

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

Environmental Assessment

Temporary Delivery of Central Valley Project Water – APN 021- 130-001 - Colusa County, CA

NCAO-EA-17-03

Bureau of Reclamation, Northern California Area Office
Shasta Lake, California



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation

November 2016

Mission Statements

The mission of the Department of the Interior is to protect and provide access to our Nation's natural and cultural heritage and honor our trust responsibilities to Indian Tribes and our commitments to 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.

Section 1 Introduction

This Environmental Assessment (EA) examines the potential direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to the affected environment associated with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) approving Colusa County Water District's (District) request to provide temporary Central Valley Project (CVP) water service to Colusa County Tax Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 021-130-001 (Figure 1), located just outside the District's service boundary (Figure 2).

1.1 Need for the Proposal

The subject property is permanently planted to almonds and ordinarily serviced by the landowner's well, which has failed. The water is needed immediately for post-harvest irrigation and fertilizing while the well is under repair.

1.2 Resources Analyzed

The range of potential impacts assesses whether the decision by Reclamation to approve the Proposed Action might cause significant effects on the human environment. This EA will analyze the affected environment of the Proposed Action and No Action Alternative in order to determine the potential impacts and cumulative effects to Water Resources.

Impacts to the following resources were considered and found to be minor or absent. Brief explanations for their elimination from further consideration are provided below:

- **Natural Resources and Public Health and Safety:** There are no elements of the Proposed Action that could impact natural resources or public health and safety. The infrastructure is existing. No construction activities are involved. The action does not involve discharges to lands or waterways.
- **Indian Trust Assets:** The Proposed Action does not have the potential to affect Indian Trust Assets (see Appendix A).
- **Cultural Resources:** Reclamation has determined that the Proposed Action is the type of activity that does not have the potential to cause effects on historic properties pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.3(a)(1) (see Appendix B).
- **Indian Sacred Sites:** The Proposed Action would not be located on or impact Federal lands and therefore could not affect Indian Sacred Sites on Federal lands.
- **Environmental Justice:** The Proposed Action would not have disproportionately negative impacts on low-income or minority individuals or populations within the Project area.
- **Special Status Biological Resources:** The Project area is within an area already disturbed by agricultural activities. Although several species listed under the Federal Endangered Species Act have the potential to inhabit the Project area, there is no Critical Habitat for these species designated in the Project area. No new construction activities, clearing, trimming, grubbing, trenching, excavation, grading, or other habitat disturbances are

associated with the Proposed Action. The land use, crop type and water volume applied to the Site and surrounding properties will not change as a result of the action. Therefore, there are no potential impacts to listed species or their habitats from the Proposed Action.

- **Cumulative Impacts:** According to the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), a cumulative impact is defined as *the impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (Federal or non-Federal) or person undertakes such other actions*. Cumulative effects can result from individually minor, but collectively significant, actions taking place over a period of time. There would be no adverse impacts associated with implementing the action. There are no similar actions that produced adverse impacts on record and no similar actions planned. Therefore, there are no cumulative effects to consider.

1.3 Environmental Setting

The property is located in Section 18, Township 13 North, Range 2 West, Mount Diablo Baseline and Meridian (M.D.B.&M.), approximately three miles southwest of the town of Arbuckle, in an area of Colusa County, California, previously disturbed by agricultural activities.

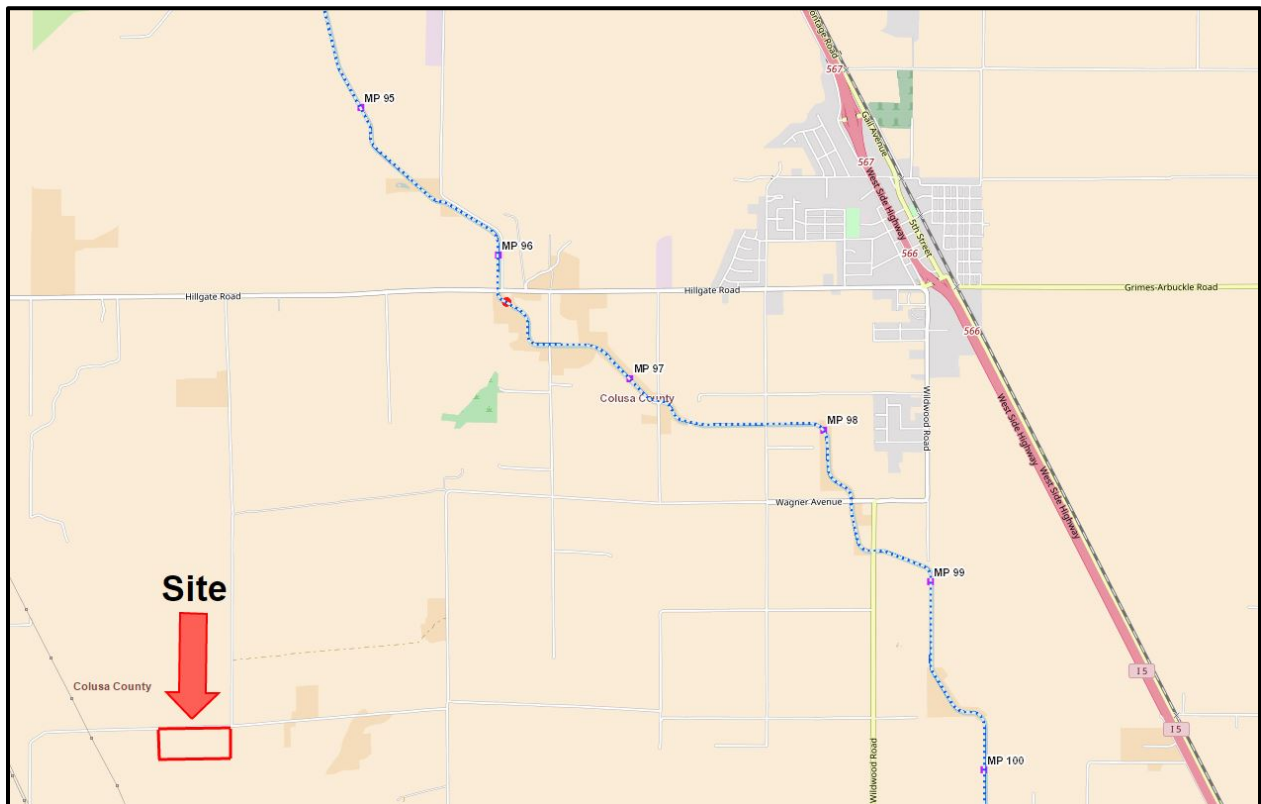


Figure 1. Vicinity map.

Section 2 Proposed Action and Alternatives

2.1 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, Reclamation would not approve the District's temporary delivery of CVP water to APN 021-130-001, for the purposes of post-harvest irrigation and fertilizing, while the groundwater well is under repair. The property owner would need to limit their water use to that acquired from rainfall, find an alternate water source, or forego the irrigation and fertilizing until the well is repaired.

2.2 Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action, Reclamation would approve the District's request to provide temporary CVP water service (up to 80 acre-feet) to Colusa County APN 021-130-001 for crop irrigation and fertilization purposes.

The water would be provided through the District's existing distribution system, diverted through an existing metered diversion and private lines, and applied to the northern 1/3 of the subject parcel, which constitutes approximately 170 acres of cropland (see Figure 2).

2.2.1 Environmental Commitments and Best Management Practices

As part of the Proposed Action, the Project proponent will implement the following environmental commitments and Best Management Practices (BMP) in order to avoid and minimize potential effects to the affected environment:

- There will be no discharges to any bodies of water.
- No clearing, grubbing, digging, grading, trenching or excavation activities are involved with the Proposed Action.
- There will be no use of equipment that would contribute to greenhouse gas emissions or other air quality pollutants involved with the Proposed Action.
- No construction activities will occur. The connection to the District's infrastructure will be made above-ground via manual connection of the irrigation line that traverses from the well to land to be serviced to an existing irrigation line on a property already connected the District infrastructure.
- Stormwater BMPs will be adhered to, including protection of storm drains.

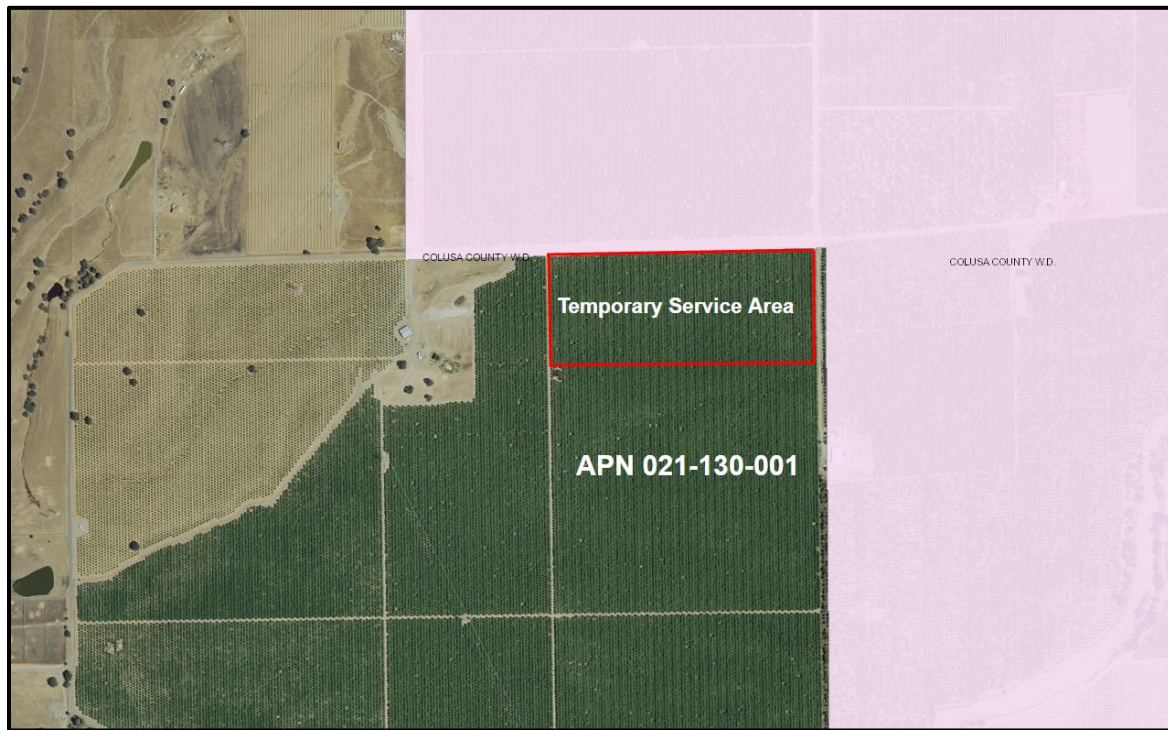


Figure 2. Portion of APN 021-130-001 to be serviced by District water (red) and District boundaries (violet).

- No fugitive dust is anticipated to be generated in the connection.
- Any spillage/solid waste generated during project activities will be removed immediately and disposed of properly.
- No properties that are not involved with the action will be affected by the Proposed Action. The work will not elevate noise above background conditions. Any water shutdown necessary to complete the work will be limited to a temporary shutdown at the property at which the connection will be made.
- There will be no crop conversion associated with the action, which is temporary and necessitated by an unforeseeable circumstance.
- The District's CVP Contract volume will not increase in conjunction with the action; no additional water will be required.

Section 3 Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences

3.1 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would consist of Reclamation not approving the District's temporary delivery of CVP water to the subject parcel for the purposes of post-harvest irrigation and fertilizing while the well is under repair. Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no change to existing conditions and current trends of the affected environment. Without the Proposed Action, the property owner would need to limit their water use to that acquired from rainfall, find an alternate water source, or forego the irrigation and fertilization activities until the well is repaired. Trees in the affected almond orchard could be damaged, fail, or have a reduced yield in future harvest years, as a result of the water deficit.

3.2 Proposed Action

3.2.1 Water Resources

The Project water to be delivered by the District would originate at Trinity Lake, be diverted through Carr Tunnel into Whiskeytown Reservoir, through Spring Creek and Keswick Powerplants into the Sacramento River until being diverted at the screened Red Bluff Pump Station into the Tehama-Colusa Canal (TCC). Once in the TCC, the water would flow to the District's diversion point.

The District would provide up to 80 acre-feet from its Contract Total for the 2016 Contract Year to the property, during the period from approval of the request through February 28, 2017. The property is not within the boundary of another CVP contractor, but is within the Place of Use identified for water rights held by the United States.

The use of the District's water would temporarily replace the use of groundwater to irrigate the affected property. As a condition of approval, the subject water would be used for irrigation purposes for lands irrigated within the previous three years and not lead to land conversion. Additionally, this water would be conveyed through existing facilities with no need for new infrastructure construction or facilities modifications.

Section 4 Consultation and Coordination

4.1 Endangered Species Act (16 USC § 1531 et seq.)

Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) requires Federal agencies to consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service to ensure that their actions do not jeopardize the continued existence of Endangered or Threatened species, or result in the destruction or adverse modification of the Critical Habitat of these species.

Reclamation determined that this project would have no effect to Federally-listed Endangered or Threatened species; and therefore consultation was not needed.

4.2 National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. § 300101 et seq.)

54 U.S.C. § 304108, commonly known as Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), requires that Federal agencies take into consideration the effects of their undertakings on historic properties. Historic properties are cultural resources that are included in, or eligible for inclusion in, the National Register. The 36 CFR Part 800 regulations implement Section 106 of the NHPA and outline the procedures necessary for compliance with the NHPA. Compliance with the Section 106 process follows a series of steps that are designed to identify if significant cultural resources are present in the Project area and to what level they would be affected by the proposed Federal undertaking.

Reclamation determined that the Proposed Action is the type of activity that has no potential to cause effects on historic properties; therefore the California State Historic Preservation Officer was not consulted (see Appendix B).

Appendix A: ITA Concurrence



Simon, Megan <msimon@usbr.gov>

ITA Review - Temporary Delivery of CVP Water - Colusa Co. APN 021-130-001

1 message

Simon, Megan <msimon@usbr.gov>
To: "Zedonis, Paul" <pzedonis@usbr.gov>

Wed, Nov 2, 2016 at 4:01 PM

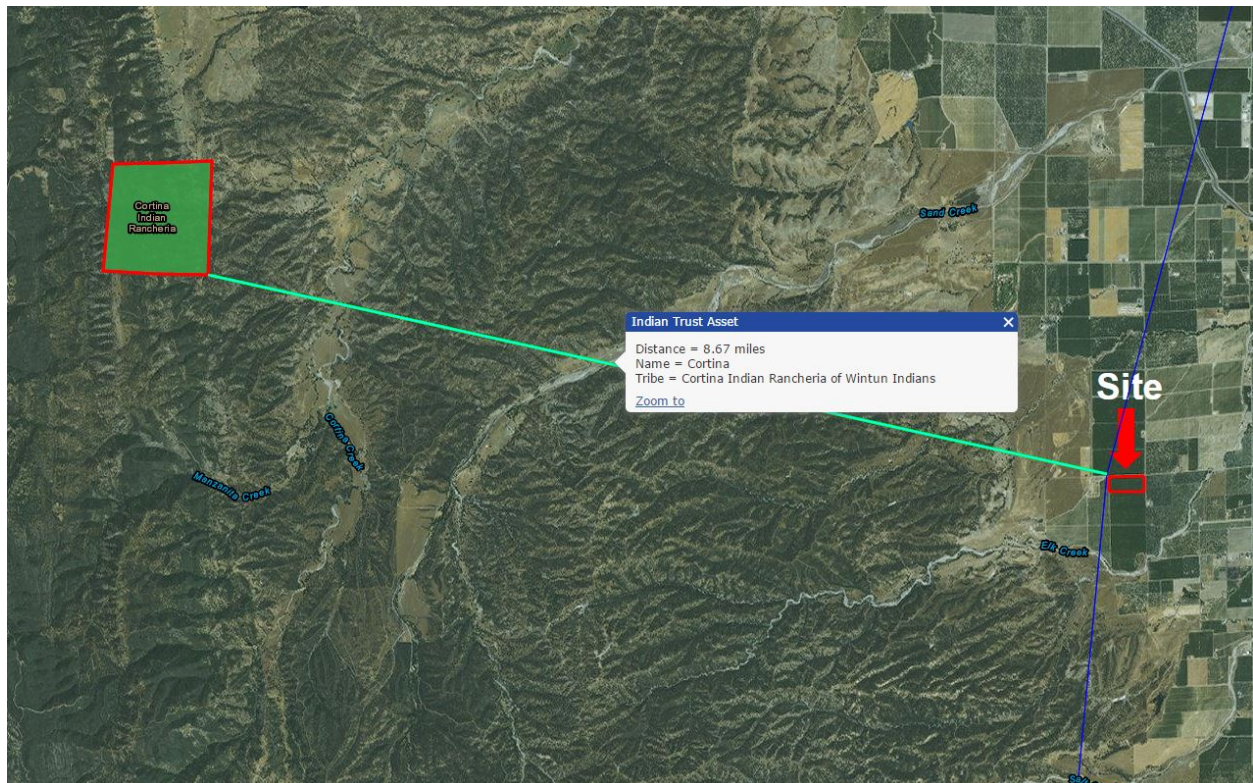
I have examined the referenced proposal and have determined that the facility is at least 8.5 miles from the closest Indian Trust Asset.

I have determined that there is no likelihood that this action will adversely impact Indian Trust Assets.

--

Megan K. Simon

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Appendix B: NHPA, Section 106 Compliance

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

MP-153 Tracking Number: 17-NCAO-011

Project Name: Temporary Use of Central Valley Project Water - APN 021-130-001 - Colusa County, CA

NEPA Document: NCAO-EA-17-03

NEPA Contact: Megan Simon, Natural Resource Specialist

MP-153 Cultural Resources Reviewer: Joanne Goodsell, Archaeologist

Date: November 3, 2016

JOANNE GOODSELL Digitally signed by JOANNE GOODSELL
Date: 2016.11.03 10:20:31 -07'00'

Reclamation proposes to approve Colusa County Water District's (District) request to provide temporary Central Valley Project (CVP) water service to Colusa County APN 021-130-001, located just outside the District's service boundary. The land is permanently planted in almonds and ordinarily serviced by the landowner's well, which has failed. The water would be delivered through the District's existing distribution system, diverted through an existing metered diversion and applied to the northern 1/3 of the subject parcel. No construction activities or facilities modifications are required to fulfill the request. No land use changes are associated with the proposed action.

Reclamation has determined that the proposed action is the type of activity that does not have the potential to cause effects on historic properties pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.3(a)(1). As such, Reclamation has no further obligations under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. § 306108). The proposed action would have no impacts on cultural resources.

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