

# RECLAMATION

*Managing Water in the West*

Final Environmental Assessment

## **Exchange with City of Fresno and Fresno Irrigation District for up to 10,000 Acre-Feet of Water in Millerton Lake for Water in San Luis Reservoir**

EA-16-026



U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Reclamation

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## **Mission Statements**

The mission of the Department of the Interior is to protect and manage the Nation's natural resources and cultural heritage; provide scientific and other information about those resources; and honor its trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated island communities.

The mission of the Bureau of Reclamation is to manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public.

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# Section 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

The San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors (Exchange Contractors), which include Central California Irrigation District, Firebaugh Canal Water District, San Luis Canal Company and Columbia Canal Company hold certain historic senior water rights to water supplies in the San Joaquin River watershed. In exchange for the Central Valley Project's (CVP's) regulation and diversion of San Joaquin River water at Millerton Lake/Friant Dam for the Friant Division, the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) agreed to provide water to the Exchange Contractors from the CVP's Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Delta) supply. However, in the event that only a portion of this supply can be met from the CVP's Delta supplies via San Luis Reservoir and the Delta-Mendota Canal, Reclamation provides San Joaquin River water from Millerton Lake via the San Joaquin River channel for delivery to the Exchange Contractors at the Mendota Pool pursuant to contract obligations (see Figure 1).

### San Luis Reservoir Low Point

San Luis Reservoir is a 2 million acre-foot off stream, pumped-storage reservoir jointly owned and operated Reclamation and the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) as part of the CVP and State Water Project (SWP), respectively. Starting in April, the CVP and SWP draw on water previously stored in San Luis Reservoir to supplement Delta exports and meet south-of-Delta demands, including those of the Exchange Contractors. However, during the summer months conditions at San Luis Reservoir promote the growth of reservoir-wide algae, when the reservoir reaches the lower water surface elevations (referred to as "low point"). The low point issue arises when water levels fall below 300 thousand acre-feet (TAF), creating algae blooms that affect water quality and south-of-Delta water deliveries. As of July 25, 2016, San Luis Reservoir storage was approximately 204 TAF (Reclamation 2016).

In order to prevent operational impacts to south-of-Delta contractors, including the Exchange Contractors, the City of Fresno (City) and Fresno Irrigation District (Fresno ID) has proposed to exchange up to 10,000 acre-feet of their available CVP water supplies currently within Millerton Lake for a like amount of water at a future time in San Luis Reservoir.

## 1.2 Need for the Proposed Action

Reclamation needs to find ways to meet its contractual obligations to the Exchange Contractors without exacerbating the low point issue at San Luis Reservoir. The purpose of the proposed project is to provide water to the Exchange Contractors via the San Joaquin River rather than from San Luis Reservoir while the reservoir is facing low point.

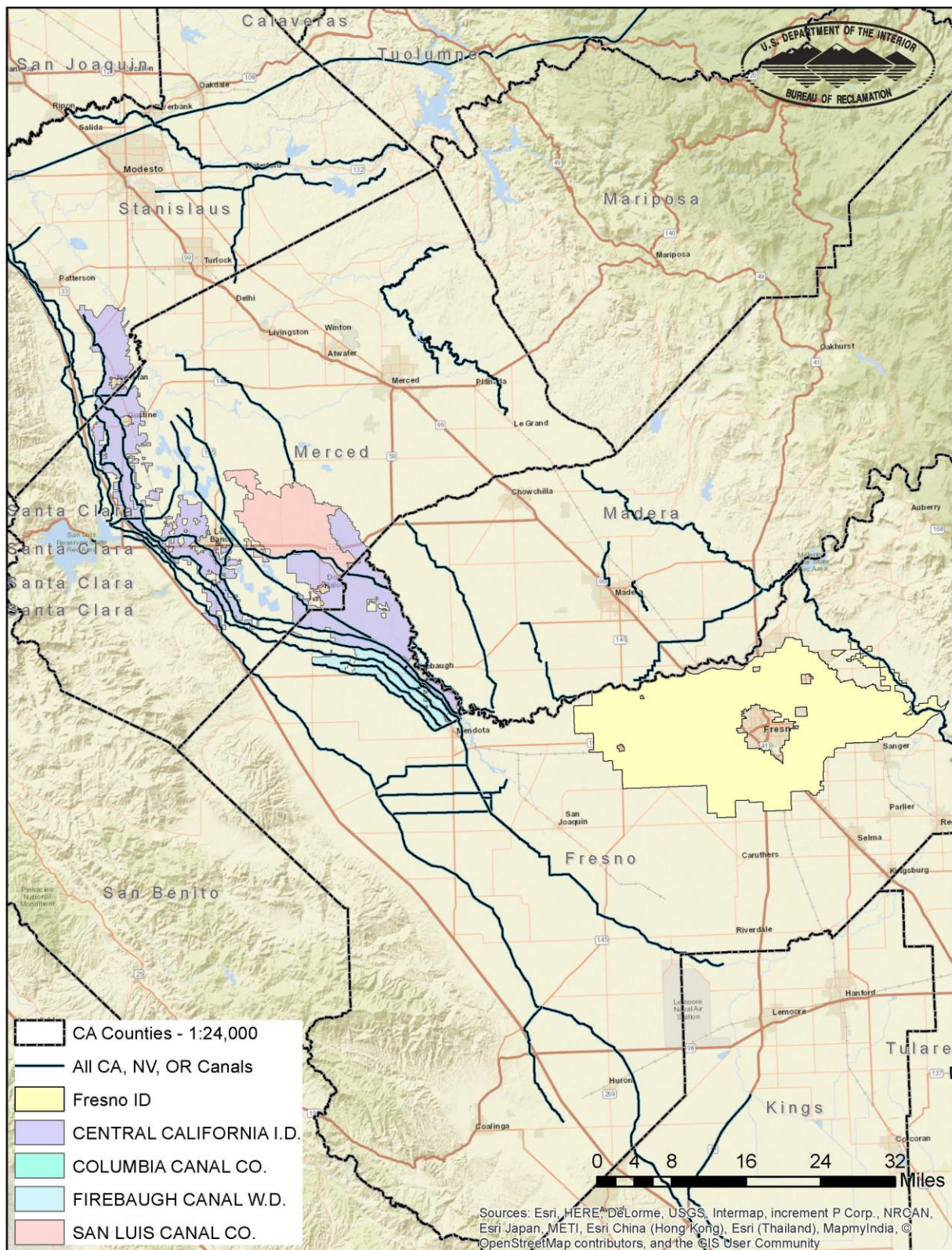


Figure 1 Proposed Action Area

## Section 2 Alternatives Including the Proposed Action

This Environmental Assessment considers two possible actions: the No Action Alternative and the Proposed Action. The No Action Alternative reflects future conditions without the Proposed Action and serves as a basis of comparison for determining potential effects to the human environment.

### 2.1 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, Reclamation would not exchange water supplies with the City or Fresno ID. San Luis Reservoir's low point condition may affect Reclamation's ability to meet south-of-Delta contract obligations, including those for the Exchange Contractors, which could affect contract allocations throughout the CVP.

### 2.2 Proposed Action

Reclamation proposes to exchange up to 10,000 acre-feet of the City's and Fresno ID's available CVP water supplies currently located in Millerton Lake. This water would be delivered to the Exchange Contractors at the Mendota Pool via the San Joaquin River to meet contract obligations. Reclamation will then return a like amount of CVP water to the City and Fresno ID in San Luis Reservoir as soon as possible but no later than the end of February 2017.

#### 2.2.1 Environmental Commitments

Reclamation, the City, Fresno ID, and the Exchange Contractors shall implement the following environmental protection measures to avoid and/or reduce environmental consequences associated with the Proposed Action (Table 1). Environmental consequences for resource areas assume the measures specified would be fully implemented.

Table 1 Environmental Protection Measures and Commitments

Resource	Protection Measure
Water Resources	The Proposed Action would not affect CVP or SWP operations; all supplies would be previously scheduled for delivery points south-of-Delta, and do not require additional Delta exports.
Water Resources	The water would only be used for beneficial purposes and in accordance with Federal Reclamation law and guidelines.
Various Resources	The water would not be used to place untilled or new lands into production, or to convert undeveloped land to other uses.
Various Resources	No new construction or modification of existing facilities may occur in order to complete the Proposed Action.
Various Resources	The Proposed Action cannot alter the flow regime of natural waterways or natural watercourses such as rivers, streams, creeks, ponds, pools, wetlands, etc., so as to have a detrimental effect on fish or wildlife or their habitats.
Various Resources	The Proposed Action would not increase or decrease water supplies that would result in land development.

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## Section 3 Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences

This section identifies the potentially affected environment and the environmental consequences involved with the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative, in addition to environmental trends and conditions that currently exist.

### 3.1 Resources Eliminated from Further Analysis

Reclamation analyzed the affected environment and determined that the Proposed Action did not have the potential to cause direct, indirect, or cumulative adverse effects to the resources listed in Table 2.

Table 2 Resources Eliminated from Further Analysis

Resource	Reason Eliminated
Air Quality	No impacts to air quality would occur as water would move through existing facilities via gravity and a determination of general conformity under the Clean Air Act is not required.
Cultural Resources	The Proposed Action would facilitate the flow of water through existing facilities to existing users. As no construction or modification of facilities would be needed in order to complete the Proposed Action, Reclamation has determined that these activities have no potential to cause effects to historic properties pursuant to 36 CFR Part 800.3(a)(1). See Appendix A for Reclamation's determination.
Environmental Justice	The Proposed Action would not cause dislocation, changes in employment, or increase flood, drought, or disease nor would it disproportionately impact economically disadvantaged or minority populations.
Global Climate	The Proposed Action would not result in emissions of greenhouse gases as water would move in existing facilities via gravity. Global climate change is expected to have some effect on the snow pack of the Sierra Nevada and the runoff regime. Current data are not yet clear on the hydrologic changes and how they will affect the San Joaquin Valley. CVP water allocations are made dependent on hydrologic conditions and environmental requirements. Since Reclamation operations are flexible, any changes in hydrologic conditions due to global climate change would be addressed within Reclamation's operation flexibility.
Indian Sacred Sites	The Proposed Action would not limit access to or ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites.
Indian Trust Assets	The Proposed Action would not impact Indian Trust Assets as there are none within 25 miles of the Proposed Action area.
Land Use	The Proposed Action would not change historic land and water management practices. Exchanged water would move through existing facilities for existing agricultural and municipal purposes. The water would not be used to place untilled or new lands into production, or to convert undeveloped land to other uses.
Socioeconomics	The Proposed Action would have beneficial impacts on socioeconomic resources as the exchanged water would be used for existing purposes.

## 3.2 Biological Resources

### 3.2.1 Affected Environment

Much of the San Joaquin Valley floor has been converted to agricultural habitat. By 1979, nearly all the Valley floor and many of the flatter upland areas were urbanized or converted to cultivated cropland (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 1998). Less than 60,700 hectares (150,000 acres), which less than five percent of the Valley floor, remains uncultivated (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 1998). As a result, the land in the Proposed Action area consists mostly of intensively farmed croplands and maintained farm roads which provide little or no habitat for special-status species. Limited natural habitat is present and what remain is mostly small acreages or isolated parcels.

A species list was obtained from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on July 29, 2016 at <http://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/> for the Proposed Action Area. The California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB 2016) was also checked for records of federally listed species in the Proposed Action Area. A summary of this information is included in Table 3 below.

Table 3 Federally listed species and critical habitat in the Proposed Action Area

Species	Status	Effects	Occurrence in the Proposed Action Area
<b>INVERTEBRATES</b>			
Conservancy fairy shrimp <i>Branchinecta conservatio</i>	E, X	NE	<b>Possible.</b> There are CNDDB records of this species near the Proposed Action Area. There is no designated Critical Habitat for this species in the Proposed Action Area. No vernal pool habitat would be altered by the Proposed Action, so there would be <i>No Effect</i> to this species.
Vernal pool fairy shrimp <i>Branchinecta lynchi</i>	T, X	NE	<b>Present.</b> There are extant CNDDB records of this species in the Proposed Action Area, however there is no designated Critical Habitat for this species within the Proposed Action Area. No vernal pool habitat would be altered by the Proposed Action, so there would be <i>No Effect</i> to this species.
Vernal pool tadpole shrimp <i>Lepidurus packardii</i>	E, X	NE	<b>Possible.</b> There are CNDDB records of this species near the Proposed Action Area. There is no designated Critical Habitat for this species in the Proposed Action Area. No vernal pool habitat would be altered by the Proposed Action, so there would be <i>No Effect</i> to this species.
Valley elderberry longhorn beetle <i>Desmocerus californicus dimorphus</i>	T, X	NE	<b>Present.</b> This species is present within the Proposed Action Area along the San Joaquin River; however, there is no designated Critical Habitat for this species within the Proposed Action Area. The Proposed Action would not alter any areas of suitable habitat for this species, or result in the disturbance or removal of this species host plant the elderberry. There would be <i>No Effect</i> to this species.
<b>FISH</b>			
Central Valley steelhead <i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i>	T, X	NE	<b>Absent.</b> This species does not occur within the Proposed Action Area, and there is no designated Critical Habitat for this species in the Proposed Action Area.

Species	Status	Effects	Occurrence in the Proposed Action Area
Central Valley spring-run Chinook <i>Oncorhynchus tshawytscha</i>	T, X	NE	<b>Absent.</b> This species was reintroduced into the San Joaquin River as part of the SJRRP; however, these fish were classified by the National Marine Fisheries Service as a non-essential experimental population and are therefore not protected under the Endangered Species Act. There is no designated Critical Habitat for this species within the Proposed Action Area.
Delta smelt <i>Hypomesus transpacificus</i>	T, X	NE	<b>Absent.</b> This species does not occur within the Proposed Action Area, and there is no designated Critical Habitat for this species in the Proposed Action Area.
Steelhead Northern California DPS <i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i>	T, X	NE	<b>Absent.</b> This species does not occur within the Proposed Action Area, and there is no designated Critical Habitat for this species in the Proposed Action Area.
<b>AMPHIBIANS</b>			
California tiger salamander, Central California DPS <i>Ambystoma californiense</i>	T, X	NE	<b>Present.</b> There are extant CNDDDB records of this species in the Proposed Action Area. Designated Critical Habitat for this species is present near Millerton Lake, but is not located within the Action Area. The Proposed Action would not alter or convert any areas of suitable habitat for this species, and would not involve any ground disturbance or construction. There would be <i>No Effect</i> to this species.
California red-legged frog <i>Rana draytonii</i>	T, X	NE	<b>Absent.</b> This species does not occur within the Proposed Action Area, and there is no designated Critical Habitat for this species in the Proposed Action Area.
<b>REPTILES</b>			
Blunt-nosed leopard lizard <i>Gambelia sila</i>	E	NE	<b>Present.</b> There are several CNDDDB records of this species within the Proposed Action Area. The Proposed Action would not alter or convert any areas of suitable habitat for this species, and would not involve any ground disturbance or construction. There would be <i>No Effect</i> to this species.
Giant garter snake <i>Thamnophis gigas</i>	T	NE	<b>Present.</b> There are CNDDDB records of this species within the Proposed Action Area. The Proposed Action would not alter the flow regime of natural waterways that may provide suitable habitat for this species, and would not convert any areas of suitable habitat for this species. There would be <i>No Effect</i> to this species.
<b>BIRDS</b>			
California Condor <i>Gymnogyps californianus</i>	E, X	NE	<b>Absent.</b> This species does not occur within the Proposed Action Area, and there is no designated Critical Habitat for this species within the Proposed Action Area.
Southwestern Willow Flycatcher <i>Empidonax traillii extimus</i>	E, X	NE	<b>Absent.</b> This species does not occur within the Proposed Action Area, and there is no designated Critical Habitat for this species within the Proposed Action Area.

Species	Status	Effects	Occurrence in the Proposed Action Area
Western Snowy Plover <i>Charadrius nivosus</i> ssp. <i>nivosus</i>	T, X	NE	<b>Present.</b> There are extant CNDDDB records of this species within the Proposed Action Area, but there is no designated Critical Habitat for this species within the Proposed Action Area. The Proposed Action would not alter or convert any areas of suitable habitat for this species, so there would be <i>No Effect</i> to this species.
Western Yellow-Billed Cuckoo <i>Coccyzus americanus</i>	T, PX	NE	<b>Possible.</b> There is one possibly extirpated CNDDDB record of this species within the Proposed Action Area, near Mendota Pool. There is no Critical Habitat for this species proposed within the Proposed Action Area. The Proposed Action would not alter or convert any areas of suitable habitat for this species, so there would be <i>No Effect</i> to this species.
<b>MAMMALS</b>			
Buena Vista Lake Ornate shrew <i>Sorex ornatus relictus</i>	E, X	NE	<b>Present.</b> There is an extant CNDDDB record of this species within the Proposed Action Area, but there is no designated Critical Habitat for this species within the Proposed Action Area. The Proposed Action would not alter or convert any areas of suitable habitat for this species, so there would be <i>No Effect</i> to this species.
Fresno kangaroo rat <i>Dipodomys nitratoideis exilis</i>	E, X	NE	<b>Possible.</b> There are CNDDDB records of this species from the 1930s within the Proposed Action Area. There is no designated Critical Habitat for this species within the Proposed Action Area. The Proposed Action would not alter or convert any areas of suitable habitat for this species, so there would be <i>No Effect</i> to this species.
Giant kangaroo rat <i>Dipodomys ingens</i>	E	NE	<b>Possible.</b> There are CNDDDB records of this species near the Proposed Action Area. The Proposed Action would not alter or convert any areas of suitable habitat for this species, so there would be <i>No Effect</i> to this species.
San Joaquin kit fox <i>Vulpes macrotis mutica</i>	E	NE	<b>Present.</b> There are several extant CNDDDB records of this species within the Proposed Action Area. The Proposed Action would not alter or convert any areas of suitable habitat for this species, and would not involve any ground disturbance or construction. There would be <i>No Effect</i> to this species.
Tipton kangaroo rat <i>Dipodomys nitratoideis nitratoideis</i>	E	NE	<b>Present.</b> There are several CNDDDB records of this species within the Proposed Action Area. The Proposed Action would not alter or convert any areas of suitable habitat for this species, so there would be <i>No Effect</i> to this species.
<b>PLANTS</b>			
Bakersfield cactus <i>Opuntia treleasei</i>	E	NE	<b>Absent.</b> This species does not occur within the Proposed Action Area.

Species	Status	Effects	Occurrence in the Proposed Action Area
California jewelflower <i>Caulanthus californicus</i>	E	NE	<b>Possible.</b> There are some possibly extirpated CNDDDB records of this species within the Proposed Action Area. The Proposed Action would not alter or convert any areas of suitable habitat for this species, so there would be <i>No Effect</i> to this species.
Colusa grass <i>Neostapfia colusana</i>	T, X	NE	<b>Absent.</b> This species does not occur within the Proposed Action Area, and there is no designated Critical Habitat for this species within the Proposed Action Area.
Fleshy owl's clover <i>Castilleja campestris</i> spp. <i>succulenta</i>	T, X	NE	<b>Present.</b> There are extant CNDDDB records of this species within the Proposed Action Area, and there is designated Critical Habitat for this species within the Proposed Action Area. The Proposed Action would not alter or convert any areas of suitable habitat for this species, so there would be <i>No Effect</i> to this species or its Critical Habitat.
Greene's tuctoria <i>Tutoria greenei</i>	E, X	NE	<b>Absent.</b> This species does not occur within the Proposed Action Area, and there is no designated Critical Habitat for this species within the Proposed Action Area.
Hairy Orcutt grass <i>Orcuttia pilosa</i>	E, X	NE	<b>Absent.</b> This species does not occur within the Proposed Action Area, and there is no designated Critical Habitat for this species within the Proposed Action Area.
Hartweg's golden sunburst <i>Pseudobahia bahiifolia</i>	E	NE	<b>Absent.</b> This species does not occur within the Proposed Action Area.
Hoover's spurge <i>Chamaesyce hooveri</i>	T, X	NE	<b>Absent.</b> This species does not occur within the Proposed Action Area, and there is no designated Critical Habitat for this species within the Proposed Action Area.
Keck's checker-mallow <i>Sidalcea keckii</i>	E, X	NE	<b>Absent.</b> This species does not occur within the Proposed Action Area, and there is no designated Critical Habitat for this species within the Proposed Action Area.
Kern mallow <i>Eremalche kernensis</i>	E	NE	<b>Present.</b> There are extant CNDDDB records of this species within the Proposed Action Area. The Proposed Action would not alter or convert any areas of suitable habitat for this species, so there would be <i>No Effect</i> to this species.
Mariposa pussypaws <i>Calyptridium pulchellum</i>	T	NE	<b>Absent.</b> This species does not occur within the Proposed Action Area.
Palmate-bracted bird's-beak <i>Cordylanthus palmatus</i>	E	NE	<b>Absent.</b> This species does not occur within the Proposed Action Area.
San Joaquin adobe sunburst <i>Pseudobahia peirsonii</i>	T	NE	<b>Present.</b> There are extant CNDDDB records of this species within the Proposed Action Area. The Proposed Action would not alter or convert any areas of suitable habitat for this species, so there would be <i>No Effect</i> to this species.

Species	Status	Effects	Occurrence in the Proposed Action Area
San Joaquin Orcutt grass <i>Orcuttia inaequalis</i>	T, X	NE	<b>Absent.</b> This species does not occur within the Proposed Action Area, and there is no designated Critical Habitat for this species within the Proposed Action Area.
San Joaquin wooly-threads <i>Monolopia congdonii</i>	E	NE	<b>Possible.</b> There is a possibly extirpated record of this species within the Proposed Action area. The Proposed Action would not alter or convert any areas of suitable habitat for this species, so there would be <i>No Effect</i> to this species.
Springville clarkia <i>Clarkia springvillensis</i>	T	NE	<b>Absent.</b> This species does not occur within the Proposed Action Area.

1 Status= Listing of Federally special status species

**E:** Listed as Endangered

**T:** Listed as Threatened

**X:** Critical Habitat designated for this species

**PX:** Proposed Critical Habitat

**C:** Candidate for Listing

2 Effects = Effect determination

**NE:** No Effect from the Proposed Action to federally listed species

3 Definition Of Occurrence Indicators

**Absent:** Species not recorded in study area and/or habitat requirements not met

**Possible:** Species has the potential to occur in the action area

**Present:** Species recorded in or near action area and habitat present

### 3.2.2 Environmental Consequences

#### **No Action**

Under the No Action Alternative, the City and districts involved would use available water supplies to keep currently farmed lands in production and to meet exiting municipal needs. There would be no land use change that could impact federally listed or candidate species or critical habitat.

#### **Proposed Action**

As the Proposed Action would not involve any construction, changes in water diversions from natural waterways, or any land use change, there would be no impacts to federally listed or candidate species or critical habitat. As a result, Reclamation has determined there would be No Effect to proposed or listed species or critical habitat under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. §1531 et seq.), and there would be no take of birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. §703 et seq.).

#### **Cumulative Impacts**

As the Proposed Action is not expected to result in any direct or indirect impacts to biological resources, there would be no cumulative impacts.

### 3.3 Water Resources

#### 3.3.1 Affected Environment

The Proposed Action area includes the service areas of the City, Fresno ID, and the Exchange Contractors, as well as the San Joaquin River to the Mendota Pool and South-of-Delta CVP facilities.

##### ***San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors***

The Exchange Contractors service area is located on the west side of the San Joaquin Valley (see Figure 1). In exchange for the CVP regulation and diversion of the San Joaquin River water at Millerton Lake/Friant Dam, Reclamation agreed to provide water to the Exchange Contractors from the CVP's Delta supply at the Mendota Pool. Reclamation's contract obligations include provisions for a call on San Joaquin River water under certain circumstances. This call occurred last year for the first time and is anticipated to occur again this year.

##### ***City of Fresno***

The City is a Friant Division CVP contractor with a long-term water service contract (Contract No. 14-06-200-8901) with Reclamation for up to 60,000 acre-feet per year of Friant Division Class 1 water. The City is a municipal corporation located on the east side of the San Joaquin Valley wholly within the boundaries of Fresno ID (see Figure 1). The City and Fresno ID entered into a Cooperative Agreement that provides the terms and conditions for Fresno ID to convey and deliver water to the City.

##### ***Fresno Irrigation District***

Fresno ID comprises some 245,000 acres, lies entirely within Fresno County and includes the rapidly growing Fresno-Clovis metropolitan area. Fresno ID is located entirely within Fresno County and has contracts for approximately 26 percent of the average runoff of the Kings River, its main supply. Fresno ID also has a long-term water service contract (Contract No. 14-06-200-1122D) with Reclamation for up to 75,000 acre-feet per year of Friant Division Class 2 water.

Total irrigated area in the District exceeds 150,000 acres. In a normal year, Fresno ID diverts approximately 500,000 acre-feet of water and delivers most of that to agricultural users, although an increasing share of Fresno ID's water supply is used for groundwater recharge in the urban area. Depending upon hydrological conditions and Kings River flows, Fresno ID diverts water and allocates a proportional share of the water to its customers including the City of Fresno and Clovis.

##### ***South-of-Delta Facilities***

A general diagram of south-of-Delta CVP facilities proposed for use under the Proposed Action is shown in Figure 2. Facilities proposed for use under the Proposed Action include: San Luis Reservoir and Gianelli Pumping and Generating Plant, O'Neill Forebay and Pumping and Generating Plant, the San Luis Canal, and the Delta-Mendota Canal in the West San Joaquin Division, as well as Millerton Lake and the Friant-Kern Canal within the Friant Division. Non-Federal facilities include the San Joaquin River and the Mendota Pool.

***Mendota Pool***

The Mendota Pool is impounded by Mendota Dam, which is owned and operated by Central California Irrigation District. The Pool primarily serves as a conveyance facility but is also used as a short-term storage and re-regulation reservoir. The Pool is supplied with surface water from the Delta-Mendota Canal (its primary source), the San Joaquin River (during restoration and flood releases from Friant Dam), and the Kings River via Fresno Slough (during flood releases from Pine Flat Dam). In addition, local wells owned by the Mendota Pool Group, Tranquillity Irrigation District, and Fresno Slough Water District also pump groundwater into the Pool, and the Mendota Wildlife Area drains its waterfowl ponds into the Pool during the spring. Water is diverted from the Pool for agricultural and wildlife uses. Most of this water is used by the members of the Exchange Contractors to irrigate lands within their service areas, but there are other CVP contractors that divert water from the Pool for irrigation purposes.



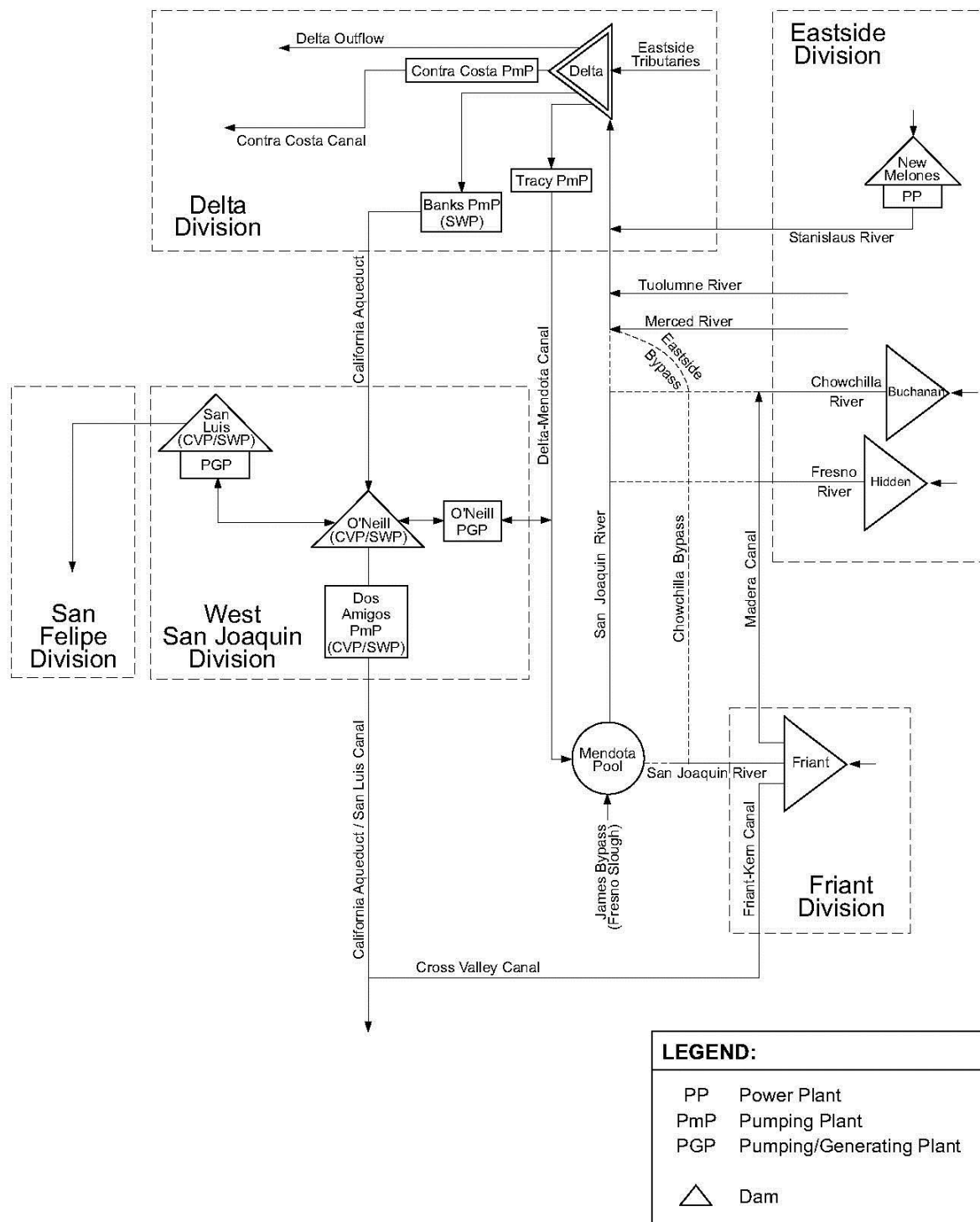


Figure 2 South-of-Delta CVP Facilities by Division  
(Source: Reclamation 1999, page III-19)

### **3.3.2 Environmental Consequences**

#### ***No Action***

Under the No Action, Reclamation would not exchange water with the City and Fresno ID. Reclamation would need to meet its south-of-Delta contractual obligations by releasing water from San Luis Reservoir and Millerton Lake. This would exacerbate San Luis Reservoir's low point condition and will likely affect contract allocations throughout the CVP.

#### ***Proposed Action***

Under the Proposed Action, Reclamation would exchange up to 10,000 acre-feet of the City's and Fresno ID's available CVP water supplies currently located in Millerton Lake for a like amount of CVP water in San Luis Reservoir as soon as possible but no later than the end of February 2017. The City's and Fresno ID's CVP water would be released from Millerton Lake to the San Joaquin River for delivery to the Exchange Contractors at the Mendota Pool to meet Reclamation's contractual obligations.

Water proposed for return to the City and Fresno ID would be scheduled in advance with Reclamation and would be acquired pursuant to Reclamation's water rights permits. No additional pumping in the Delta beyond what is authorized would be needed to complete the exchange. Therefore, the Proposed Action would not affect CVP or SWP operations and would not change existing diversion points from the Delta under Reclamation's or the California Department of Water Resources' water rights permits. The Proposed Action would not interfere with Reclamation's obligations to deliver water to other contractors, wetland habitat areas, or for other environmental purposes.

The proposed exchange would utilize existing facilities and would not require new infrastructure, modification of existing facilities, or ground disturbing activities to be completed. The water would be used for existing agricultural and municipal purposes. No native or untilled land (fallow for three years or more) would be cultivated with water involved with these actions.

The Proposed Action would have a beneficial effect on water supply during this critically dry year.

#### ***Cumulative Impacts***

Cumulative impacts result from incremental impacts of the Proposed Action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time. Significance exists if it is reasonable to anticipate a cumulatively significant impact on the environment.

Reclamation has reviewed existing or foreseeable projects in the same geographic area that could affect or could be affected by the Proposed Action since Reclamation and CVP contractors have been working on various drought-related projects, including this one, in order to manage limited water supplies due to current hydrologic conditions and regulatory requirements. This and similar projects would have a cumulative beneficial effect on water supply during this critically dry year.

As in the past, hydrological conditions and other factors are likely to result in fluctuating water supplies which drive requests for water service actions. Water districts provide water to their customers based on available water supplies and timing, while attempting to minimize costs. Farmers irrigate and grow crops based on these conditions and factors, and a myriad of water service actions are approved and executed each year to facilitate water needs. It is likely that over the course of the Proposed Action, districts will request various water service actions, such as transfers, exchanges, and Warren Act contracts (conveyance of non-CVP water in CVP facilities). Each water service transaction involving Reclamation undergoes environmental review prior to approval.

The Proposed Action and other similar projects would not hinder the normal operations of the CVP and Reclamation's obligation to deliver water to its contractors or to local fish and wildlife habitat. Since the Proposed Action would not involve construction or modification of facilities, there would be no cumulative impacts to existing facilities or other contractors.

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## **Section 4 Consultation and Coordination**

Reclamation has consulted with the following regarding the Proposed Action:

- Friant Division Contractors
- Exchange Contractors
- South of Delta Contractors
- California Department of Water Resources (DWR)

Reclamation is coordinating the exchange with the City, Fresno ID, the Exchange Contractors and DWR.

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## **Section 5 Preparers and Reviewers**

Rain L. Emerson, M.S., Supervisory Natural Resources Specialist, SCCAO

Lisa Carlson, Wildlife Biologist, SCCAO

Joanne Goodsell, Archaeologist, MP-153

David E. Hyatt, Resources Management Division Chief, SCCAO – reviewer

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## Section 6 References

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# **Appendix A**

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## **Reclamation's Cultural Resources Determination**

**CULTURAL RESOURCES COMPLIANCE**  
**Mid-Pacific Region**  
**Division of Environmental Affairs**  
**Cultural Resources Branch**

**MP-153 Tracking Number:** 16-SCAO-201

**Project Name:** Exchange with City of Fresno (City) and Fresno Irrigation District (Fresno ID) for up to 10,000 Acre-Feet of Water in Millerton Lake for Water in San Luis Reservoir

**NEPA Contact:** Rain Emerson, Supervisory Natural Resources Specialist

**NEPA Document:** EA-16-026

**MP-153 Cultural Resources Reviewer:** Joanne Goodsell, Archaeologist

**Date:** July 29, 2016

**JOANNE GOODSSELL**

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Date: 2016.07.29 10:00:13 -0700

Reclamation proposes to exchange up to 10,000 acre-feet of the City's and Fresno ID's available CVP water supplies currently located in Millerton Lake. This water would be delivered to the Exchange Contractors at the Mendota Pool via the San Joaquin River to meet contract obligations. Reclamation will then return a similar amount of CVP water, less conveyance losses if applicable, to Fresno ID in San Luis Reservoir as soon as possible but no later than the end of February 2017. No new construction or modification of existing facilities will occur as part of the Proposed Action.

Reclamation has determined that the proposed action is the type of undertaking that does not have the potential to cause effects on historic properties, should such properties be present, pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.3(a)(1) and will result in no impacts to cultural resources. As such, Reclamation has no further obligations under 54 U.S.C. § 306108, commonly known as Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).

This document conveys the completion of the cultural resources review and NHPA Section 106 process for this undertaking. Please retain a copy with the administrative record for the proposed action. Should the proposed action change, additional review under Section 106, possibly including consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer, may be required.