



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION

Finding of No New Significant Impact and Decision Record

B.F. Sisk Safety of Dams 2025 Modifications

Interior Region 10 • California-Great Basin

CGB-ED-2025-139

Prepared and Recommended by:

_____ Date: _____

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Approved by:

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Mission Statements

The U.S. 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, Native Hawaiians, 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.

Introduction

In accordance with section 102(2) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) prepared a Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA) to examine the potential effects to the environment associated with Reclamation's proposed action to address dam stability and safety concerns in the event of seismic activity at the San Luis Reservoir, located in Merced County, California, by extending the North Valley Slopewash (NVS) berm, and adding Borrow Areas 20 and 21.

This Finding of No New Significant Impact (FONNSI) follows implementation regulations for an EA described in 43 CFR Part 46 and the Department of the Interior Handbook of NEPA Implementation Procedures (516 DM 1). This FONNSI is supported by Reclamation's B.F. Sisk Safety of Dams 2025 Modifications SEA Number CGB-ED-2025-139, incorporated here by reference.

Purpose and Need

The proposed action will help prevent destabilization of the dam embankment, reduce safety concerns, and maintain water supply deliveries to state and Federal water contractors by expanding the project footprint to add 0.6 acres for the NVS berm and 85.3 acres at Borrow Areas 20 and 21.

Proposed Action

No Action: Under the No Action Alternative, Reclamation would complete the B.F. Sisk Safety of Dams Modification Project as described in the 2019 EIS/R and Record of Decision (ROD), and as modified in the 2021 SEA/FONSI. No modifications to the project description would be made.

Proposed Action: Reclamation would increase the project footprint to include an extension to the NVS berm and Borrow Areas 20 and 21. No new significant impacts would occur with the implementation of the mitigation measures identified in the 2019 ROD or 2021 SEA/FONSI.

Mitigation, Monitoring, and Enforcement

Mitigation, monitoring, and enforcement measures have been identified in Appendix A of the SEA to address potential adverse impacts. These measures are considered a part of the selected alternative. The authority to implement these measures is derived from Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, Section 101 of the Clean Air Act, and Sections 401, 402, and 404 of the Clean Water Act.

Finding

The SEA evaluated the reasonably foreseeable effects of the No Action and Selected Alternative. In determining the degree of significance, the following were considered:

1. Short- and long-term effects;
2. Beneficial and adverse effects;
3. Effects on public health and safety;
4. Economic effects; and
5. Effects on the quality of life of the American people.

There will be no new impacts associated with the selected alternative with implementation of the mitigation measures identified in the 2019 ROD. Reclamation coordinated with appropriate Federal, state, and local entities through permitting and consulting procedures. Reclamation reviewed the selected alternative for conformance with land use plans, and compliance with laws pertinent to the decision. The following are relevant findings of the selected alternative, with respect to the plans and laws associated with the affected environment.

- National Historic Preservation Act
 - The State Historic Preservation Officer concurred with Reclamation on a finding of no adverse effect to historic properties determination on June 12, 2025.
- Endangered Species Act
 - Reclamation reinitiated formal consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on Amended Biological Opinion (BO) 2022-0047090-R001. On September 10, 2025, the USFWS concluded in an amendment to the BO that the selected alternative is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the San Joaquin kit fox, the California tiger salamander Central California distinct population segment, or the California red-legged frog.
- Clean Air Act
 - No net changes to air quality impacts

Reclamation did not solicit public review of the SEA because no new significant impacts were identified in the SEA beyond those already disclosed in the 2019 ROD. After consideration of the information described above and analysis contained within the SEA, Reclamation finds that the selected alternative would have no new significant impacts on the human environment.

Decision

Based on the analysis of the proposed action in the B.F. Sisk 2025 Safety of Dams Project Modifications SEA (CGB-ED-2025-139), Reclamation has decided to implement the selected

alternative. The selected alternative best meets the purpose and need to address dam stability and safety concerns in the event of seismic activity to reduce public safety concerns and maintain water supply deliveries to state and Federal water contractors. All practicable means to avoid or minimize environmental harm from the proposed action are adopted with this decision. This document certifies that Reclamation has considered all relevant information raised in the NEPA process and that the NEPA process has concluded. The responsible official has decided to adopt the FONNSI.

Certified by:

_____ Date: _____

Cathy Wise

Regional Construction Engineer

Interior Region 10 • California-Great Basin, Bureau of Reclamation