Recreation
- ▶ The Classics at Gold Country HOA
- ▶ National Park Service, Partnerships Program, Pacific West Regional Office
- ▶ Office of Assemblymember Alyson L. Huber, 10th District
- ▶ Office of Representative Dan Lungren
- ▶ Office of Senator Ted Gaines
- ▶ Sacramento Area Sewer District, Development Services
- ▶ Sacramento County Municipal Services Agency, Department of Regional Parks
- ▶ United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria
- ▶ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Environmental Review Office, Communities and Ecosystem Division

### 3.2.2 Comments by Issue

Most written comments contained comments on multiple issues, which were assigned to the categories listed in Table 2.

<b>Table 2 Summary of Comments by Category</b>	
Issue Category	Summary of Comments
Air Quality	Commenters request that all potential air impacts be analyzed, with regard to increased traffic and all project phases. This includes potential increase in GHGs from commuting employees.
Biological Resources	The Nimbus Site receives all of the concern with regard to wildlife, vegetation, and the environment. Commenters are concerned for wildlife and plant life in general, for indigenous species and a number of specifically named species, and all the more for rare, threatened, or endangered species. Residents enjoy deer and birds visiting their backyards, and are concerned about the loss of same. Keeping intact the natural environment and open space, as well as the contiguous nature of the Parkway, is a common priority. Requests include thorough analysis of potential impacts on all aspects of wildlife, plant life, and the environment; on the American River's Wild and Scenic River designation; and on the "wilderness-feel" of the Nimbus area. The other concerns are stability of the soil at the Nimbus Site and the monitoring requirements in the existing NPDES permit for juvenile trout.
Communications and Related Facilities	Opposition to the proposed communications tower is largely based on concern regarding the potential impacts of microwaves, especially on children. Electromagnetic fields generally, radio-frequency interference, and pollution also are concerns. One commenter asks the agencies to consider that a Kilgore Site facility would not expose residences or children to microwaves to the same degree as would a Nimbus Site facility.
Cultural Resources	Tribal preservation committees should be able to accompany agency staff on field surveys of the proposed project sites.
Cumulative Impacts	The agencies are urged to analyze all cumulative impacts, with special attention given to proper scope.
Economics, Employment, and Population	The most pervasive concern is for residential property values, particularly with regard to neighborhoods adjacent to the Nimbus Site. Implementation at the Nimbus Site may encourage population growth, some commenters assert, while others are interested in analyses of potential impacts on local service jobs at the Nimbus Site. Others are interested in the costs of site preparation and development relative to what is paid for the current facility, and how the State is going to pay for its share of a new facility. Analyze the financial impact of construction dust on homes adjacent to the Nimbus Site.
EIS/EIR	Some commenters perceive that, relative to the controversial nature of the project, the EIS/EIR is being fast-tracked. Provide copies of EIS/EIR drafts and other project-related environmental documentation to commenters who submitted requests, to facilitate their understanding of the project and ability to comment on potential impacts and mitigation.

<b>Table 2 Summary of Comments by Category</b>	
Issue Category	Summary of Comments
Hazardous Materials and Conditions	Analysis of potential impacts related to hazardous materials is encouraged. Mercury vapors from dredger tailings, as well as the rate of mercury methylation, which could result from project construction and operations is a concern. One commenter suggests testing excavated material before moving it off-site and proper disposal.
Hydrology and Water Quality	Analyses of potential impacts of the proposed project on water quality, and of runoff on the surrounding environment, are sought. Where would wastewater and storm water be discharged, and would an NPDES permit be required? One commenter encourages the use of pervious paving to avoid impacts related to stormwater infiltration.
Mineral Resources	Analyze how the mine tailings/materials will be reused if the Nimbus Site is chosen.
New Construction vs. Leasing/Purchasing Existing Facilities	Commenters suggest purchasing or leasing existing commercial space, rather than new construction, in these financially troubled times. They discourage the use of taxpayer funds to build new facilities while existing vacant commercial space is plentiful. Some decry the use of State money to build in a recreation/conservation area. Consider that it would cost approximately \$50 million to build and only \$20 million to buy.
Noise	Analyze the potential noise impacts during the construction and operation phases, as well as the potential impacts of noise from employees, vehicles, and equipment on wildlife and humans. Commenters remind that noise rises, and thus at the Nimbus Site it would have a larger impact on residents of The Bluffs. There also is concern regarding the potential impacts of intermittent noise during late night hours on humans and wildlife.
Notice of Preparation	The only comment related to the NOP itself was concern regarding whether it is typical for agencies to incur the expense of sending copies via UPS Next Day delivery.
Public Safety	Much concern was expressed regarding public safety, particularly at the Nimbus Site. Increased traffic could endanger children walking or bicycling in that residential, recreational, and school area. Many question the building of a flood emergency operations facility in a flood plain or below Nimbus and Folsom dams. Reconsideration regarding what has been characterized as a small, manageable risk of dam failure is encouraged. Commenters are concerned about the site having a single route for egress and ingress; the displacement of potentially dangerous wildlife into neighborhoods; the hazards and risks of fire, explosion, sound and air pollution, hazardous fuel sources, and chemicals; and increased crime rates. Some note that the Kilgore Site's distance from residential areas makes it the safer location.

<b>Table 2 Summary of Comments by Category</b>	
Issue Category	Summary of Comments
Public Scoping Meetings and Public Outreach	The late arrival of postcards announcing the public scoping meeting made attending the meeting difficult for many residents and created a perception problem. Some request that another public scoping meeting be held, with sufficient prior notice. Consider suspending all project activities until another public scoping meeting, preceded by sufficient notification, can be held. Invitations are extended to the agencies to attend homeowner association meetings, and commenters urge the agencies to allow scoping meeting audiences to ask questions as a group, primarily to facilitate idea sharing. Public outreach is considered essential for this project.
Recreation	Recreation received a large number of comments, particularly regarding the potential for Nimbus Site construction, operations, and/or security issues to result in restricted access to the Parkway, trails, and the river. Commenters assert that traffic near the Nimbus Site would have a deleterious effect on joggers, bicyclists, and walking residents. Concern ranges from the potential impacts on playgrounds to impacts on access to recreation facilities at Nimbus Flat, Sacramento State Aquatic Center, Nimbus Shoals, and Nimbus Overlook units of Lake Natoma. Would an off-site staging area be required for construction at the Nimbus Site, and what would the potential impacts be on State Parks operations? Identify mitigation for any revenue loss and for other potential impacts on State Parks. Consider making the JOC parking lot available for shared use by Parkway users (Nimbus Site), and do not modify the Jedediah Smith Memorial Trail.
Security Requirements and Features	A number of commenters do not believe that the Nimbus Site is conducive to maintaining security, given its proximity to the American River, trails, and concealing vegetation. Analyze what security features would be required at the Nimbus Site (e.g., fences, gates) and whether the access road would be subject to closure.
Site Selection and Approvals	Opposition to the Nimbus Site is expressed in concerns related to the noncommercial nature of the site, the expense of new construction vs. buying, impacts on adjacent neighborhoods, easier access to food outlets (than at the Kilgore Site), the availability of empty commercial spaces for purchase or leasing (e.g., Mather, McClellan, along Hwy 50 and I-80), the insufficient size of the site and the potential need for future growth of the JOC facility, the need for the chosen site to be large enough to accommodate structures that meet the requirements of a LEED® Silver rating, the possibility of encouraging population growth in the area, the commute to downtown being longer than the stated 20 minutes, noncompliance with local and regional plans, insufficient access to the site (especially in the event an earthquake knocks out bridges), and several other concerns. Support for the Kilgore Site is based on its perceived suitability for a commercial facility and adherence to site selection criteria, while the relatively few commenters who express opposition to the Kilgore Site (one of whom favors the Nimbus Site) believe that Kilgore does not meet certain site selection criteria (availability of food, proximity to a major thoroughfare, and so forth). Commenters submit a number of questions and requests related to the site selection criteria. Sewer issues are addressed, what the agencies

<b>Table 2</b> <b>Summary of Comments by Category</b>	
Issue Category	Summary of Comments
	must be aware of and how mitigation would result in less-than-significant impact findings at both sites.
Traffic and Transportation	Much opposition to the Nimbus Site is expressed as concern for potential impacts on an area already experiencing traffic congestion. While commenters believe that the public transit options aren't sufficient at either site, many cite the recreational, residential, and schools-oriented nature of the Nimbus area as significant concerns when considering traffic impacts. Some feel that the Kilgore Site's more commercial nature, and its more favorable ingress and egress, would allow it to more reasonably absorb traffic impacts. Commenters request that the agencies fully analyze all potential traffic impacts, including on bicyclists and pedestrians, with much concern centered on Gold Country Blvd., Hazel Ave., and Sunrise Blvd. during the construction and operations phases. A complete traffic impact study, including analysis of impacts on the State Highway System, is requested, as is coordination with Caltrans if any significant traffic impacts are identified.
Visual Resources	Visual resources are another category that received a large number of comments, primarily in opposition to the Nimbus Site. Commenters are concerned about the impacts of JOC buildings, parking lots, communications tower, and large antennae on views from neighborhood adjacent to the Nimbus Site, from The Bluffs (considered particularly severe), from the Parkway, and from the American River. Property values, in the context of visual impacts, are a concern, as are the negative effects of glare and nighttime lighting. Analysis of visual impacts should include visual simulations of buildings and even agency staff viewing (in person) of the Nimbus Site from The Bluffs. Suggested mitigation includes setbacks or buffers, earth tones and textures, plantings, stepping structures away from the Parkway or limiting their size, non-intrusive lighting, non-reflective surfaces, and minimal glass.
Notes: Caltrans = California Department of Transportation, EIS/EIR = environmental impact statement/environmental impact report, GHGs = greenhouse gases, Hwy 50 = U.S. Highway 50, I-80 = Interstate 80, LEED = Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, NPDES = National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System, Parkway = American River Parkway, State Parks = California State Parks (California Department of Parks and Recreation), UPS = United Parcel Service	

### 3.3 Comments Received

This section lists the comments that were submitted to Reclamation and/or DWR during the scoping period. In most cases, the comments were paraphrased to save space or to communicate an overall theme that would encompass more than one comment. In some cases, similar comments appear in more than one section. For each comment, the commenter's intent was determined before it was assigned to a category.

#### **Air Quality**

- ▶ Analyze the potential impacts on air quality, with special attention paid to nonattainment for ozone and particulate matter.

## Joint Operations Center Relocation Project

- ▶ Consider that air pollution resulting from JOC construction, operations, and an increase in traffic at the Nimbus Site would have a more negative impact than at the Kilgore Site.
- ▶ Analyze potential greenhouse gas emissions from employee commuting to and from the Kilgore Site, which lacks sufficient public transit options.

### **Biological Resources**

- ▶ Do not disturb wildlife by building the project at the Nimbus Site.
- ▶ Preserve the American River Parkway by building at the Kilgore Site.
- ▶ Analyze how lighting would have a negative impact on wildlife.
- ▶ Consider that oak trees will be destroyed if the Nimbus Site is chosen.
- ▶ Analyze the possibility of rare and endangered species being destroyed by construction and operations at the Nimbus Site.
- ▶ Analyze impacts on open space.
- ▶ Analyze potential impacts on indigenous species.
- ▶ Analyze potential impacts on deer, turkey, turkey vulture, fox, coyote, skunk, rabbit, beaver, mountain lion, raccoon, rattlesnake, river otters, owls, hawks, and numerous species of birds on the river and in the pond on the Nimbus Site.
- ▶ Analyze potential impacts on wildlife, with special attention given to rare and endangered species.
- ▶ Analyze the potential impacts on Swanson's hawk, which appear in residents' backyard.
- ▶ Analyze the extent of habitat loss at the Nimbus Site.
- ▶ Analyze the potential impacts on vegetation at the Nimbus Site.
- ▶ Analyze project construction and operation impacts on valley elderberry longhorn beetle (Nimbus Site).
- ▶ Do not pave over this greenbelt area (the Nimbus Site).
- ▶ Analyze the potential impacts on wetlands from building at the Nimbus Site.
- ▶ Consider that construction and operations at the Nimbus Site would displace the deer that residents enjoy viewing.
- ▶ Understand that neither Reclamation nor DWR appear to be an environmentally friendly agency, by choosing the Nimbus Site as the Proposed Action.
- ▶ Keep the natural environment intact; relocate to a more appropriate area.
- ▶ Maintain the contiguous nature of the American River Parkway by not building at the Nimbus Site.

- ▶ Consider the irreparable harm to “wilderness feel,” a resource that Sacramento County taxpayers have supported for decades, which would occur with the project at the Nimbus Site.
- ▶ Analyze the stability of the soil at the Nimbus Site.
- ▶ Analyze project construction and operation impacts on the American River’s Wild and Scenic River designation (Nimbus Site).
- ▶ Inform regarding the monitoring requirements in the existing NPDES permit for juvenile trout.

***Communications and Related Facilities***

- ▶ Provide details about the proposed communications tower.
- ▶ Do not build a microwave communications tower.
- ▶ Analyze levels of electromagnetic fields and radio-frequency interference and pollution associated with the proposed microwave tower, large antennae, and other potential sources.
- ▶ Analyze potential impacts of microwave exposure from the proposed communications tower on area residents, particularly children.
- ▶ Consider that a Kilgore Site facility would not expose residences or children to microwaves to the same degree as would a Nimbus Site facility.

***Cultural Resources***

- ▶ Consider that the presence of mine tailing at the Nimbus Site is a reminder of the cultural and historic significance of the area.
- ▶ Be aware that the loss of cultural and historical resources at the Nimbus Site would be irreplaceable.
- ▶ Allow tribal preservation committees to accompany agency staff on field surveys of the proposed project sites.

***Cumulative Impacts***

- ▶ Analyze all cumulative impacts, with special attention given to the proper scope.

***Economics, Employment, and Population***

- ▶ Analyze the effects of construction and operations at the Nimbus Site on growth of local service jobs.
- ▶ Analyze the potential impacts on property values, particularly for homeowners immediately adjacent to the Nimbus Site.
- ▶ Analyze the potential impacts of construction-related dust on homes near the Nimbus Site.
- ▶ Clarify how the State is going to pay for its part of building at either project site.
- ▶ Clarify what the costs of site preparation and development are estimated to be.

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- ▶ Clarify what is being paid now for the current facility.
- ▶ Analyze the potential for constructing and operating the JOC at the Nimbus Site to encourage population growth.
- ▶ Applaud you for using land that you own to reduce costs.
- ▶ Consider selling the land and reinvesting the money.

### ***Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report***

- ▶ Be aware that, for such a controversial project, it appears as though the completion of the EIS/EIR is on a fast track.
- ▶ Provide copies of all drafts of the EIS/EIR and other project-related environmental documentation to commenters who submit requests, to facilitate their understanding of the project and ability to comment on potential impacts and mitigation.

### ***Hazardous Materials and Conditions***

- ▶ Analyze potential impacts related to hazardous materials.
- ▶ Be aware that dredger tailings can contain mercury and thus the need to ensure that mercury vapors will not accumulate in project structures.
- ▶ Prevent changes in the rate of mercury methylation by evaluating potential changes in hydrology that would result from project construction and operations.
- ▶ Test excavated material before moving it off-site, and dispose of such material properly.

### ***Hydrology and Water Quality***

- ▶ Analyze the potential impacts on water quality.
- ▶ Analyze the potential impacts of runoff on the surrounding environment.
- ▶ Analyze where wastewater and storm water would be discharged?
- ▶ Analyze whether an NPDES permit would be required?
- ▶ Use pervious paving to avoid impacts related to stormwater infiltration.

### ***Mineral Resources***

- ▶ Address how the mine tailings/materials will be reused if the Nimbus Site is chosen.

### ***New Construction vs. Leasing/Purchasing Existing Facilities***

- ▶ Purchase or lease existing commercial space, rather than build, in these financially troubled times.
- ▶ Do not use taxpayer funds to build new facilities while existing vacant commercial space is plentiful.
- ▶ Do not use State money to build in a recreation/conservation area.
- ▶ Consider that it would cost approximately \$50 million to build and only \$20 million to buy.

### ***Noise***

- ▶ Analyze the potential noise impacts during the construction and operation phases.

- ▶ Analyze the potential impacts of noise from employees, vehicles, and equipment on wildlife and humans.
- ▶ Consider that noise rises, and thus would have a larger impact on residents of the Bluffs.
- ▶ Analyze the potential impacts of intermittent noise during late night hours on humans and wildlife.

***Notice of Preparation***

- ▶ Clarify whether it is typical for agencies to incur the expense of sending copies of the NOP via UPS Next Day delivery.

***Public Safety***

- ▶ Consider that increased traffic could endanger children walking or bicycling in this residential, recreational, and schools area (Nimbus Site).
- ▶ Do not build a flood emergency operations facility in a flood plain or below Nimbus Dam (Nimbus Site).
- ▶ Do not build a flood emergency operations facility in a flood plain or below Folsom Dam (Nimbus Site).
- ▶ Reconsider taking what has been characterized as a small, manageable risk of dam failure; why take the risk at all?
- ▶ Do not build an emergency operations facility with only a single route for egress and ingress (Nimbus Site).
- ▶ Consider that excavation and construction of the project could displace rattlesnakes, rats, and rodents, causing them to enter neighborhoods (Nimbus Site).
- ▶ Consider that the Kilgore Site's distance from residential areas makes it the safer location because children are not as likely to be present.
- ▶ Analyze the hazards and risks of fire, explosion, sound and air pollution, hazardous fuel sources, and chemicals associated with the proposed emergency generator (particularly at Nimbus Site).
- ▶ Analyze the potential for an increase in crime rates at the Nimbus Site.
- ▶ Consider that Reclamation would not agree to cut a firebreak on the Nimbus Site, but now wants to build on it.
- ▶ Address safety concerns with regard to traffic, bicycles, etc., funneling onto Hazel Avenue (Nimbus Site).
- ▶ Provide for the safety of construction workers, as well as nearby residents and their homes.

***Public Scoping Meetings and Public Outreach***

- ▶ Be aware that late arrival of postcards announcing the public scoping meeting made attending the meeting difficult for many residents.

## Joint Operations Center Relocation Project

- ▶ Consider holding another public scoping meeting, with sufficient prior notice, to give residents who missed the first meeting a chance to hear presentations and comment verbally on the project.
- ▶ Consider suspending all project activities until another public scoping meeting, preceded by sufficient notification, can be held.
- ▶ Be aware that the late meeting notification of local residents has added to the perception that the government is trying to ramrod the project through.
- ▶ Use the mailing list from Hazel Avenue Widening Project to ensure coverage and save time.
- ▶ Accept the invitation to meet with The Bluffs Homeowners' Association.
- ▶ Accept the invitation to attend and present at the next meeting of the Board of Directors of The Classics at Gold Country Homeowners Association.
- ▶ Consider that not allowing the audience, as a group, to ask questions after the presentation at the scoping meeting stopped communication and ideas from being shared among attendees.
- ▶ Consider that the communications photo was misleading.
- ▶ Be aware that public outreach is essential for this project.
- ▶ Know that the Pacific West Regional Office of the National Parks Service has no comment on the subject document.

## **Recreation**

- ▶ Consider that security alerts or terrorist threats could result in restricted recreational access to the American River Parkway.
- ▶ Analyze the potential impacts on playgrounds.
- ▶ Recognize that construction and operation at the Nimbus Site could disrupt the use of a national and locally recognized bicycle trail.
- ▶ Consider that increased traffic at the Nimbus Site would have a deleterious effect on joggers, bicyclists, and walking residents.
- ▶ Consider that recreation on the American River would be compromised by project construction and operations at the Nimbus Site.
- ▶ Do not modify the Jedediah Smith Memorial Trail.
- ▶ Analyze potential impacts on access to recreation facilities at Nimbus Flat, CSUS Aquatic Center [sic], Nimbus Shoals, and Nimbus Overlook units of Lake Natoma.
- ▶ Analyze whether an off-site staging area will be required for construction at the Nimbus Site and what the potential impacts would be on State Park operations.
- ▶ Identify mitigation for any loss of revenue that State Parks might incur during construction and for any other potential impacts on State Parks.

- ▶ Consider making JOC parking lot available for shared use by American River Parkway users (Nimbus Site).

***Security Requirements and Features***

- ▶ Consider that the Nimbus Site is not conducive to maintaining security, given its proximity to the American River, trails, and concealing vegetation.
- ▶ Analyze what security features would be required (e.g., fences, gates).
- ▶ Analyze whether the access road would be subject to closure (Nimbus Site)?

***Site Selection, Alternatives, and Approvals***

- ▶ Do not choose the Nimbus Site.
- ▶ Consider that the Nimbus site is not intended for commercial or industrial use.
- ▶ Evaluate all permits needed for construction and operation at the Nimbus Site--401, 404, 106, etc.
- ▶ Realize that saving money is a poor rationale for selecting the Nimbus Site.
- ▶ Consider that construction and operations at the Nimbus Site would disrupt the educational mission of the Nimbus Fish Hatchery.
- ▶ Choose the Kilgore Site, which is located in a commercial area.
- ▶ Consider that the Kilgore Site would provide more options for dining and other commercial amenities.
- ▶ Consider that the Kilgore Site is separated from food establishments by a water channel and would require driving.
- ▶ Consider purchasing facilities at former Mather Air Force Base (where the California Emergency Management Agency is located), old Sacramento Army Depot, McClellan Park, the Aerojet property, or along the Highway 50 or I-80 corridors.
- ▶ Make the site selection process and the criteria used for site selection available to the public.
- ▶ Do not refer to the Nimbus Site as the “Preferred Alternative” because it sounds biased.
- ▶ Be more concerned with the environment and the quality of life of local residents of the area than with a single department.
- ▶ Analyze the appropriateness of a private-public partnership on public land (Nimbus Site).
- ▶ Clarify whether the project is subject to local planning commission approval and if so which commission(s) would be involved, or whether the project is exempt given that it is a Federal project?
- ▶ Consider that the Nimbus Site would not be large enough to accommodate a facility of the size required for the JOC.

## Joint Operations Center Relocation Project

- ▶ Analyze the need for future growth of the JOC in relation to the Nimbus Site.
- ▶ Build where the JOC would have fewer impacts on current and future generations.
- ▶ Consider that the needs of the many (local residents) should outweigh the needs of the relative few (agencies) at the Nimbus Site.
- ▶ Review the commute time between downtown and the Nimbus Site, as it appears to be 26 minutes at mid-morning (about 10:00 a.m.) with no slowdowns.
- ▶ Consider that chosen site must be large enough to accommodate facilities that meet the certification requirements for the minimum of a LEED® Silver rating (Nimbus Site).
- ▶ Consider that the Kilgore Site is not "along, or adjacent, to a major traffic thoroughfare," a site selection criterion.
- ▶ Expect that at the Nimbus Site, a private sewer pump station/force main will be required: an 800-foot sewer force main along Gold Country Boulevard and another 800 foot sewer force main on-site.
- ▶ Consider that at the Kilgore Site, the project would not be permitted to connect to the existing sewer interceptor line; it would require gravity sewer.
- ▶ Anticipate a less-than-significant impact on sewage facilities at either site, as a result of mitigation.
- ▶ Do not waste taxpayer money on further analysis of the Nimbus Site, as it has no chance of being approved.
- ▶ Consider that the Nimbus Site would not be in compliance with the 2009 American River Parkway Plan.
- ▶ Consider that the Nimbus Site would not be in compliance with the American River Waterway Management Plan.
- ▶ Expect a legal battle should the Nimbus Site be chosen.
- ▶ Realize how selection of the Nimbus Site represents government waste and abuse at its worst.
- ▶ Evaluate options that did not exist in 2007, when potential sites were selected.
- ▶ Analyze power reliability and related issues at the Kilgore Site.
- ▶ Build the JOC downtown, in the valley, or along canals.
- ▶ Clarify the involvement of the U.S. General Services Administration in site selection.
- ▶ Address how, in the event of an earthquake and damage to bridges in Sacramento County, people will get to the Nimbus Site facility from north of the American River.
- ▶ Factor into the analysis of the Nimbus Site the earthquake rating of Folsom Dam.

- ▶ Divide staff between the two sites.

### ***Traffic and Transportation***

- ▶ Construction at the Nimbus Site would coincide with Phase 2 of the Hazel Avenue Widening Project, thus worsening conditions in an already congested traffic area.
- ▶ Consider that lunchtime traffic would further congest the area near the Nimbus Site.
- ▶ Factor into the analysis that the travel pathways at the Nimbus Site are too limited.
- ▶ Consider that the public transit options servicing the Kilgore Site are extremely limited.
- ▶ Analyze the possibility of adding traffic signals to regulate flow around the Nimbus Site.
- ▶ Analyze the degree to which traffic on Gold Country Boulevard, Hazel Avenue, and Sunrise Boulevard during construction and operations will worsen already congested areas.
- ▶ Analyze the potential impacts on traffic during the construction phase.
- ▶ Analyze all potential impacts on traffic.
- ▶ Consider that the Kilgore Site would provide easy vehicle access and offers more options for ingress and egress.
- ▶ Consider that speeding, which is already a problem, would increase on Gold Country Boulevard if the Nimbus Site were chosen.
- ▶ Evaluate impacts on traffic and bicyclists at intersection of Gold Country Boulevard and the Nimbus Site access roads.
- ▶ Complete a Traffic Impact Study (TIS) and include analysis of impacts on the State Highway System (SHS), including the U.S. Highway 50/Hazel Avenue interchange, at a minimum. Impacts to all ramps, ramp intersections, and mainline segments should be analyzed.
- ▶ Coordinate with the California Department of Transportation if the TIS identifies any significant traffic impacts, to investigate feasible mitigation (which could include fair-share funding for U.S. 50 auxiliary lanes between Sunrise Boulevard and Hazel Avenue or between Hazel Avenue and Folsom Boulevard).

### ***Visual Resources***

- ▶ Analyze the potential impacts on visual resources.
- ▶ Consider that buildings, parking lots, communications tower, and large antennae will have a negative impact on views (Nimbus Site).
- ▶ Consider that project structures are visually inappropriate for a greenbelt area (Nimbus Site).
- ▶ Analyze the degree to which affected views will have a negative impact on residential property values (Nimbus Site).
- ▶ Be aware that the visual impacts on residents of the Bluffs will be particularly severe.

## Joint Operations Center Relocation Project

- ▶ Analyze the degree to which views for recreationists will be negatively altered by project structures (Nimbus Site).
- ▶ Analyze the effects of light pollution on the residential areas near the Nimbus Site.
- ▶ Include setbacks or buffers to reduce visual impacts at the Nimbus Site.
- ▶ Step structures away from the American River Parkway or limit structure scale at the Nimbus Site.
- ▶ Use screening structures and live plantings of native trees/shrubs around parking areas.
- ▶ Specify earth tones and textures that blend with the local vegetation and landscape to reduce visual impacts.
- ▶ Reduce the potential light and glare impacts by using non-intrusive lighting, non-reflective surfaces, and minimal glass.
- ▶ Prepare visual simulations of buildings as would be viewed from the bluff (Nimbus Site).
- ▶ Come up to The Bluffs, talk to all of the hundreds of residents at the clubhouse, and from there look down on your proposed development.
- ▶ Do not build big buildings along the American River Parkway.

## 4.0 Future Steps

### 4.1 Summary of Future Steps and Public Participation Opportunities

The goal of this summary of scoping comments is to ensure that the issues raised by the public and agencies are addressed in the draft EIS/EIR and that proposed alternatives are considered in the analysis. In compliance with NEPA, CEQ regulations, and the Reclamation planning regulations and guidance, alternatives should be reasonable and implementable. Reclamation and DWR will also continue to meet with collaborating agencies, community groups, and individuals.

The analysis of the alternatives will be documented in a draft EIS/EIR. Although Reclamation and DWR welcome public input at any time during the planning process, the next official public comment period will begin when the draft EIS/EIR is published, which is anticipated to be in June. The draft EIS/EIR will be widely distributed to elected officials, regulatory agencies, and members of the public and will be available on the project Web site at <http://www.usbr.gov/mp/cvo/joc.html>. The availability of the draft EIS/EIR will be announced in the *Federal Register*, and a 60-day public comment period will follow to allow agencies and the public a chance to review the draft EIS/EIR and to provide input to Reclamation and DWR. Two public meetings will be held, anticipated to be in late April.

At the conclusion of this public comment period, Reclamation and DWR will revise the EIS/EIR and will publish a final EIS/EIR. The availability of the final EIS/EIR will be announced in the *Federal Register* and a 30-day public comment period will follow. If necessary, Reclamation and DWR will publish a notice in the *Federal Register* requesting comments on significant changes made as a result of comments received.

At the conclusion of the public comment period, Reclamation and DWR will address all comments, will resolve inconsistencies, and will publish the approved EIS/EIR and record of decision. The availability of these documents will be announced in the *Federal Register*.

All publications, including this report, the draft EIS/EIR, and the notice of availability, will be published on the official JOC EIS/EIR Web site at <http://www.usbr.gov/mp/cvo/joc.html>. In addition, pertinent dates regarding solicitation of public comments will be published on the Web site.

## **4.2 Contact Information**

The public is invited and encouraged to participate throughout the planning process for the EIS/EIR. One way to participate is by reviewing the progress of the EIS/EIR online at the official JOC EIS/EIR Web site, at <http://www.usbr.gov/mp/cvo/joc.html>. The Web site will be updated with information, documents, and announcements throughout the duration of the EIS/EIR preparation.

Another means of participation is by requesting to be added to the official JOC EIS/EIR mailing list to receive future mailings and information. Anyone wishing to be added to or deleted from the distribution list or requesting further information may e-mail Reclamation c/o Douglas Kleinsmith at [dkleinsmith@usbr.gov](mailto:dkleinsmith@usbr.gov) or call him at (916) 978-5034, or email DWR c/o John Engstrom at [engstrom@water.ca.gov](mailto:engstrom@water.ca.gov) or call him at (916) 651-8745. Please provide your name, mailing address, and e-mail address, as well as your preferred method of receiving information.

**ATTACHMENT 1**  
**Public Information Materials for the JOC**  
**Relocation Project Scoping Period**



**DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES**

1416 NINTH STREET, P.O. BOX 942836  
SACRAMENTO, CA 94236-0001  
(916) 653-5791

**NOTICE OF PREPARATION**

**To:** Agencies and Interested Parties

**From:** California Department of Water Resources

**Date:** January 18, 2011

**Subject:** **Announcement of:**

- 1) Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report on the Joint Operations Center Relocation Project;**
- 2) Public Scoping Meetings to be held on February 3, 2011; and**
- 3) Scoping Comments due by February 17, 2011**

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) and the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) will prepare a joint environmental impact statement (EIS)/environmental impact report (EIR) for the Joint Operations Center (JOC) Relocation Project (proposed project for CEQA purposes) in Sacramento County, California. The EIS/EIR will be prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 United States Code [USC] Section 4321 et seq.) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (California Public Resources Code [PRC], Section 21000 et seq.; see also 14 California Code of Regulations [CCR] Sections 15220, 15222 [State CEQA Guidelines]). Reclamation will be the Federal lead agency for purposes of complying with NEPA, and DWR will be the State lead agency for compliance with CEQA.

**PURPOSE OF THE NOTICE OF PREPARATION:** The purpose of a notice of preparation (NOP) is to notify responsible and trustee agencies, Federal agencies involved in approving or funding a project, and interested parties that an EIR will be prepared. The NOP should provide sufficient information about the proposed project and its potential environmental impacts to allow recipients the opportunity to provide a meaningful response related to the scope and content of the EIS/EIR, including the potentially significant and significant environmental issues, reasonable alternatives, and mitigation measures that the responsible or trustee agency will need to have explored in the EIS/EIR (State CEQA Guidelines CCR Section 15082[a][1]).

The project location, description, and probable environmental impacts of the proposed project are presented below. An initial study has not been prepared because the EIS/EIR will address all issue areas and it is already known that the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment. The EIS/EIR will also include feasible mitigation measures, where available, and consideration of a reasonable range of alternatives to avoid or substantially reduce the proposed project's significant adverse environmental impacts.

The purposes of this NOP are to:

1. notify the appropriate parties that an EIS/EIR will be prepared for the proposed project;
2. briefly describe the proposed project and the anticipated content of the EIS/EIR;
3. announce the public scoping meetings to facilitate public input; and
4. solicit input by February 16, 2011, from Federal, State, regional, and local agencies, and from interested organizations and individuals, about the content and scope of the EIS/EIR, including the alternatives to be addressed and the potentially significant environmental impacts.

**PROJECT BACKGROUND AND NEED:** The following agencies/departments are currently collocated in a leased building at 3310 El Camino Avenue, Sacramento, California (referred to hereafter as the El Camino Interim JOC):

- Reclamation's Central Valley Operations Office (CVO);
- DWR's Division of Operations and Maintenance, Operations Control Office, State Water Project (SWP) Power and Risk Office, and Division of Flood Management's Offices of Operations and Maintenance and Hydrology and Flood Operations including the State-Federal Flood Operations Center; and
- The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service (NWS) Sacramento Weather Forecast Office and California-Nevada River Forecast Center.

The existing lease expires on June 30, 2015.

In 2005, Reclamation and DWR determined that the El Camino Interim JOC no longer met critical requirements of both agencies and that sufficient upgrades could not be accomplished to satisfy the new mandated requirements as follows:

- The El Camino Interim JOC does not meet the State of California's "Essential Service" requirements and cannot cost effectively be retrofitted to remedy the situation. During any retrofit, all tenants would be required to temporarily vacate the building, which would be impractical.
- Safety and physical security requirements including clear space building set-back allowances cannot be met. The El Camino Interim JOC allows uncontrolled commercial and public vehicles to within 12 feet of the building structure. The remedy to solve this issue is cost prohibitive.
- The El Camino Interim JOC space is constrained. All possible expansion possibilities have been explored and are infeasible.

In 2006, Reclamation and other JOC partner agencies discussed and weighed the many benefits achieved through the collocation of operations in the existing facility, and agreed to continue to jointly coordinate CVP and SWP operations by continuing to be collocated in new facilities in the future.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** Reclamation, DWR, and NWS propose to construct a new JOC in the Sacramento area to be occupied by June 2015. The proposed new JOC would provide the special needs, essential services, and requisite office space for the combined occupancy of Reclamation, DWR, and NWS (see specific list of departments/offices in “Project Background” above) to replace the El Camino Interim JOC. Special needs are defined as two control centers, flood operations center, backup power supplies, primary and backup communication systems, intense computer infrastructure, physical and cyber security systems, and meeting state essential service criteria. The criteria used by Reclamation, DWR, NWS, and the California Department of General Services (DGS) to establish a new JOC location include the following:

The following is a description of the criteria used by DWR, NWS, Reclamation and Department of General Services (DGS) established for a new JOC:

- The location of the new JOC must be acceptable by all major stakeholders (Reclamation, DWR, NWS).
- Relocation must be coordinated with the expiration of the El Camino Interim JOC’s existing lease terms.
- The new location must be along, or adjacent to a major traffic thoroughfare and within a 20-minute commute from downtown Sacramento (DWR headquarters).
- The new facility must be sited, designed, and constructed consistent with the Bureau of Reclamation Sustainable Buildings Implementation Plan requirements for leased buildings and should be consistent, where possible, with Recommendations on Sustainable Siting for Federal Facilities in accordance with Executive Order 13514.
- The new location must be certified as minimum LEED Silver in accordance with State requirements.
- The new location must have access to public transportation, bus service and/or light rail.
- The new location must be of sufficient size to adequately accommodate all stakeholder needs and requirements.
- There must be line of sight for all stakeholder specialized communications systems and equipment. Redundant communication systems must be immediately accessible.
- The new location must have excellent power service availability, reliability, and redundancy.
- The new location must be large enough to accommodate parking for all stakeholders as allowed by State and Federal guidelines and large enough to provide clear space building set-back allowances for physical security.
- The new site must be situated above the 200-year flood plain elevation.
- There must be adequate restaurant/food service facilities within the vicinity.
- The new building/complex should be located on a site where adjacent commercial

development and public events can be controlled, minimized, or monitored.

DGS would be responsible for the design and construction of the new JOC, which needs to accommodate approximately 500 employees and be approximately 200,000 square feet. The design and footprint of the new JOC would be completed by a private development team under contract to DGS; the preliminary design concepts being considered in the EIS/EIR are (1) one three-story building and two one-story buildings or (2) two one-story buildings and two two-story buildings. The new JOC would occupy approximately 16 acres of land, including access roads and parking lots.

In September 2007, Reclamation, DWR, and NWS completed a site criteria/ranking process to determine which site(s) in the Sacramento area were available at that time and could be considered for further evaluation. Based on the above criteria and stakeholder input, the following sites (Exhibits 1 and 2) have been selected for further review and will be analyzed, along with a No-Project Alternative (for CEQA purposes), in the EIS/EIR at an equal level of detail:

- Site 1 (Preferred): The Nimbus site is a 19-acre parcel owned by Reclamation and located adjacent to the California Department of Fish and Game's (DFG's) and Reclamation's Nimbus Fish Hatchery, near the Nimbus Dam on the American River. The site is adjacent to the Upper Sunrise Area of the American River Parkway and contains dredge spoils from gold mining on the American River. Access to the site is from U.S. Highway 50 via Hazel Avenue and Gold Country Boulevard. This site is owned by Reclamation and would be leased to DWR if selected. The EIS/EIR will analyze two JOC configurations at an equal level of detail for purposes of NEPA on Site 1: (1) one three-story building and two one-story buildings and (2) two one-story buildings and two two-story buildings.
- Site 2 - Commercial Site: The Kilgore site is a representative currently available commercial site that has been selected for the purposes of this environmental document for environmental analysis as it meets the minimum criteria for a potential building site. To implement this alternative, a full and open competitive procurement process would be utilized to obtain a commercial building site which may include but is not limited to the Kilgore site.

The Kilgore site is a privately owned, 18-acre property located northeast of the intersection of Kilgore Road and Crawford Drive. The site is in a commercial area adjacent to office buildings and is bounded on the south side by the Folsom South Canal. Access to the site is from U.S. Highway 50 via Sunrise Boulevard and Kilgore Road. The EIS/EIR will analyze one JOC configuration on Site 2: two two-story buildings and two one-story buildings.

**PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:** The EIS/EIR will describe the direct and indirect potentially significant and significant environmental impacts of the proposed project. The EIS/EIR will also evaluate the cumulative impacts of the project when considered in conjunction with other related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects.

The probable environmental impacts of the proposed project are as follows:

- **Aesthetics:** Temporary and long-term changes in scenic views or visual character of the project sites from the construction of the new JOC and tree/vegetation removal, including potential effects on the American River Parkway at the Nimbus site and to homeowners with views of the Nimbus site in particular; and creation of a new source of light or glare.
- **Air Quality:** Temporary and short-term increases in pollutant emissions associated with construction activities; and long-term increases in pollutant emissions during project operation (including stationary and mobile-source emissions).
- **Biological Resources:** Temporary disturbance or permanent loss of oak woodland habitat, jurisdictional waters of the United States (including wetlands), and special-status species habitats; construction disturbance or take of special-status species, especially valley elderberry longhorn beetle, California red-legged frog, white-tailed kite, Swainson's hawk, burrowing owl, and nesting birds.
- **Climate Change:** Temporary and long-term changes in greenhouse gas emissions resulting from the proposed project, which could contribute to global climate change.
- **Cultural Resources:** Temporary and/or permanent disturbance of known and unknown historic or archaeological resources, especially the mine tailings located on the Nimbus site.
- **Earth and Paleontological Resources:** Potential soil erosion or loss of topsoil during construction; potential loss of mineral resources; and potential disturbance of unknown unique paleontological resources during earthmoving activities.
- **Hazards and Hazardous Materials:** Potential spills of hazardous materials during construction; potential exposure to hazardous materials during construction; and increased exposure to wildland fire risk during construction.
- **Hydrology and Water Quality:** Potential temporary and permanent alteration of local drainage patterns and runoff effects, including potential drainage to the American River (from the Nimbus site) or the City of Rancho Cordova's storm drainage system (from the Kilgore site); temporary off-site effects on water quality associated with construction and long-term urban development; and potential effects of impervious surfaces on groundwater recharge.
- **Land Use and Planning (including Agriculture and Forestry Resources):** Consistency with adopted land use plans, including the Sacramento County General Plan and City of Rancho Cordova General Plan; consistency with adjacent adopted land use plans including American River Parkway Plan; division of an existing community; conversion of Important Farmland to nonagricultural use; conflicts with lands under Williamson Act contracts; and potential loss or conversion of forestland or timberland.
- **Noise:** Temporary and short-term increases in noise and vibration levels near sensitive receptors during construction; permanent increases in noise as a result of project operation.

- **Public Services and Utilities (including Power and Energy):** Potential disruption of utility service from construction activities; and potential increased need for public services and utilities, including power and energy needs, associated with operation of the new JOC.
- **Recreation:** Potential construction-related impacts to recreational facilities in near the project area, including the American River Parkway, Nimbus Fish Hatchery, and the Sacramento State Aquatics Center at the Nimbus site; and the International Drive bicycle path at the Kilgore site.
- **Socioeconomics (including Population, Employment, and Housing):** Temporary and permanent increase in local/regional employment opportunities; potential increased need for housing; and other potential socioeconomic impacts, the analysis of which is required by NEPA.
- **Transportation and Circulation:** Temporary increase in traffic and traffic hazards on local roadways and U.S. Highway 50 ramps during construction, including hauling; temporary disruption of emergency service response times and access; permanent increase in traffic on local roadways and U.S. Highway 50 ramps during project operation; potential effects on pedestrian and bicycle access to/from adjacent roadways.
- **Growth Inducement:** Potential growth-inducing impacts from project construction, including substantial new short-term and permanent employment opportunities.
- **Environmental Justice and Indian Trust Assets:** Potential for disproportionately high and adverse effects on minority or low income populations, including Tribal populations and assets, the analysis of which is required by NEPA.

These issue areas will be discussed further in the EIS/EIR, and mitigation measures will be recommended wherever feasible to reduce potentially significant and significant impacts.

**SCOPING MEETINGS:** Two public scoping meetings will be held to inform interested parties about the proposed project and to solicit agency and public input on the scope and content of the EIS/EIR:

- Thursday, February 3, 2011, 2:00–4:00 p.m. (brief presentation at 2:30 p.m.)
- Thursday, February 3, 2011, 6:30–8:30 p.m. (brief presentation at 7:00 p.m.)

The scoping meetings will be held at the Sacramento State Aquatics Center, 1901 Hazel Avenue, Sacramento, California. Each meeting will include a brief presentation about the project and then allow attendees to learn more and ask questions in an open-house format at several information stations.

If special assistance is required to participate in the public scoping meetings, please contact Mr. John Engstrom or Ms. Elizabeth Vasquez (contact information is provided below) as far in advance as possible to enable Reclamation to secure the needed services. If a request cannot be honored, the requestor will be notified. A telephone device for the hearing impaired (TDD) is available at 916-989-7285.

**COMMENTS:** This NOP is being circulated for a 30-day public comment period, beginning on January 18, 2011, and ending on February 16, 2011. Written or oral comments on the proposed content and scope of the EIS/EIR can be provided at the public scoping meetings, or written comments may be provided directly to Reclamation or DWR. Comments must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on February 17, 2011. Agencies that will need to use the EIS/EIR when considering permits or other approvals for the proposed project should provide the name of a contact person. Comments provided by e-mail should include the name and address of the sender. Please send all written and/or e-mail comments to one of the following:

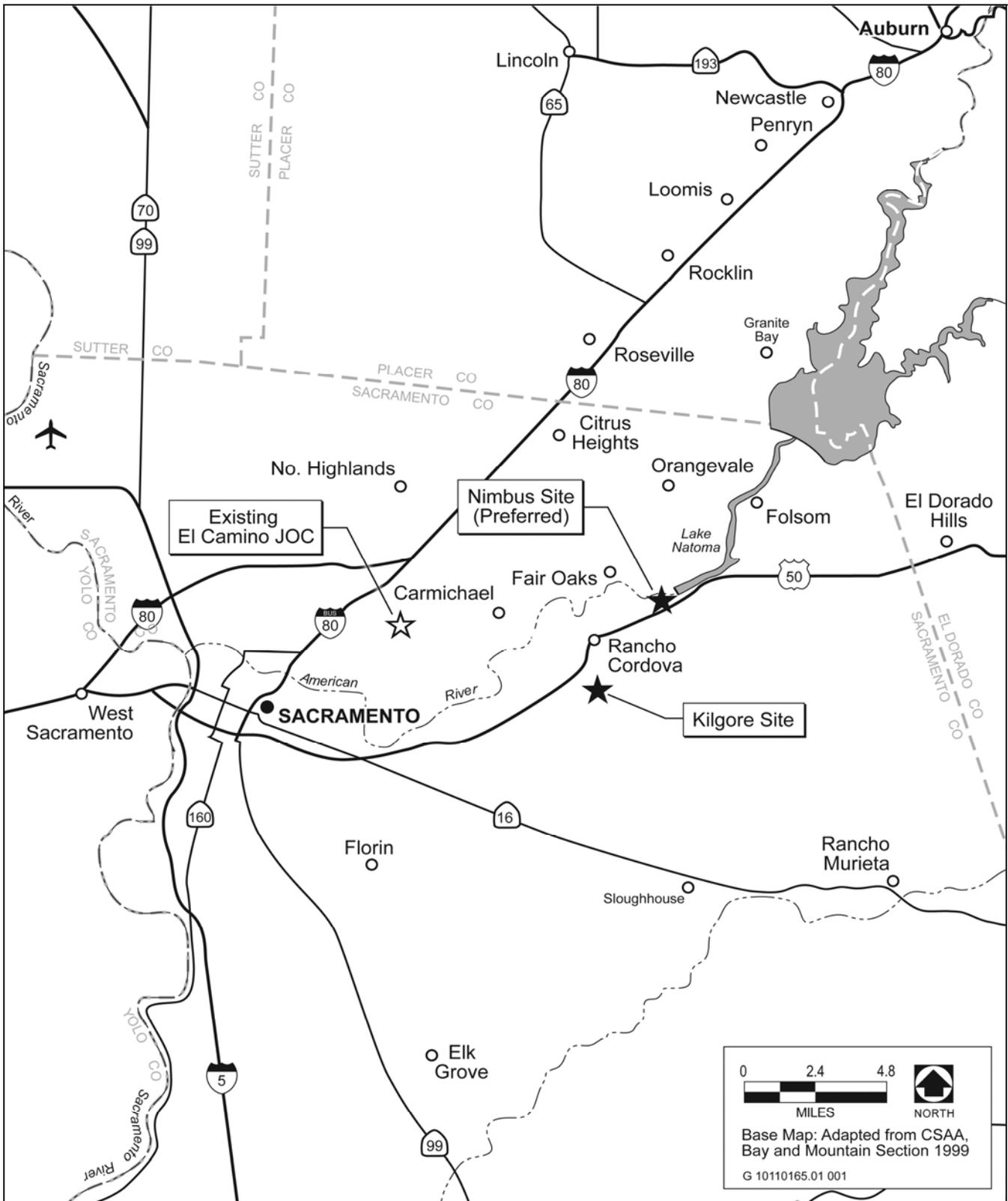
Division of Management Services  
**California Dept. of Water Resources**  
1416 Ninth Street, Room 315/P.O. Box  
942836  
Sacramento, CA 942836-0001  
Attention: John Engstrom  
Telephone: (916) 651-8745  
Fax: (916) 653-6476  
E-mail: engstrom@water.ca.gov

Office of Environmental Affairs  
**Bureau of Reclamation**  
2800 Cottage Way  
Sacramento, CA 95825  
Attention: Elizabeth Vasquez  
Telephone: (916) 978-5040  
Fax: (916) 978-5055  
E-mail: evasquez@usbr.gov

More information about the project is available at <http://www.usbr.gov/mp/cvo/joc.html>.

Before including your name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, please be aware that your entire comment, including your personal identifying information, may be made publicly available at any time. While you can request in your comment that your personal identifying information be withheld from public review, Reclamation and DWR cannot guarantee that this will be possible.

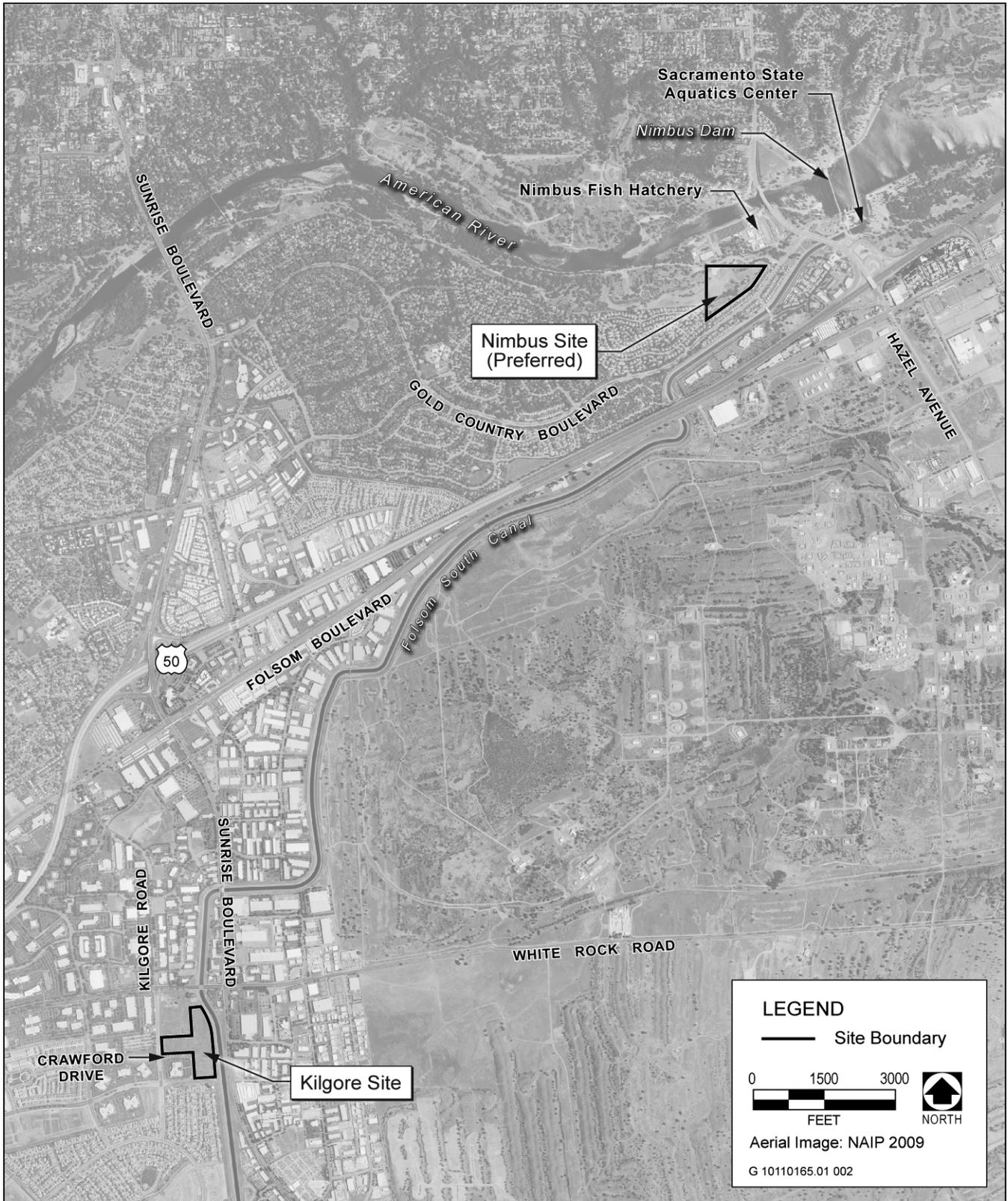
All comments received during the public comment period will be considered and addressed in the EIS/EIR, which is anticipated to be available for public review in spring 2011.



Source: Adapted by AECOM in 2010

**Project Vicinity**

**Exhibit 1**



Source: Adapted by AECOM in 2010

**Site Locations**

**Exhibit 2**

**4310-MN-P**

**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

Bureau of Reclamation

Joint Operations Center Relocation Project, Sacramento County, California

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Reclamation, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement/environmental impact report (EIS/EIR) and notice of public scoping meetings.

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act and the California Environmental Quality Act, the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), the lead Federal agency, and the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), the lead State agency, will prepare a joint EIS/EIR for the proposed Joint Operations Center (JOC) Relocation Project (Proposed Action). The purpose of the Proposed Action is to construct a new JOC in the Sacramento area to be occupied by June 2015. The new JOC would provide typical office space and special needs/essential services space for combined occupancy by Reclamation, DWR, and the NOAA's National Weather Service (NWS) to replace jointly occupied space at 3310 El Camino Avenue in Sacramento.

**DATES:** Written comments on the scope of the EIS/EIR will be accepted until February 17, 2011.

Two public scoping meetings will be held to solicit public input on the scope and content of the EIS/EIR:

- Thursday February 3, 2011, 2:30 pm to 4:00 pm, Sacramento, California.
- Thursday February 3, 2011, 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm, Sacramento, California.

**ADDRESSES:** Send written comments on the content and scope of the EIS/EIR to Ms. Elizabeth Vasquez, Division of Environmental Affairs, Bureau of Reclamation, 2800 Cottage Way, Sacramento, CA 95825 or e-mail [evasquez@usbr.gov](mailto:evasquez@usbr.gov).

The public scoping meetings will be held at Sacramento State Aquatics Center, 1901 Hazel Avenue, Gold River, California.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ms. Elizabeth Vasquez, 916-978-5040; email at [evasquez@usbr.gov](mailto:evasquez@usbr.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** As with the currently occupied space, the proposed JOC would be shared by the following departments:

- DWR's Division of Operations and Maintenance, Operations Control Office, State Water Project Power and Risk Office, and Division of Flood Management offices;
- Reclamation's Central Valley Project Operations Office; and
- The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's NWS and River Forecast Center.

Along with evaluating a No-Action Alternative, the EIS/EIR will analyze two potential sites for the proposed JOC at an equal level of detail – both of which are located in Sacramento County, California. The sites under consideration are:

- Site 1 (Preferred): The Nimbus site is an 18-acre parcel owned by Reclamation and located adjacent to the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) Nimbus Fish Hatchery, near the Nimbus Dam on the American River. The site is adjacent to the Upper Sunrise Area of the American River Parkway and contains

dredge spoils from gold mining on the American River. Access to the site is from U.S. Highway 50 via Hazel Avenue and Gold Country Boulevard.

- Site 2: The Kilgore/Crawford site is a privately owned 18-acre property located northeast of the intersection of Kilgore Road and Crawford Drive. The site is in a commercial area adjacent to office buildings and is bounded on the south side by the Folsom South Canal. Access to the site is from U.S. Highway 50 via Sunrise Boulevard and Kilgore Road.

At this time, there are no known Indian trust assets or environmental justice issues associated with the Proposed Action.

### **Special Assistance for Public Scoping Meetings**

If special assistance is required to participate in the public scoping meetings, please contact Ms. Elizabeth Vasquez (see “For Further Information Contact” above) as far in advance as possible to enable Reclamation to secure the needed services. If a request cannot be honored, the requestor will be notified. A telephone device for the hearing impaired (TDD) is available at 916-989-7285.

### **Public Disclosure**

Before including your name, address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be publicly available at any time. While you can ask us, in your comment, to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Dated: November 23, 2010

Signed: /s/ Anastasia T. Leigh  
Anastasia T. Leigh  
Acting Regional Environmental Officer  
Mid-Pacific Region

# The Sacramento Bee

P.O. Box 15779 • 2100 Q Street • Sacramento, CA 95852

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SAC CA 95811

## DECLARATION OF PUBLICATION (C.C.P. 2015.5)

COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO  
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

I am a citizen of the United States and a resident of the County aforesaid; I am over the age of eighteen years, and not a party to or interested in the above entitled matter. I am the printer and principal clerk of the publisher of The Sacramento Bee, printed and published in the City of Sacramento, County of Sacramento, State of California, daily, for which said newspaper has been adjudged a newspaper of general circulation by the Superior Court of the County of Sacramento, State of California, under the date of September 26, 1994, Action No. 379071; that the notice of which the annexed is a printed copy, has been published in each issue thereof and not in any supplement thereof on the following dates, to wit:

**January 19, 2011**

I certify (or declare) under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct and that this declaration was executed at Sacramento, California,

on **January 19, 2011**

  
(Signature)

### Scoping Meetings and Comment Period for an Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report on the Joint Operations Center Relocation Project

Comment Period: January 19 to February 17, 2011

Scoping Meetings: February 3, 2011

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) and the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) will prepare a joint environmental impact statement (EIS)/environmental impact report (EIR) for the Joint Operations Center (JOC) Relocation Project in Sacramento County, California. Reclamation will be the Federal lead agency for purposes of complying with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and DWR will be the State lead agency for compliance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** Reclamation, DWR, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)'s National Weather Service (NWS) propose to construct a new JOC in the Sacramento area to be occupied by June 2015. The new JOC would provide special needs/essential services facilities and office space for combined occupancy by Reclamation, DWR, and NWS to replace the existing El Camino JOC.

The new JOC needs to accommodate approximately 500 employees and be approximately 200,000 square feet. The preliminary design concepts being considered in the EIS/EIR are (1) one three-story building and two one-story buildings or (2) two one-story buildings and two two-story buildings. The new JOC would occupy approximately 16 acres of land, including access roads and parking lots.

**PROJECT ALTERNATIVES:** Two alternative locations have been identified for the project: a site owned by Reclamation adjacent to the Nimbus Fish Hatchery and a representative commercial site on Kilgore Road near Sunrise Boulevard. A No-Action Alternative will also be evaluated.

**Probable ENVIRONMENTAL Impacts:** The full range of environmental issues will be addressed as required under NEPA and CEQA. Key issues are anticipated to be aesthetic/visual resources, biological resources, climate change, cultural resources, recreation, and traffic; cumulative impacts will also be evaluated. Mitigation measures will be recommended wherever feasible to reduce potentially significant and significant impacts.

**SCOPING MEETINGS:** Two public scoping meetings will be held to inform interested parties about the proposed project and to solicit agency and public input on the scope and content of the EIS/EIR:

- Thursday, February 3, 2011, 2:30-4 p.m.
- Thursday, February 3, 2011, 7-8:30 p.m.

Meetings will be held at the Sacramento State Aquatics Center, 1901 Hazel Avenue, Sacramento, California.

**Comments:** Comments must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on February 17, 2011. Written or oral comments on the proposed content and scope of the EIS/EIR can be provided at the public scoping meetings, or written comments may be provided directly to Reclamation or DWR:

Division of Management Services  
California Dept. of Water Resources  
P.O. Box 942836  
Sacramento, CA 942836-0001  
Attention: John Engstrom  
E-mail: engstrom@water.ca.gov

Office of Environmental Affairs  
Bureau of Reclamation  
2800 Cottage Way  
Sacramento, CA 95825  
Attention: Elizabeth Vasquez  
E-mail: evasquez@usbr.gov  
Fax: 916-653-6476 Fax: 916-978-5055



Reclamation  
Mid-Pacific Region  
Sacramento, CA



California  
Department of  
Water Resources



National Oceanic and  
Atmospheric Administration

## Mid-Pacific Region Sacramento, CA

MP-11-010

### Media Contacts:

Pete Lucero, Reclamation, 916-978-5100

Ted Thomas, DWR, 916-653-9712

Matt Ocana, National Weather Service, 801-524-5692

For Release On: January 31, 2011

## Reclamation, CA Department of Water Resources and National Weather Service Assess New Sites for Flood, Water Operations

The Bureau of Reclamation, California Department of Water Resources (DWR) and the National Weather Service (NWS) have scheduled public scoping meetings on the proposed relocation of the Joint Operations Center (JOC) in Sacramento County.

To better coordinate California water and flood operations, the three agencies plan to relocate the JOC by 2015 from the existing facility on El Camino Avenue near Watt Avenue in Sacramento to a new site.

The proposed relocation would improve communications and coordination during emergencies, such as floods and droughts, and would accommodate approximately 500 employees. The new facility would house control centers for the State Water Project and the federal Central Valley Project, a flood operations center, backup power supplies, primary and backup communication systems, complex computer infrastructure, and physical and cyber security systems, and would meet state essential service criteria. The current facility was adapted from a former retail store property and does not meet state essential service criteria.

The public and media are invited to attend either of two scoping meetings to be held:

**When:** Thursday, February 3, 2011, afternoon session 2-4 p.m., or evening session 6:30-8:30 p.m.

**Where:** Sacramento State Aquatics Center, 1901 Hazel Avenue, Sacramento, CA 95670

-more-

The scoping sessions will have an open house format with employees available to answer questions. Staff will present an introduction to the project at 2:30 p.m. and again at 7 p.m.

Two locations are being considered for a new JOC: a site owned by Reclamation adjacent to the Nimbus Fish Hatchery and a commercial site on Kilgore Road near Sunrise Boulevard.

An Environmental Impact Statement and Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) will be prepared describing any potentially significant environmental impacts of the proposed project. For more information see the project Web site at <http://www.usbr.gov/mp/cvo/joc.html>.

Written or oral comments on the proposed content and scope of the EIS/EIR or on alternatives to be considered may be provided at the public scoping meetings. Written comments may be provided directly to Reclamation or DWR at:

**California Department of Water Resources**

Division of Management Services  
P.O. Box 942836  
Sacramento, CA 942836  
Attention: John Engstrom  
Telephone: 916-651-8745  
Fax: 916-653-6476  
E-mail: [engstrom@water.ca.gov](mailto:engstrom@water.ca.gov)

**Bureau of Reclamation**

Division of Environmental Affairs  
2800 Cottage Way  
Sacramento, CA 95825  
Attention: Elizabeth Vasquez  
Telephone: 916- 978-5040  
Fax: 916-978-5055  
E-mail: [evasquez@usbr.gov](mailto:evasquez@usbr.gov)

Comments must be received no later than 5 p.m. on Wednesday, February 16, 2011.

###

Reclamation is the largest wholesale water supplier and the second largest producer of hydroelectric power in the United States, with operations and facilities in the 17 Western States. Its facilities also provide substantial flood control, recreation, and fish and wildlife benefits. Visit our website at <http://www.usbr.gov>.





February 2011

## Joint Operations Center Relocation Project

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), California Department of Water Resources (DWR), and National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service (NWS) propose to relocate their joint operations center (JOC) from the interim existing facility on El Camino Avenue in 2015. The relocation would allow the agencies to address essential service requirements, safety and physical security requirements, and future expansion space requirements that cannot be met at the existing facility. An environmental impact statement/environmental impact report (EIS/EIR) will be prepared for the project. Two locations are being considered: a Reclamation-owned property near Nimbus Fish Hatchery and a commercial site on Kilgore Road near Sunrise Boulevard. A no-action alternative will also be evaluated.

The public is invited to attend open house meetings to comment on the proposed content and scope of the EIS/EIR:

### Open House Meetings

**February 3, 2011**

Sacramento State Aquatics Center

1901 Hazel Avenue  
Sacramento, CA

2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

(short presentation at 2:30 p.m.)

**OR**

6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

(short presentation at 7:00 p.m.)

To add your name to the mailing list for future project updates, please email or mail your contact information to:

#### **Office of Environmental Affairs, Bureau of Reclamation**

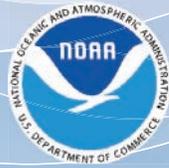
Attention: Elizabeth Vasquez

2800 Cottage Way, Sacramento, CA 95825

Email: [evasquez@usbr.gov](mailto:evasquez@usbr.gov)

Fax: 916-978-5055

More information is available at: [www.usbr.gov/mp/cvo/joc.html](http://www.usbr.gov/mp/cvo/joc.html)



# Joint Operations Center Relocation Project

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), California Department of Water Resources (DWR), and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service (NWS) are currently co-located in a joint operations center (JOC) near Watt Avenue and El Camino Avenue (Figure 1) in Sacramento, California (Existing JOC) that includes the following:

- DWR's Division of Operations and Maintenance, Operations Control Office, State Water Project (SWP) Power and Risk Office, and Division of Flood Management's Offices of Operations and Maintenance and Hydrology and Flood Operations including the State-Federal Flood Operations Center;
- Reclamation's Central Valley Project (CVP) Operations Office; and
- NWS Sacramento Weather Forecast Office (WFO) and California-Nevada River Forecast Center (RFC).

The existing lease expires in June 2015. The existing JOC no longer meets critical requirements of the agencies, including:

- essential service requirements;
- safety and physical security requirements; and
- space for future expansion.

The cost to retrofit the existing JOC and requirements to temporarily vacate the building during remodel make such actions impractical and cost-prohibitive. As a result, the agencies are proposing to construct and operate a new JOC.

## Project Description

The proposed new JOC would provide the special needs, essential services, and requisite office space for the combined occupancy of Reclamation, DWR, and NWS. Special needs are defined as two control centers, flood operations center, backup power supplies, primary and backup communication systems, intense computer infrastructure, physical and cyber security systems, and meeting state essential service criteria. The screening

criteria used by Reclamation, DWR, NWS, and the California Department of Government Services (DGS) to establish a new JOC site include the following:

- must be along or adjacent to a major traffic thoroughfare and within a 20-minute commute from downtown Sacramento (DWR headquarters);
- must be outside of the 200-year floodplain;
- must allow line of sight for specialized communications systems and equipment, redundant communication systems, and excellent availability, reliability, and redundancy of power service;
- must be large enough to provide clear space building set-back allowances (100 feet from all off-site vehicle approaches) for physical security;
- must be able to maintain a secure perimeter;
- must have a lower risk of incompatible adjacent development; and
- must have access to alternative transportation, bus service, and/or light rail.

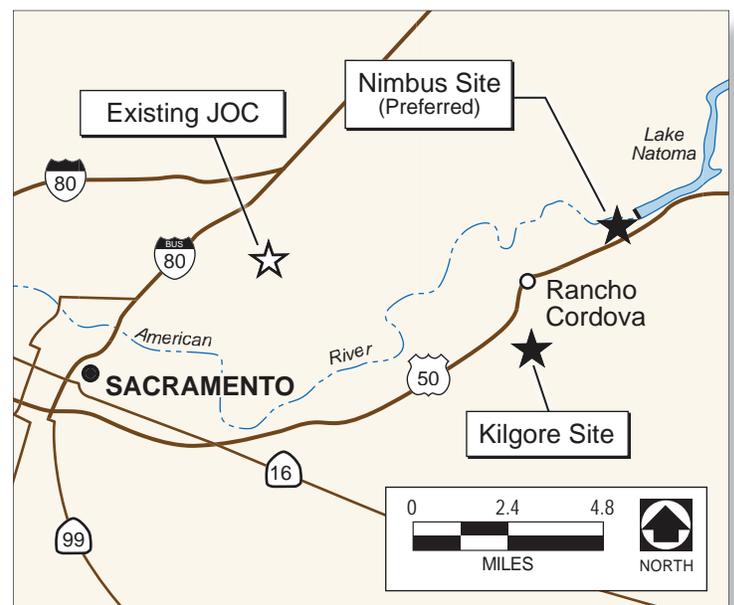
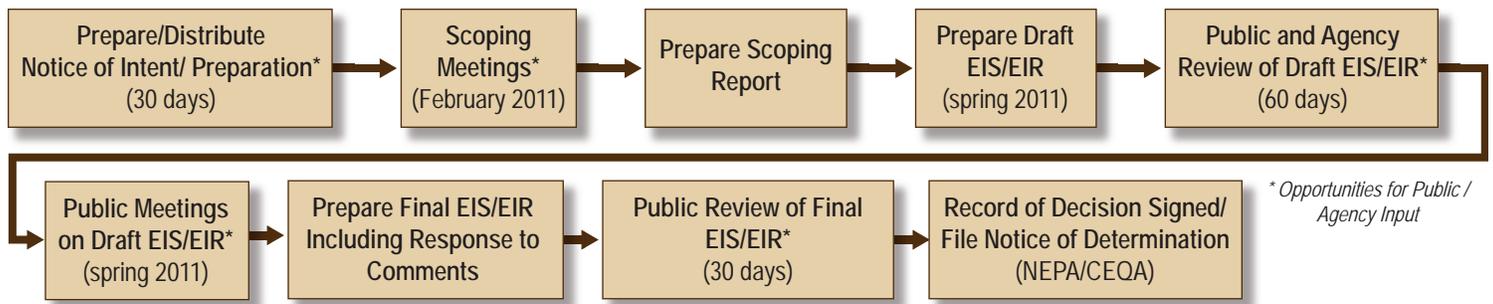


Figure 1: Alternative JOC Sites



## Project Characteristics

DGS would be responsible for the design and construction of the new JOC, which needs to accommodate about 600 employees and be about 200,000 square feet. The design and footprint of the new JOC would be completed under contract to DGS. The preliminary design concepts being considered in the EIS/EIR are (1) one three-story building and two one-story buildings or (2) two one-story buildings and two two-story buildings. The new JOC would occupy approximately 16 acres of land, including access roads and parking lots.

## Project Alternatives

Following a multiple-year process of identifying and ranking possible sites, two sites have been selected for further review and analysis. These sites—the Nimbus site and a commercial site on Kilgore Road—are shown on Figure 1.

The Nimbus site (preferred)

- 19-acre parcel
- Owned by Reclamation, would be leased to other agencies
- Two JOC configurations for analysis

The Kilgore site

- 18-acre parcel
- Privately owned
- Representative commercial site, would require future competitive procurement process
- One JOC configuration for analysis

## Environmental Review

The agencies are preparing an environmental impact statement/environmental impact report (EIS/EIR) that will describe the potentially significant and significant environmental impacts of the proposed project. The full range of environmental issues will be addressed. Mitigation measures will be recommended wherever feasible to reduce potentially significant impacts.

## Public Meetings

Two scoping meetings are being held on February 3, 2011, at the Sacramento State Aquatic Center, Meeting Room 201-204, 1901 Hazel Avenue, to provide input on the scope and content of the EIS/EIR.

Additional public meetings will be held following publication of the draft EIS/EIR in spring 2011.

### Public Comments

For more information or to provide your comments on the NOI/NOP (by February 17, 2011) please contact:

#### Bureau of Reclamation Office of Environmental Affairs

2800 Cottage Way  
Sacramento, CA 95825  
Attention: Elizabeth Vasquez  
Telephone: (916) 978-5040  
Fax: (916) 978-5055  
E-mail: [evasquez@usbr.gov](mailto:evasquez@usbr.gov)

#### California Department of Water Resources Division of Management Services

1416 Ninth Street, Room 315/P.O. Box 942836  
Sacramento, CA 942836-0001  
Attention: John Engstrom  
Telephone: (916) 651-8745  
Fax: (916) 653-6476  
E-mail: [engstrom@water.ca.gov](mailto:engstrom@water.ca.gov)

Or visit the project site: [www.usbr.gov/mp/cvo/joc.html](http://www.usbr.gov/mp/cvo/joc.html)



**Joint Operations Center Relocation Project**

↓ Fold Here ↓

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Add to mailing list: Y / N

Office of Environmental Affairs  
Bureau of Reclamation  
Attention: Elizabeth Vasquez  
2800 Cottage Way  
Sacramento, CA 95825