


RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

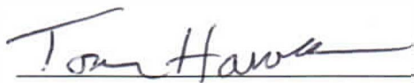
Finding Of No Significant Impact

Central California Irrigation District and Del Puerto Water District Orestimba Creek Groundwater Recharge Project

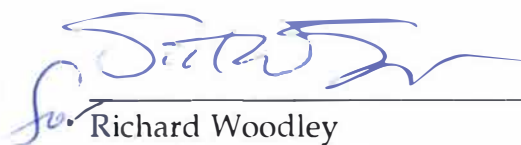
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Recommended by: 
Jamie LeFevre
Natural Resource Specialist
Mid-Pacific Regional Office

Date: 6/12/17

Concurred by: 
Thomas Hawes
Water Conservation Specialist
Mid-Pacific Regional Office

Date: 6/13/2017

Approved by: 
Richard Woodley
Chief, Resources Division
Mid-Pacific Regional Office

Date: 6/20/17

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Background

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) is providing a Bay-Delta Restoration Program: CALFED Water Use Efficiency Grant to the Central California Irrigation District (CCID) to partially fund the Orestimba Creek Groundwater Recharge Project (Proposed Action). The grant will fund a project to construct a 20 acre groundwater recharge facility near Orestimba Creek that would allow the recharge of 500 acre feet per year (afy) of surface water to the local groundwater basin. The project area is located north of Orestimba Road, and ½ mile west of Eastin Road in Stanislaus County, California. Surface water supplies within project area are unreliable due to severe restrictions during dry conditions and regulatory pumping restrictions. During dry periods growers within CCID and Del Puerto Water District (DPWD) rely on groundwater or other sources of supply to meet their irrigation needs. The Proposed Action would help to provide a long-term solution by banking excess water into the regional aquifer during wet periods which can be extracted during the dry periods.

Alternatives Including the Proposed Action

No Action

Under the No Action Alternative, Reclamation would not provide the grant funds to CCID. CCID and DPWD would not construct the Proposed Action. Recharge benefits from the Proposed Action would not be available for future extraction and groundwater overdraft conditions during dry periods would continue.

Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action, Reclamation would provide \$600,000 in grant funding to CCID for the development of a groundwater recharge facility. The project proponents would construct a double-bay groundwater recharge pond, recharge water conveyance connection, conveyance pipeline, production well, and monitoring or observation wells. The Proposed Action would allow the delivery of excess flows into the pond for recharge and extraction of groundwater as an irrigation water supply during dry periods.

During wet periods, excess water available to the District would be diverted to the proposed recharge ponds, where it will be banked in the local aquifer. During dry periods, the extraction well will pump from this aquifer and deliver that water to the Delta Mendota Canal where it will be used within the region to support irrigation demands. Monitoring well data will be used to determine the amount of water that can be extracted without contributing to groundwater overdraft.

The Proposed Action, as detailed in the attached Environmental Assessment/Initial Study (EA/IS), includes environmental commitments and best management practices which will avoid and minimize potential effects to air quality and special status species. In consideration of species protected by the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (as amended), informal section 7 consultation has been completed with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. A concurrence letter was received September 29, 2016.

Findings

Based on the attached EA/IS 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/IS describes the existing environmental resources in the Proposed Action area and evaluates the effects of the No Action and Proposed Action alternative 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). Effects on several environmental resources were examined and found to be absent or minor. That analysis is provided in the attached EA/IS, and the analysis in the EA/IS is hereby 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)(2)).
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 adversely affect any districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(8). Pursuant to 54 USC § 306108, commonly known as Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, and its implementing regulations at 36 CFR Part 800, Reclamation determined the undertaking has no potential to cause effects on historic properties and therefore, will result in no significant impacts to cultural resources.
8. The proposed action will not significantly 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).