

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

San Andreas and Staten Island Salinity Stations Refurbishments

FONSI-12-027



Mission Statements

The Department of the Interior protects and manages the Nation's natural resources and cultural heritage; provides scientific and other information about those resources; and honors 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.

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
South-Central California Area Office, Fresno, California

FONSI-12-027

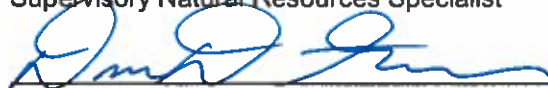
**San Andreas and Staten Island Salinity
Stations Refurbishments**


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Date


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for 
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Introduction

In accordance with section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, the South-Central California Area Office of the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), has determined that replacing the San Andreas and Staten Island Salinity Stations with better quality materials to withstand deterioration is not a major federal action that will significantly affect the quality of the human environment and an environmental impact statement is not required. This Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is supported by Reclamation's Environmental Assessment (EA) EA-12-027, *San Andreas and Staten Island Salinity Stations Refurbishments*, and is hereby incorporated by reference.

Reclamation provided the public with an opportunity to comment on the Draft FONSI and Draft EA between December 31, 2015 and January 29, 2016. No comments were received.

Background

An inspection of the San Andreas and Staten Island Salinity Stations by Reclamation determined the facilities needed to be replaced due to unsafe and dangerous conditions to employees.

Proposed Action

Reclamation proposes to replace the San Andreas and Staten Island Salinity Stations with better quality materials to withstand deterioration. Specific Project details are included in Section 2.2 of EA-12-027.

Permitting for the Proposed Action

Reclamation and its Contractor(s) shall comply with all terms and conditions of the Clean Water Act Section 404 and Section 10 Rivers and Harbors Act permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Encroachment Permit from the Central Valley Flood Projection Board (See Appendices A and B of EA-12-027), and Section 401 Certification from the Central Valley Quality Control Board.

Environmental Commitments

Reclamation and its Contractor(s) shall implement all environmental protection measures listed in Table 1 of EA-12-027 and associated section 7 Endangered Species Act compliance documents (Appendices C and D of EA-12-027) to reduce environmental consequences associated with the Proposed Action. Environmental consequences for resource areas assume the measures specified would be fully implemented.

Findings

Reclamation's finding that implementation of the Proposed Action will result in no significant impact to the quality of the human environment is supported by the following findings:

Resources Eliminated from Detailed Analysis

As described in Table 2 of EA-12-027, Reclamation analyzed the affected environment and determined that the Proposed Action does not have the potential to cause direct, indirect, or cumulative adverse effects to the following resources: Cultural Resources, environmental justice, Indian Sacred Sites, Indian Trust Assets, or land use.

Air Quality

The Proposed Action involves temporary earthmoving and minor appurtenance improvements in the Sacramento Valley and San Joaquin Valley area. The air quality impacts of the Proposed Action would primarily be construction-related emissions that are temporary and short-term in nature.

The Sacramento Valley Air Basin and the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin have established screening thresholds to determine whether a proposed project has a potential to exceed their air quality standards. Construction under the Proposed Action would result in the temporary generation of reactive organic gases, nitrogen oxides, inhalable particulate matter between 2.5 and 10 microns in diameter, particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter, and carbon monoxide emissions. Estimated construction emissions would be below established thresholds of significance (See Table 5 in EA-12-027).

The Proposed Action would not impact the air district's plans to achieve or maintain attainment for various air quality pollutants. As such, there would be no adverse air quality impacts associated with this Proposed Action and a conformity analysis pursuant to the Clean Air Act is not required.

Biological Resources

Project construction would occur primarily in or over the waterway, with limited work occurring on land. Consequently, listed aquatic species, and particularly listed fish species, have the greatest potential to occur in the Proposed Action area.

Reclamation submitted a request to U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to concur with its determination that the Proposed Action may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the delta smelt and giant garter snake. Given the incorporation of avoidance and minimization measures into the Proposed Action, the USFWS concurred with our determination on December 8, 2016 (See Appendix C of EA-12-027).

The primary effects from removing piles is the temporary increase of sediment suspension, which may result in increased turbidity in the water column. Vibratory pile removal tends to cause the sediments to slough off at the mudline, resulting in relatively low levels of suspended sediments. Because piles occupy a small area of substrate that is often rearranged by river currents, any increase in turbidity will be small and short-term. Reclamation has determined that

sediment suspension are likely low enough in concentration and short enough in duration to avoid effects on fish health, foraging, or migration.

Each Salinity Station would require the installation of steel piles. Installation of the steel piles would require in-water pile driving that could produce high-intensity sound and has the potential to harm or harass fish. Steel piles would take less than an hour to be driven using the vibratory drill at each station and would occur during the dry and warmer months, when most species have already migrated up to their spawning grounds.

Environmental protective measures have been incorporated into the Proposed Action in order to avoid and or minimize potential impacts to federally listed species and their habitat. The construction work window of August through October is designed to allow a reasonable construction period while avoiding and or minimizing impacts to peak migrations of listed anadromous fish and access to their designated critical habitat. Also, the piles would be installed using a vibratory pile driver during daylight hours to avoid nocturnal migratory behavior of salmonids and reduce underwater noise levels. In addition, installation of steel piles would occur during the dry and warmer months, when most species have already migrated up to their spawning grounds.

Reclamation submitted a request to National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to concur with its determination that the Proposed Action may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect listed salmonids, green sturgeon, and their respective critical habitat. Given the incorporation of avoidance and minimization measures into the Proposed Action, NMFS concurred with our determination on March 24, 2016 (See Appendix D of EA-12-027).

Global Climate Change

Greenhouse gas emissions would be temporary and occur during construction. Annual construction and operational emissions of carbon dioxide equivalents are estimated to be 623 metric tons per year. Emissions would be temporary and occur only during construction. There are no reporting requirements for greenhouse gas emissions during construction.

Water Resources

The majority of construction associated with the Proposed Action would be over water, and would include removing wooden piles and driving in new steel piles into the sediment. Erosion and debris associated with demolition and construction may enter the water. Sediment and debris entering the rivers systems could temporarily increase the turbidity of the water.

The Proposed Action would not result in significant impacts to water resources because Reclamation and the contractor would conduct the work in a manner to best avoid disturbances to soils or sediment by implementing best management practices. Also, Reclamation and the contractor would comply with all environmental protection measures listed in Table 1 of EA-12-027 and terms and conditions associated with issued permits. No obstructions for navigation would occur because the construction activities allow room for vessels to pass.

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.

Air Quality

The Proposed Action would not contribute to an exceedance of applicable air quality standards and thresholds via emissions. The emissions would be temporary and would not substantially contribute to a cumulative impact within the Sacramento Valley Air Basin and the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin.

Biological Resources

Numerous activities continue to impact habitat for listed and proposed threatened and endangered species in the Delta. Habitat loss and degradation affecting both animals and plants continue as a result of urbanization, road and utility right-of-way management, flood control projects, climate change, grazing by livestock, and agricultural practices. Listed and proposed animal species are also affected by poisoning, increased predation associated with human development, and reduction of food sources. These ongoing impacts are expected to continue in the future. However, as a result of the small footprint and short construction period, the poor quality of habitat at those locations, and the measure that would be implemented to protect special-status species, the Proposed Action will have very little cumulative contribution toward impacts to biological resources.

Global Climate Change

Greenhouse gases emissions generated by the Proposed Action are expected to be extremely small. While any increase in greenhouse gases emissions would add to the global inventory of gases that would contribute to global climate change, the Proposed Action would result in potentially minimal to no increases in greenhouse gases emissions and a net increase in greenhouse gases emissions among the pool of greenhouse gases would not be detectable.

Water Resources

The Proposed Action activities has the potential to cause increased turbidity temporarily, however best management practices and other conservation measures have been incorporated into the Proposed Action to protect water resources. In addition, repairing the salinity stations would allow Reclamation to continue to safely monitor water quality in the Delta. Therefore, the Proposed Action would not contribute to cumulative impacts to water resources.