FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
FOR THE
RENEWAL OF WATER SERVICE CONTRACTS
FOR THE SACRAMENTO RIVER DIVISION CONTRACTORS

FEBRUARY 24, 2005

CENTRAL VALLEY PROJECT
CALIFORNIA

The Mid-Pacific Region of the Bureau of Reclamation has found that an environmental impact statement is not required for the proposed execution of the renewal of water service contracts for the Sacramento River Division contractors. The Sacramento River Division consists of 18 contractors in the Tehama-Colusa Canal Unit, the Corning Canal Unit, and the Black Butte Unit (see attached Environmental Assessment). The renewal would be for 25 years for contracts with agricultural uses or a combination of agricultural and municipal/industrial uses and for 40 years for contracts with municipal/industrial uses only. The contract period would begin March 1, 2005, and end February 28, 2030, for the 25-year contract period. The contract period for the 40-year contracts would begin March 1, 2005, and end February 28, 2045. The Environmental Assessment (EA) that is incorporated by reference supports this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

Section 3409 of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA) stipulates that Reclamation must prepare appropriate environmental review for renewal of long-term water service contracts. Reclamation initially prepared a draft EA in May 2003 and revised it in August 2003 following a 30-day public review period and again in July 2004 for an additional 30-day comment period. Comments received in the public review of those documents have been incorporated and are presented in the current December 2004 final EA.

Reclamation has prepared this EA to determine if renewing the Sacramento River Division long-term water service contracts would result in any site-specific significant impacts to the human environment. This EA has been prepared pursuant to and in accordance with Section 102 (2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (42 USC§ 4321-4370d), the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations on implementing NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and Reclamation's NEPA handbook (Bureau of Reclamation 1990).

The proposed action is the execution of long-term water service contracts between the United States and the Sacramento River Division contractors for 25 or 40 years. The purpose of this action is to renew the Sacramento River Division water service contracts, consistent with the provisions of CVPIA.

Long-term contract renewal is needed to:

- Continue beneficial use of water, developed and managed as part of the Central Valley Project (CVP), with a reasonable balance among competing demands, including the needs of irrigation and domestic uses; fish and wildlife protection, restoration, and mitigation; fish and wildlife enhancement; power generation; recreation; and other water uses consistent with requirements imposed by the State Water Resources Control Board and the CVPIA;
- Incorporate certain administrative conditions into the renewed contracts to ensure CVP continued compliance with current Federal reclamation law and other applicable statutes; and
- Allow the continued reimbursement to the Federal government for costs related to CVP construction and operation.

FINDINGS

In accordance with NEPA and its implementing regulations and consistent with the analysis in the Sacramento River Division Long-Term Water Service Contract Renewal EA, Reclamation has found that implementation of the proposed action will result in no significant impact to the quality of the human environment. This finding is supported by the following factors:

1. Water Resources. Renewal of the long-term contracts will not change contract water quantities from the quantities in existing contracts and, therefore, will not cause any increased use. Therefore, there will be no effect on surface water supplies or quality. For the same reason, renewal of long-term contracts will not result in any growth-inducing impacts that will increase water demand during the time frame of this renewal.

2. Land Use. The renewal of contracts will not provide for additional water supplies that could act as an incentive for conversion of native habitat for increased acreage of agricultural production, municipal and industrial development, or other activities. The amount and types of crops will vary according to the annual water allocation and farming practices, and a small quantity of irrigation use may be changed to Municipal and Industrial (M&I) purposes where the existing contract and governing laws and regulations allow. Therefore, there will be no significant effect on land uses.

3. Biological Resources. The amount and timing of storage at CVP reservoirs and flows in rivers and streams that convey CVP water during the contract renewal period are expected to be similar to the amount and timing of storage and flows under historic CVP operations and will be in conformance with all existing biological opinions and with regulatory requirements. Renewal of the long-term contracts will not cause changes in existing programs to protect biological resources and programs will continue to be implemented to ensure that no significant impacts to biological resources will occur. Because there will be no significant effect on, or changes to, land or water use, there will be no significant effect on biological resources.

4. Threatened and Endangered Species. The proposed long-term contract renewal would continue the deliveries of CVP water to contractors of the Sacramento River Division. It would not change or alter habitat use by, or populations of, species listed or proposed for listing as threatened or endangered that are known to occur or have the potential to occur in the contractors' service area. Thus this action results in no significant impact to listed species. Reclamation has consulted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA Fisheries). Results of these consultations were considered in finalizing the Environmental Assessment and executing this FONSI.

5. Cultural Resources. The proposed action will not cause activities that could affect cultural resources, such as permanent changes in reservoir elevations, development of native habitat for agricultural or M&I use, or the construction of any new facilities. No impacts to cultural resources are expected.

6. Recreation Resources. The proposed action will not cause changes in historic CVP operations that determine reservoir storage or the amount or timing of water deliveries. Therefore, no impacts to recreational resources are anticipated.

7. Demographics and Environmental Justice. The proposed action will not cause changes in historical water supplies or CVP operations and, as a result, no changes in population and the various indicators of social well-being will result from the contract renewal. The proposed action will support continued agricultural production and, therefore, will not cause changes to employment of minority and low-income populations. No disproportionate impacts to minority or low-income populations are expected to occur as a result of renewing these contracts.

8. Indian Trust Assets. Continued delivery of project water under the existing contracts will not affect any Indian trust assets because existing rights will not be affected, no physical changes to existing facilities are proposed, and no new facilities are proposed.

9. Economic Resources. The renewal of long-term CVP contracts will not cause changes from existing contracts in deliveries or pricing of CVP water, CVP facilities operations, CVP power generation and use, or recreation use, and, therefore, will not cause economic impacts.

Information about the EA prepared for the proposed action or this FONSI may be obtained from Basia Trout, Bureau of Reclamation, 530-528-0512.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

MID-PACIFIC REGION

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA AREA OFFICE
SHASTA LAKE, CALIFORNIA

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Long-term Water Service Contract Renewals for the Sacramento River Division Contractors
Central Valley Project

Sacramento, California

FONSI NO. NC-04-05

Recommended: Russell P. Smith 2/24/05
Environmental Officer — Date
Northern California Area Office

Approved: FEB 24, 2005
Area Manager — Date
Northern California Area Office

Concur: Frank Michny 2/25/05
Regional Environmental Officer — Date
Mid-Pacific Regional Office