

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

Warren Act Contract for Storage and Conveyance of Non-CVP Water from El Dorado Irrigation District to Westlands Water District in 2015

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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FONSI No. 15-20-MP



U. S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Mid-Pacific Region
Sacramento, California

August 2015

Introduction

The United States Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) will enter into a Warren Act contract with Westlands Water District (WWD) to facilitate the transfer of 3,100 acre-feet (AF) of El Dorado Irrigation District (EID) water to WWD in 2015. WWD faces deficits in their water supplies in 2015, and similar conditions are envisioned for 2016. The result of this shortfall will be the potential loss of annual agricultural crops and potential damage to permanent crops. This transfer will prevent some of the potential agricultural losses from the two consecutive zero allocations of CVP water in 2014 and 2015.

EID proposes to transfer up to 3,100 acre-feet (AF) of water during the summer of 2015 to WWD. EID will make the water available through re-operations of EID reservoirs to release water otherwise planned to be stored within the EID network of reservoirs. Specifically, the transfer quantity is derived from the following re-operations:

1. Up to 700 AF will be released from Weber Reservoir from sometime in August to September 23 that would otherwise be maintained in storage.
2. Up to 2,400 AF will be released from Silver Lake that will otherwise be added to storage in Jenkinson Lake or used directly to meet summer/fall 2015 water demands from EID's service area for municipal, industrial, and irrigation uses, as well as wastewater treatment and recycled water services, that will instead be met with water previously stored in Jenkinson Lake.

The proposed project will result in the temporary decreased storage of approximately 700 AF in Weber Reservoir and approximately 2,400 AF in Jenkinson Lake, and the temporary increased storage of approximately 3,100 AF in Folsom Reservoir before Reclamation conveys the water to WWD.

As part of the proposed project, EID and Reclamation will enter into a refill agreement for Weber Reservoir and Jenkinson Lake with conditions acceptable to both parties to ensure that CVP water system operations will not be adversely affected during the refill of the storage void created by the transfers of previously stored water in 2015.

To accomplish this transfer, the following temporary (one year or less) changes in Place of Use and Point of Rediversion are being sought by Petition to the State Water Resources Control Board pursuant to EID Water Right License 2184 (Application 1692) and consistent with California Water Code Sections 1725-1732:

1. The temporary addition of the Reclamation CVP Jones intake facility;
2. The temporary addition of San Luis Reservoir, a Reclamation CVP facility, as a point for the temporary storage and rediversion of the transfer water by WWD under License 2184; and
3. The temporary addition of the WWD service area to License 2184 authorizing consumptive

and beneficial uses of transfer water within the WWD service area.

The Proposed Action will be in compliance with the 2008 USFWS and 2009 NOAA Fisheries biological opinions on the coordinated operations of the Central Valley Project and State Water Project

Reclamation prepared the attached Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate the effects of the Proposed Action. The EA was available for public review from August 4, 2015 through August 11, 2015. EID sent the only comment, which clarified the proposed action.

Findings

Based on the attached EA, Reclamation finds that the Proposed Action is not a major Federal action that will significantly affect the quality of the human environment. The attached EA describes the existing environmental resources in the Proposed Action area and evaluates the effects of the No Action and Proposed Action alternatives on the resources. The EA was prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508), and Department of the Interior Regulations (43 CFR Part 46). This analysis is provided in the attached EA, and the analysis in the EA is incorporated by reference.

Following are the reasons why the impacts of the Proposed Action are not significant:

1. The proposed action will not significantly affect public health or safety (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(3)).
2. The proposed action will not significantly impact natural resources and unique geographical characteristics such as historic or cultural resources; parks, recreation, and refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order (EO) 11990); flood plains (EO 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(3) and 43 CFR 46.215(b)).
3. The proposed action will not have possible effects on the human environment that are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(5)).
4. The proposed action will neither establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects nor represent a decision in principle about a future consideration (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(6)).
5. There is no potential for the effects to be considered highly controversial (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(4)).
6. The proposed action will not have significant cumulative impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)).
7. The proposed action will not affect historic properties (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(8)).

8. The proposed action will not affect listed or proposed threatened or endangered species (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(9)).

9. The proposed action will not violate federal, state, tribal or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(10)).

10. The proposed action will not affect any Indian Trust Assets (512 DM 2, Policy Memorandum dated December 15, 1993).

11. Implementing the proposed action will not disproportionately affect minorities or low-income populations and communities (EO 12898).

12. The proposed action will not limit access to, and ceremonial use of, Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (EO 13007 and 512 DM 3).