

# RECLAMATION

*Managing Water in the West*

**Draft FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

## **Patterson Irrigation District Transfer of Replacement Water to Westlands Water District**

**FONSI-19-019**



U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Reclamation  
South-Central California Area Office

**May 2019**

## **Mission Statements**

The mission of the Department of the Interior is to conserve and manage the Nation's natural resources and cultural heritage for the benefit and enjoyment of the American people, provide scientific and other information about natural resources and natural hazards to address societal challenges and create opportunities for the American people, and honor the Nation's trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated island communities to help them prosper.

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-19-019**

**Patterson Irrigation District Transfer of  
Replacement Water to Westlands Water  
District**

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Date



## Introduction

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) has released, for public review, this draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) which is supported by Reclamation's attached Environmental Assessment (EA)-19-019, Patterson Irrigation District Transfer of Replacement Water to Westlands Water District Project, hereby incorporated by reference, for public review. No final decision shall be made on the FONSI until public review has been completed and comments, if any, considered.

## Background

Patterson Irrigation District (ID) provides agricultural irrigation water supplies to agricultural water users on 13,500 acres in Stanislaus County (Figure 1). As a result of a settlement reached between Patterson ID and Reclamation for the construction of Friant Dam and partial obstruction of natural flow from the San Joaquin River, Patterson ID receives 6,000 acre-feet per year of what is known as Replacement Water from Reclamation via the Delta-Mendota Canal.

Westlands Water District (Westlands) contracts with Reclamation to deliver up to 1,195,000 acre-feet of Central Valley Project (CVP) water to agricultural users within its service area.

Patterson ID and Westlands have a history of joint water management actions. An identical action to the Proposed Action was carried out in the 2013 water contact year and was analyzed in Reclamation's EA-13-073, *Transfer of up to 1,500 Acre-Feet of Replacement Water from Patterson Irrigation District to Westlands Water District*, that resulted in the issuance of a FONSI on February 19, 2014 (Reclamation 2014). This review concluded that the water transfer would not cause significant impacts to the human environment. EA/FONSI-13-073 are hereby incorporated by reference.

## Alternatives Considered

### No Action

Under the No Action Alternative, Reclamation would not approve the transfer of CVP water from Patterson ID to Westlands. Patterson ID would continue to use the remaining balance of its Replacement Water within its district, and Westlands would have to find another source of water to meet the needs of its customers.

### Proposed Action

Reclamation proposes to approve Patterson ID's transfer of up to 1,500 AF of its Replacement Water (under Contract #14-06-200-3598A-LTR1) to Westlands for the remainder of the 2019 contract water year. Reclamation would facilitate this transfer by conveying the Replacement

Water down the Delta-Mendota Canal from the San Joaquin-Sacramento River Delta, which is the typical route for Patterson ID's delivery, but instead of being diverted into Patterson ID turnouts, 1,500 AF of Patterson ID's Replacement Water would continue to O'Neill Forebay and then be delivered to existing Westlands turnouts along the San Luis Canal, and/or stored in San Luis Reservoir for later use by Westlands. Westlands would then convey this Replacement Water to its water users. This transfer would occur within existing facilities and will not require any construction or ground disturbing activities.

## Findings

In accordance with NEPA, Reclamation has determined that the approval of the Proposed Action is not a major federal action that will significantly affect the quality of the human environment; consequently, an environmental impact statement is not required.

The following reasons are why the impacts from the proposed action are not significant:

- The proposed action will not significantly affect public health or safety (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(2)).
- The proposed action will not significantly affect natural resources and unique geographical characteristics such as proximity to 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)).
- There is no potential for the effects to be considered highly controversial (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(4)).
- 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)).
- 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)).
- The proposed action will not have cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)).
- The proposed action will not significantly affect historic properties (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(8)).
- The proposed action will not significantly affect listed or proposed threatened or endangered species, or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(9)).

- The proposed action will not threaten a violation of Federal, State, tribal or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(10)).
- The proposed action will not affect any Indian Trust Assets (512 DM 2, Policy Memorandum dated December 15, 1993).
- Implementing the proposed action will not disproportionately affect minorities or low-income populations and communities (EO 12898).
- The proposed action will not limit access to, and ceremonial use of, Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (EO 13007 and 512 DM 3).