



— BUREAU OF —  
RECLAMATION

# Finding of No Significant Impact

## East Park Reservoir Fishery Restocking

CGB-EA-2022-007

EA-NCAO-21-04

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## Background

Reclamation's East Park Dam (EPD) and East Park Reservoir (EPR) are located in Colusa County, CA, about 33 miles southwest of the town of Orland and 60 miles northwest of Sacramento (Figure 1). Completed in 1910, the dam and reservoir are part of the Orland Project, Reclamation's oldest water supply delivery project constructed entirely within the State of California. The Orland Project also includes Reclamation's Stony Gorge Reservoir (SGR), located approximately 13 miles downstream of EPD (Figure 2), and approximately 125 miles of canals and laterals. The EPD is owned by Reclamation and has been managed by the Orland Unit Water Users' Association (OUWUA) since 1954. The County of Colusa (County) manages the reservoir and 1,600 acres of adjacent uplands as a park that is typically open to the public year-round under a November 2013 Management Agreement (MA) with Reclamation and the OUWUA.

EPR was historically stocked with fish species that supported recreational fishing opportunities that were one of the main attractions for local and regional visitors to the area. Further drawdown of the already historically low reservoir level in late 2021 to facilitate necessary repairs of the EPD gates resulted in unanticipated but total loss of the EPR fishery.

## Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action, Reclamation will restock EPR with a focus on fish species that had known stable populations prior to 2021. All fish will be sourced from a California vendor that is licensed for aquaculture by the California Department of Wildlife (CDFW). Reclamation may also approve the County's supplementation of the Reclamation restocking effort with fish species historically present in the reservoir. Reclamation and the County will be responsible for any permitting efforts necessitated by their individual restocking efforts such as submitting for a restocking permit(s) from CDFW, as appropriate.

## Findings

The Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508), and Department of the Interior Regulations (43 CFR Part 46). A draft of the EA document was released for a 14-day public comment period beginning December 27, 2021. No public comments were received.

The draft EA proposed the stocking effort to initiate in March 2022 and allowed for a suite of release methods dependent on the reservoir level at the time of restocking. Due to unseasonably warm conditions in January, fish spawning occurred earlier than anticipated, necessitating

acceleration of schedule of the inaugural restocking event from March to February to assure fish survival. In addition, the County has since requested that Reclamation approve their supplementation of Reclamation's restocking effort; The Proposed Action has been revised to include this approval. Based on a site visit conducted on January 31, 2022, the reservoir level is such that the truck can unload the fish directly from the open gates of the truck to be parked on an existing boat ramp (located due south of the location identified in the draft EA); No off-road equipment use will be necessary to implement the action. As such, the refined project has no potential to cause effects to historic properties as discussed in Appendix B to the EA. Should reservoir conditions change considerably in the future such that the need for off-road equipment use changes as well, Reclamation will review the undertaking for compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

The EA (as updated from the December 2021 draft with new and relevant information per the preceding paragraph) found that any potential environmental impacts from the Proposed Action would be less than significant. As a result, Reclamation has determined that implementing the Proposed Action is not a major Federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment, and therefore does not require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement.

Reclamation's determination is supported by the EA that describes the existing environmental resources in the Project area and evaluated the effects of the Proposed Action and No Action Alternative on those resources. The analysis provided in the EA is incorporated by reference. Reclamation's determination that the Proposed Action will not result in significant impacts is summarized below:

Reclamation considered potential short-term and long-term effects of the Proposed Action, both beneficial and adverse. Following are the reasons why the impacts of the Proposed Action are not significant, with respect to the affected environment and degree of effects of the action (40 CFR 1501.3(b)).

- The Proposed Action will not significantly affect public health or safety (40 CFR 1501.3(b)(2)(iii)).
- The Proposed Action will not violate federal, state, tribal or local law protecting the environment (40 CFR 1501.3(b)(2)(iv)).
- The Proposed Action will not significantly or adversely affect Indian Trust Assets (512 DM 2, Policy Memorandum dated December 15, 1993).
- Implementing the Proposed Action will not have an adverse effect that disproportionately affects 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 significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (EO 13007 and 512 DM 3).

- 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 and Scenic Rivers (WSR); 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 (43 CFR 46.215(b)).
- The Proposed Action will not have possible effects on the human environment that are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.
- The Proposed Action will neither establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects nor represent a decision in principle about a future consideration.
- There is no potential for the effects to be considered highly controversial.
- The Proposed Action will not have significant effects on historic properties.
- The Proposed Action will have no effect on species listed or proposed for listing as threatened under Section 7 of the Federal Endangered Species Act.