

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

**Final Environmental Assessment/Initial Study and Finding of No
Significant Impact/Mitigated Negative Declaration**

Meridian Farms Water Company Integrated Regional Water Management Program – Groundwater Production Element Project



**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Mid Pacific Region
Sacramento, California**

**Reclamation District 70
1138 4th Street
Meridian, CA 95957**

October 2011

Final Environmental Assessment/Initial Study

Meridian Farms Water Company – Integrated Regional Water Management Program Groundwater Production Element Project

Reclamation and RD 70, on behalf of MFWC, released a Draft EA/IS for a 30-day public review period from September 14 through October 14, 2011. Comments were received and are included as Attachment 1. Responses to comments are presented in Section 8. This Final EA/IS incorporates, by reference, the Meridian Farms Water Company Integrated Regional Water Management Program – Groundwater Production Element Project, dated September 2011. This document is a continuation of the Draft EA/IS, which will be used by Reclamation to support a Finding of No Significant Impact and RD 70 to support a Mitigated Negative Declaration under NEPA and CEQA, respectively.

8 Responses to Comments

Three comment letters pertaining to the proposed project/proposed action were received. Following is a summary of the specific comments that were received, with responses to the comments. Copies of all letters received are included in Attachment 1.

Letter 1

California State Clearinghouse and Planning Unit, addressed to Andy Duffey, Reclamation District 70, dated October 18, 2011

Comment 1-1:

The California State Clearinghouse provided information on the distribution of the EA/IS. The letter acknowledges that the lead agency has complied with the State Clearinghouse Review requirements pursuant to CEQA.

Response 1-1:

No response is required.

Letter 2

California Regional Water Quality Control Board, addressed to Andy Duffey, Reclamation District 70, dated October 10, 2011

Comment 2-1:

The California Regional Water Quality Control Board stated that their agency is delegated with the responsibility of protecting the quality of surface and groundwater. The Control Board provided informational summaries on the following permits:

- Construction Storm Water General Permit
- Phase I and II Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permits
- Industrial Storm Water General Permit
- Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit
- Clean Water Act Section 401 Permit – Water Quality Certification
- Waste Discharge Requirements

Response 2-1:

MFWC will make sure that all required permits and authorizations are obtained prior to construction of the groundwater well.

Letter 3:

Email from California Department of Transportation, addressed to Andy Duffey, dated October 11, 2011

Comment 3-1:

Caltrans has no comments.

Response 3-1:

No response necessary.

Attachment 1
Comments



Edmund G. Brown Jr.
Governor

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Governor's Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse and Planning Unit



Ken Alex
Director

October 18, 2011

Andy Duffey
Reclamation District 70
1138 4th Street
Meridian, CA 95957

Subject: Meridian Farms Water Company - Groundwater Production Element Project
SCH#: 2011092039

Dear Andy Duffey:

The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named Mitigated Negative Declaration to selected state agencies for review. On the enclosed Document Details Report please note that the Clearinghouse has listed the state agencies that reviewed your document. The review period closed on October 17, 2011, and the comments from the responding agency (ies) is (are) enclosed. If this comment package is not in order, please notify the State Clearinghouse immediately. Please refer to the project's ten-digit State Clearinghouse number in future correspondence so that we may respond promptly.

Please note that Section 21104(c) of the California Public Resources Code states that:

"A responsible or other public agency shall only make substantive comments regarding those activities involved in a project which are within an area of expertise of the agency or which are required to be carried out or approved by the agency. Those comments shall be supported by specific documentation."

These comments are forwarded for use in preparing your final environmental document. Should you need more information or clarification of the enclosed comments, we recommend that you contact the commenting agency directly.

This letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. Please contact the State Clearinghouse at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions regarding the environmental review process.

Sincerely,

Scott Morgan
Director, State Clearinghouse

Enclosures
cc: Resources Agency

**Document Details Report
State Clearinghouse Data Base**

SCH# 2011092039
Project Title Meridian Farms Water Company - Groundwater Production Element Project
Lead Agency Reclamation District 70

Type MND Mitigated Negative Declaration
Description The MFWC Groundwater Production Element Project includes the installation of one groundwater well to supplement existing MFWC surface and groundwater supplies. The groundwater well will be installed near an existing irrigation lateral. The MFWC proposed well would be within a 0.5-acre area in Sutter County, CA. This project is made possible through a funding partnership with the DWR (Prop 50 Integrated Regional Water Management Plan [IRWMP] Implementation funding) and the Reclamation Act of 1902 (32 Stat. 388), as amended and supplemented; and Public Law 108-361, Section 103(d)(5), Section 9504(a).

Lead Agency Contact

Name Andy Duffey
Agency Reclamation District 70
Phone 530 696 2456
Fax
email
Address 1138 4th Street
City Meridian
State CA **Zip** 95957

Project Location

County Sutter
City
Region
Lat / Long 39° 8' 43.3" N / 121° 53' 25.2" W
Cross Streets Farmland Rd
Parcel No. 13-090-035
Township 15N **Range** 1E **Section** **Base**

Proximity to:

Highways Hwy 20
Airports
Railways
Waterways Sacramento River
Schools Meridian ES
Land Use Agriculture

Project Issues Aesthetic/Visual; Agricultural Land; Air Quality; Archaeologic-Historic; Biological Resources; Drainage/Absorption; Economics/Jobs; Geologic/Seismic; Noise; Public Services; Population/Housing Balance; Recreation/Parks; Soil Erosion/Compaction/Grading; Traffic/Circulation; Vegetation; Water Quality; Water Supply; Wetland/Riparian; Landuse; Cumulative Effects

Reviewing Agencies Resources Agency; Department of Fish and Game, Region 2; Department of Parks and Recreation; Department of Water Resources; California Highway Patrol; Caltrans, District 3; CA Department of Public Health; State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Water Rights; Regional Water Quality Control Bd., Region 5 (Sacramento); Native American Heritage Commission

Date Received 09/16/2011 **Start of Review** 09/16/2011 **End of Review** 10/17/2011

Note: Blanks in data fields result from insufficient information provided by lead agency.



California Regional Water Quality Control Board Central Valley Region

Katherine Hart, Chair



11020 Sun Center Drive, #200, Rancho Cordova, California 95670-6114
(916) 464-3291 • FAX (916) 464-4645
<http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley>

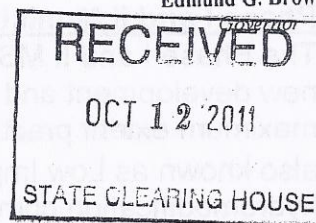
Matthew Rodriguez
Secretary for
Environmental Protection

Edmund G. Brown Jr.

10 October 2011

Andy Duffey
Reclamation District 70
1138 4th Street
Meridian, CA 95957

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10/17/2011
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COMMENTS TO DRAFT MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION, MERIDIAN FARMS WATER COMPANY – GROUNDWATER PRODUCTION ELEMENT PROJECT, SCH NO. 2011092039, SUTTER COUNTY

Pursuant to the State Clearinghouse's 16 September 2011 request, the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board) has reviewed the *Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration* for the Meridian Farms Water Company – Groundwater Production Element Project, located in Sutter County.

Our agency is delegated with the responsibility of protecting the quality of surface and groundwaters of the state; therefore our comments will address concerns surrounding those issues.

Construction Storm Water General Permit

Dischargers whose project disturb one or more acres of soil or where projects disturb less than one acre but are part of a larger common plan of development that in total disturbs one or more acres, are required to obtain coverage under the General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activities (Construction General Permit), Construction General Permit Order No. 2009-009-DWQ. Construction activity subject to this permit includes clearing, grading, grubbing, disturbances to the ground, such as stockpiling, or excavation, but does not include regular maintenance activities performed to restore the original line, grade, or capacity of the facility. The Construction General Permit requires the development and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP).

For more information on the Construction General Permit, visit the State Water Resources Control Board website at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/stormwater/constpermits.shtml

California Environmental Protection Agency

Phase I and II Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permits¹

The Phase I and II MS4 permits require the Permittees reduce pollutants and runoff flows from new development and redevelopment using Best Management Practices (BMPs) to the maximum extent practicable (MEP). MS4 Permittees have their own development standards, also known as Low Impact Development (LID)/post-construction standards that include a hydromodification component. The MS4 permits also require specific design concepts for LID/post-construction BMPs in the early stages of a project during the entitlement and CEQA process and the development plan review process.

For more information on which Phase I MS4 Permit this project applies to, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/storm_water/municipal_permits/

Industrial Storm Water General Permit

Storm water discharges associated with industrial sites must comply with the regulations contained in the Industrial Storm Water General Permit Order No. 97-03-DWQ.

For more information on the Industrial Storm Water General Permit, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/storm_water/industrial_general_permits/index.shtml.

Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit

If the project will involve the discharge of dredged or fill material in navigable waters or wetlands, a permit pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act may be needed for the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE). If a Section 404 permit is required by the USACOE, the Central Valley Water Board will review the permit application to ensure that discharge will not violate water quality standards. If the project requires surface water drainage realignment, the applicant is advised to contact the Department of Fish and Game for information on Streambed Alteration Permit requirements.

If you have any questions regarding the Clean Water Act Section 404 permits, please contact the Regulatory Division of the Sacramento District of USACOE at (916)557-5250.

Clean Water Act Section 401 Permit – Water Quality Certification

If an USACOE permit, or any other federal permit, is required for this project due to the disturbance of waters of the United States (such as streams and wetlands), then a Water Quality Certification must be obtained from the Central Valley Water Board prior to initiation of project activities. Water Quality Certification must be obtained prior to initiation of project activities. There are no waivers for 401 Water Quality Certifications.

¹ Municipal Permits = The Phase I Municipal Separate Storm Water System (MS4) Permit covers medium sized Municipalities (serving between 100,000 and 250,000 people) and large sized municipalities (serving over 250,000 people). The Phase II MS4 provides coverage for small municipalities, including non-traditional Small MS4s, which include military bases, public campuses, prisons and hospitals.

10 October 2011

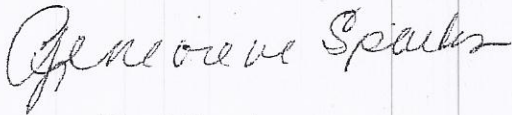
Waste Discharge Requirements

If USACOE determines that only non-jurisdictional waters of the State (i.e., "non-federal" waters of the State) are present in the proposed project area, the proposed project will require a Waste Discharge Requirement (WDR) permit to be issued by Central Valley Water Board. Under the California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, discharges to all waters of the State, including all wetlands and other waters of the State including, but not limited to, isolated wetlands, are subject to State regulation.

For more information on the Water Quality Certification and WDR processes, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/water_quality_certification/

If you have questions regarding these comments, please contact me at (916) 464-4745 or gsparks@waterboards.ca.gov.



Genevieve (Gen) Sparks
Environmental Scientist
401 Water Quality Certification Program

cc: State Clearinghouse Unit, Governor's Office of Planning and Research, Sacramento

----- Forwarded message from sukhi_johal@dot.ca.gov -----

Date: Tue, 11 Oct 2011 13:38:29 -0700

From: Sukhi Johal <sukhi_johal@dot.ca.gov>

Reply-To: Sukhi Johal <sukhi_johal@dot.ca.gov>

Subject: Caltrans Comments - Meridian Farms Water Company - Groundwater Production Element Project SC# 2011092039

To: aduffey@succeed.net

Mr. Duffey,

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Meridian Farms Water Company (MFWC) - Groundwater Production Element Project that proposes to augment surface water supplies for MFWC by installing and operating one groundwater production well located in Sutter County.

At this time, Caltrans has no comments. However, the Department would appreciate being kept apprised of any changes to the above-mentioned project description.

If you should have any questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards,

Sukhi Johal
Associate Transportation Planner
Caltrans District 3
Office of Transportation Planning - South
703 B St. Marysville, CA 95901
Office (530) 740-4843
Fax (530) 741-5346

----- End forwarded message -----