

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

Categorical Exclusion Checklist

Water Year 2017 Colusa County Water District Reclamation Reform Act Section 215 Contract

NCAO-CEC-17-12

Prepared by: Natalie L. Wolder Date: March 30, 2017
Natalie Wolder
Repayment Specialist
Northern California Area Office (Willows)

Concurrence by: Attachment 1 Date: March 30, 2017
Megan K. Simon
Northern California Area Office Designee for
Tribal Trust Assets

Concurrence by: Attachment 2 Date: March 30, 2017
Scott Williams
Archaeologist
Mid-Pacific Regional Office

Concurrence by: Paul Zedonis Date: March 31, 2017
Paul Zedonis
Environmental and Natural Resources
Supervisory Natural Resource Specialist/
Division Manager
Northern California Area Office

Approved by: Donald Bader Date: 3/31/17
Donald Bader
Area Manager
Northern California Area Office



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Mid Pacific Region

March 2017

Background

In recent years, conversion of row crops to orchard-type crops has increased substantially in Colusa County Water District (District) and vicinity (Figure 1A). These orchard-type crops have been planted on District lands and use groundwater as a supplemental source of water. Increased pumping, over longer periods of time, to support these crops has increased the demand on the groundwater aquifer. In the past, the use of surface water from the District benefited the aquifers. With the reductions in available surface water in recent drought years and the conversion from crops that benefit groundwater recharge, recharge has substantially decreased in the service area in recent years. This decrease is considerable enough that, if unaided, the aquifer recharge may become unsustainable for current uses in the near term.

In the months preceding Water Year 2017 (January and February 2017), approximately 1.35 million AF of water was released from Shasta Dam in flood operations.

Section 215 of the Reclamation Reform Act (RRA), Public Law 97-293 of 1982 authorizes the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) to provide temporary water service contracts (Section 215 contracts) of one year or less for water supplies that are not storable for project purposes or are infrequent and otherwise unmanaged flood flows of short duration. Section 215 water may be used for irrigation and municipal and industrial purposes and must be used within the District's Service Area and Boundaries and within the Central Valley Project (CVP) Consolidated Place of Use.

Proposed Action

Reclamation will execute a Section 215 contract with Colusa County Water District (District) for temporary service of up to 10,000 acre-feet of water, pursuant to Section 215 of the RRA, during Water Year 2017 (March 1, 2017 through February 28, 2018), for use on lands located within the Contractor's Service Area and Boundaries. The availability of Section 215 water would be at Reclamation's discretion and dependent on reservoir capacity and operations, hydrologic conditions, and the District's operating guidelines.

Water diverted pursuant to the Section 215 contract would be applied to orchards within the District's Service Area and Boundaries, as delineated on Exhibit A of its Renewed Water Service Contract, Contract Number 14-06-200-304A-LTR1 (Figure 1A). The ultimate intended purpose of the water application is to recharge the aquifer in support of existing agricultural uses.

Section 215 water delivery would be from existing facilities. No banking, transferring, or exchanging of Section 215 water would be allowed unless otherwise approved by Reclamation.

Exclusion Categories

Bureau of Reclamation Categorical Exclusion – 516 DM 14.5.D.4. Approval, execution, and implementation of water service contracts for minor amounts of long-term water use or

temporary or interim water use where the action does not lead to long-term changes and where the impacts are expected to be localized.

Extraordinary Circumstances

Below is an evaluation of the extraordinary circumstances as required in 43 CFR 46.215.

- | | | | | | | |
|---|----|-------------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|-----|--------------------------|
| 1. This action would have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment (40 CFR 1502.3). | No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Uncertain | <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. This action would have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources (NEPA Section 102(2)(E) and 43 CFR 46.215(c)). | No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Uncertain | <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. This action would have significant impacts on public health or safety (43 CFR 46.215(a)). | No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Uncertain | <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. This action would have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographical characteristics 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 (EO 11990); flood plains (EO 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas (43 CFR 46.215 (b)). | No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Uncertain | <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. This action would have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks (43 CFR 46.215(d)). | No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Uncertain | <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. This action would establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects (43 CFR 46.215 (e)). | No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Uncertain | <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. This action would have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects (43 CFR 46.215 (f)). | No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Uncertain | <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. This action would have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by Reclamation (LND 02-01; and 43 CFR 46.215 (g)). | No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Uncertain | <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- | | | | | | | |
|--|----|-------------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|-----|--------------------------|
| 9. This action would have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated critical habitat for these species (43 CFR 46.215 (h)). | No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Uncertain | <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. This action would violate a Federal, Tribal, State, or local law or requirement imposed for protection of the environment (43 CFR 46.215 (i)). | No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Uncertain | <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. This action would affect ITAs (512 DM 2, Policy Memorandum dated December 15, 1993). | No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Uncertain | <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. This action would have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (EO 12898; and 43 CFR 46.215 (j)). | No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Uncertain | <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13. This action would 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; 43 CFR 46.215 (k); and 512 DM 3). | No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Uncertain | <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. This action would contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act; EO 13112; and 43 CFR 46.215 (l)). | No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Uncertain | <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Regional Archeologist concurred with Item 8 (email attached).

ITA Designee concurred with Item 11 (email attached).

NEPA Action Recommended

X CEC – This action is covered by the exclusion category and no extraordinary circumstances exist. The action is excluded from further documentation in an EA or EIS.

☐ Further environmental review is required, and the following document should be prepared.

☐ EA

☐ EIS

Environmental commitments, explanations, and/or remarks:

No construction or modification of facilities will be needed for delivery of this water. Lands that have never been tilled or irrigated will not be tilled or put into agricultural production using this water. Lands that have been fallowed and untilled for three consecutive years, or more, will not be irrigated with this surplus water.

Figure 1. Site Location Maps

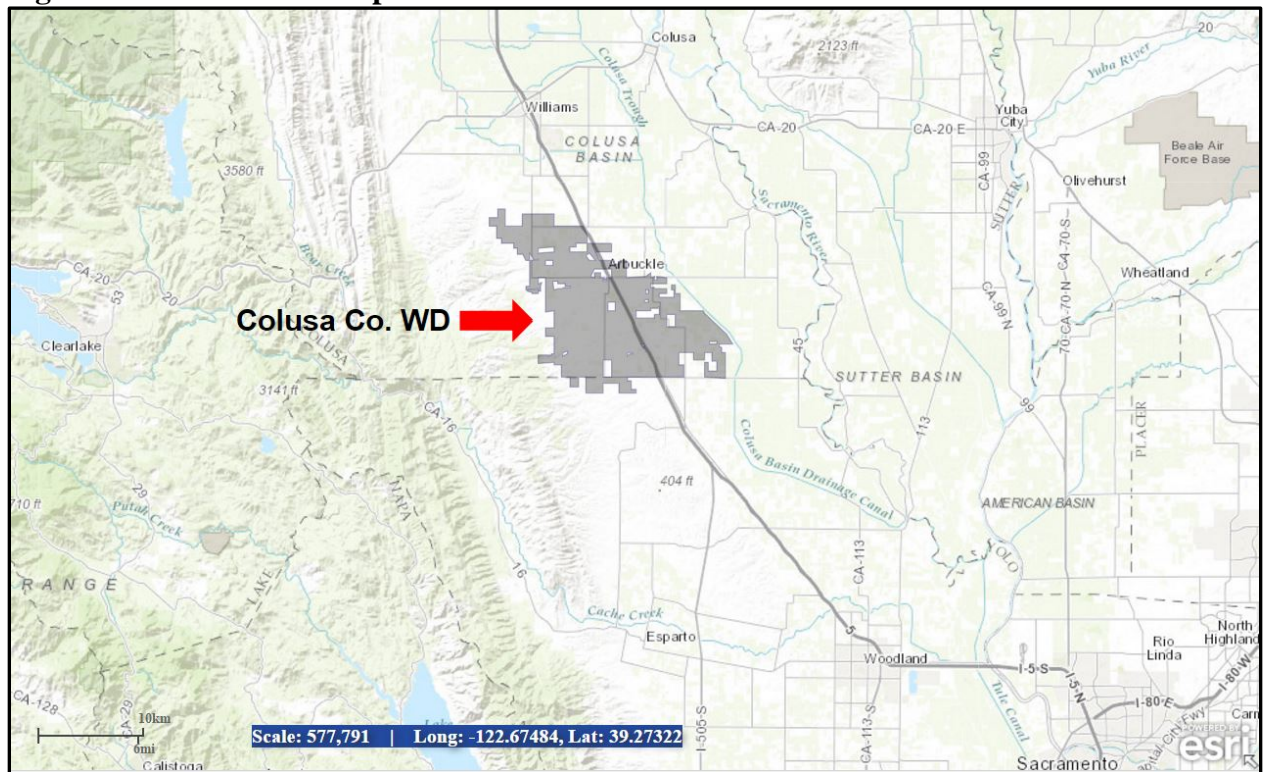


Figure 1A. Vicinity Map

Figure 1, Cont.

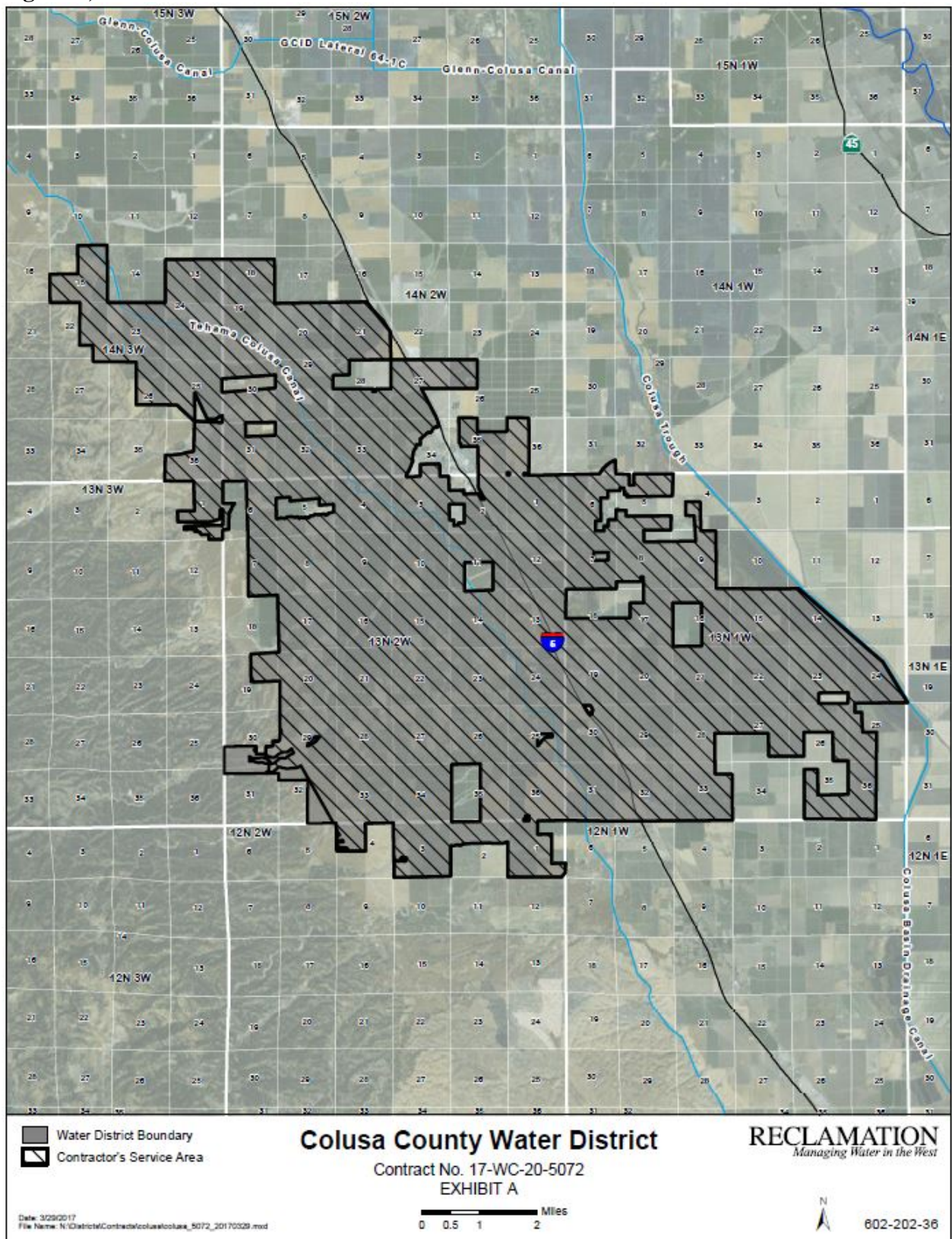


Figure 1B. Exhibit A from Renewed Water Service Contract No. 14-06-200-304A-LTR1

Attachment 1. Indian Trust Asset Review



Simon, Megan <msimon@usbr.gov>

ITA Review - Water Year 2017 Colusa Co. WD - RRA Section 215 Contract

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

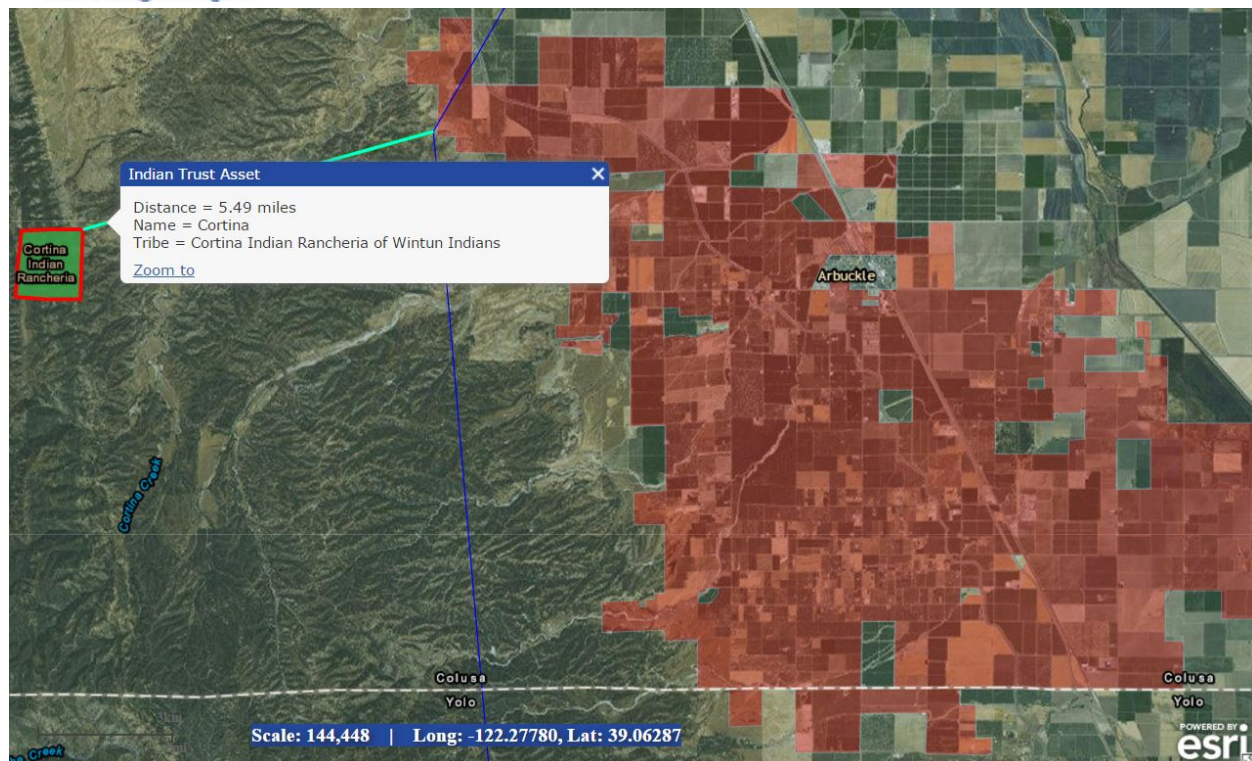
Thu, Mar 30, 2017 at 10:22 AM

I have examined the referenced proposal and have determined that the facilities are at least 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

Natural Resources Specialist
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Northern California Area Office
16349 Shasta Dam Blvd.
Shasta Lake, CA 96019
(530) 276-2045
msimon@usbr.gov



Attachment 2. Cultural Resources Review

CULTURAL RESOURCES COMPLIANCE
Division of Environmental Affairs
Cultural Resources Branch (MP-153)

MP-153 Tracking Number: 17-NCAO-119

Project Name: Water Year 2017 Colusa County Water District Reclamation Reform Act
Section 215 Contract

NEPA Document: NCAO-CEC-17-12

NEPA Contact: Megan Simon, Natural Resource Specialist



MP 153 Cultural Resources Reviewer: Scott Williams, Archaeologist

Date: March 30, 2017

Reclamation is proposing to execute a Section 215 contract with Colusa County Water District (District) for temporary service of up to 10,000 acre-feet of water, pursuant to Section 215 of the RRA, during Water Year 2017 (March 1, 2017 through February 28, 2018), for use on lands located within the District's Service Area and Boundaries and within the CVP Consolidated Place of Use. This is the type of undertaking that does not have the potential to cause effects to historic properties, should such properties be present, pursuant to the NHPA Section 106 regulations codified at 36 CFR § 800.3(a)(1). Reclamation has no further obligations under NHPA Section 106, pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.3(a)(1).

Water diverted pursuant to the Section 215 contract would be applied to orchards within the District's Service Areas and Boundaries, as delineated on Exhibit A of its Renewed Water Service Contract, Contract Number 14-06-200-304A-LTR1 (Figure 1B of the CEC [NCAO-CEC-17-12]). The ultimate intended purpose of the water application is to recharge the aquifer in support of existing agricultural uses. There is no construction or change in land use associated with this action. Lands that have never been tilled or irrigated will not be tilled or put into agricultural production using this water. Lands that have been fallowed and untilled for three consecutive years, or more, will not be irrigated with this surplus water.

This document is intended to convey the completion of the NHPA Section 106 process for this undertaking. Please retain a copy in the administrative record for this action. Should changes be made to this project, additional NHPA Section 106 review, possibly including consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer, may be necessary. Thank you for providing the opportunity to comment.