



Upper San Joaquin River Basin STORAGE INVESTIGATION

Winter 2005

The Upper San Joaquin River Basin Storage Investigation (Investigation) is a joint Feasibility Study by the Bureau of Reclamation and the California Department of Water Resources (DWR). The Investigation is being performed in accordance with the CALFED Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report Record of Decision (ROD), which recommended evaluation of water storage in the Upper San Joaquin River Basin to “contribute to restoration of and improve water quality for the San Joaquin River and facilitate additional conjunctive water management and water exchanges that improve the quality of water deliveries to urban communities.”

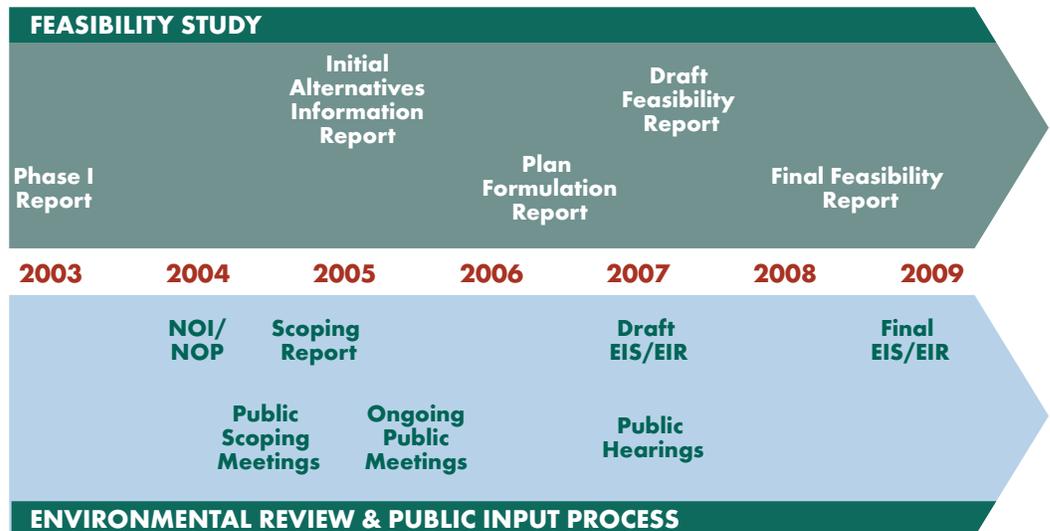
FEASIBILITY STUDY & ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCEED

The Investigation has formally begun the Feasibility Study and assessing the options for environmental review. Activities include:

- refining the initial surface storage options—sizes and designs
- identifying conjunctive management opportunities and constraints
- developing operating scenarios that support the project objectives
- developing complete alternatives for feasibility evaluation and environmental review
- identifying a preferred alternative

The complex and challenging next step of the Investigation is developing operating scenarios that explain how new storage could meet project objectives in the context of existing water management in the entire system.

The graphic below shows the relationship of the environmental review process with the Feasibility Study. These two review processes are equally important, interrelated, and accomplished concurrently. The alternatives that are evaluated in the Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) will be developed in the early stages of the Feasibility Study. Formal environmental review pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) was initiated with the issuance of the Notice of Intent/Notice of Preparation (NOI/NOP) in January 2004 and scoping meetings in March 2004.



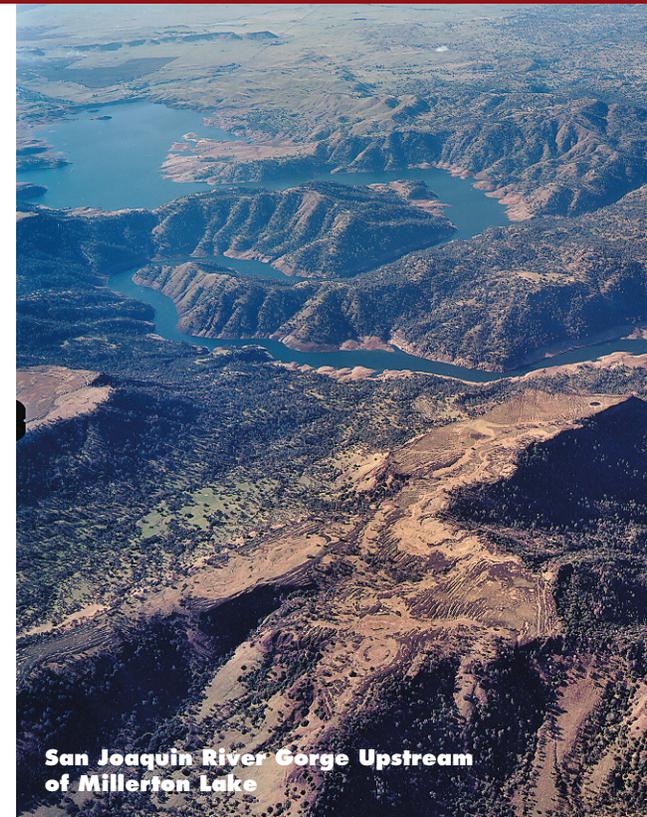
STAKEHOLDERS PROVIDE INPUT

In March 2004, Reclamation and DWR held public scoping meetings in Sacramento, Modesto, Friant, and Visalia to solicit public input on the scope of the environmental impact analysis to be conducted for the project. Reclamation also provided an opportunity for submission of written comments through April 16, 2004.

Scoping comments were received from Federal and State of California agencies, public and private utilities, local residents, environmental interest groups, and several Native American tribes and individuals. Comments addressed a broad range of issues and concerns and are summarized in a Scoping Report that was completed in December 2004. The report is available for review on the project Web site at: www.usbr.gov/mp/sccao/storage.

Specific concerns raised during scoping and the Study Team's response:

How would new water be used? New water would be used consistent with the needs identified in the CALFED ROD. These objectives include contributing to river restoration, improving water quality, and facilitating



San Joaquin River Gorge Upstream of Millerton Lake

conjunctive management and exchanges for improved urban water quality. The Study Team is developing operating scenarios to begin exploring how new storage could be operated to meet these needs.

What about river restoration? Many stakeholders have an interest in potential restoration of the San Joaquin River downstream of Friant Dam and asked how this issue will be addressed in the Investigation.

Next Steps As shown below and in the graphic on page 1, the Investigation is proceeding to develop and evaluate the alternatives. As the Study Team progresses through the Feasibility Study and environmental review process, each supporting document includes a greater level of detailed analysis of a progressively narrower selection of alternatives.

Phase 1 Report

Identified the needs and opportunities for water storage in the Upper San Joaquin River, identified and screened 17 storage options, and resulted in retaining six options for further evaluation.

COMING IN SPRING 2005!

Initial Alternatives Information Report

Will document continued screening of storage options, identify initial operating scenarios, and formulate preliminary alternatives.

Plan Formulation Report

Will document the development and refinement of the final alternatives for evaluation in the Feasibility Report and environmental review.





Although the Investigation is not developing a river restoration plan, the Study Team is coordinating with other groups that are considering restoration of the San Joaquin River. The Investigation will examine the extent to which new storage could support a range of restoration opportunities.

Currently, the planning baseline for the Investigation assumes continued operation of Friant Dam under existing operating practices (see sidebar).

More Options? Many people requested that the Investigation study a full range of alternatives, including groundwater storage. The Investigation will examine a full range of alternatives, including groundwater storage and conjunctive management components. Southern California Edison and Pacific Gas and Electric suggested other options for consideration, including some options with smaller upstream reservoirs in combination with a new Fine Gold reservoir. The Study Team is evaluating storage options for consideration in the Initial Alternatives Information Report to be released in Spring 2005.

Potentially Affected Environmental Resources? Several comments were provided regarding potential impacts to environmental resources around and upstream of Millerton Lake that would be affected by development of surface water storage options retained from Phase 1. Much of the land upstream of Millerton Lake is owned by the United States and managed by either the Bureau of Land Management or the Forest Service. These and several other agencies will participate in evaluating potential impacts storage options may have on the natural and human environment.

During the development of Phase 1 studies, a legal decision regarding restoration releases from Friant Dam had not been made. Accordingly, Phase 1 evaluations did not include river restoration in the without-project conditions and did not consider specific restoration objectives. On August 27, 2004, the U.S. District Court, Eastern District of California, found that Friant Dam has been operated in violation of California Fish and Game Code Section 5937, which requires that water be released from a dam to maintain downstream fish in good condition. The ruling specified that a remedy to the violation will be determined at a later date.

Draft Feasibility Report & Draft EIS/EIR

Companion documents that will report on the benefits, costs, environmental impacts and mitigation, and cost sharing of the alternatives and a preferred alternative for public review and comment.



Final Feasibility Report & Final EIS/EIR

Final reports on the alternatives, recommended plan, and responses to public comments. These reports are provided to Congress for consideration in authorizing a project for design and construction.



Congressional Authorization & Record of Decision





A Joint Study by
Bureau of Reclamation and DWR

THE PURPOSE OF THE FEASIBILITY STUDY

The Feasibility Study undertaken in this Investigation serves to identify, refine, and analyze alternate ways of meeting the Investigation objectives. The Study is evaluating technical feasibility, costs and benefits, environmental impacts and mitigation, and cost allocation. The Investigation has been divided into two phases, the first of which was completed in Fall 2003. Once both phases are complete, the resulting Final Feasibility Report will present the evaluation and a recommended plan to Congress.

To receive Investigation updates and notifications for future meetings, please contact:

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Or visit the project Web site: www.usbr.gov/mp/sccao/storage

Next Report: Initial Alternatives Information Report

Currently the Study Team is preparing the Initial Alternatives Information Report (IAIR) for anticipated release in the Spring of 2005. The IAIR will include:

- Refined planning objectives for the Investigation
- Further evaluation of six surface storage options retained from Phase 1
 - Raise *Friant Dam*
 - *Fine Gold Creek Reservoir*
 - *Yokohl Valley Reservoir*
 - *Temperance Flat Reservoir*
(three potential locations)

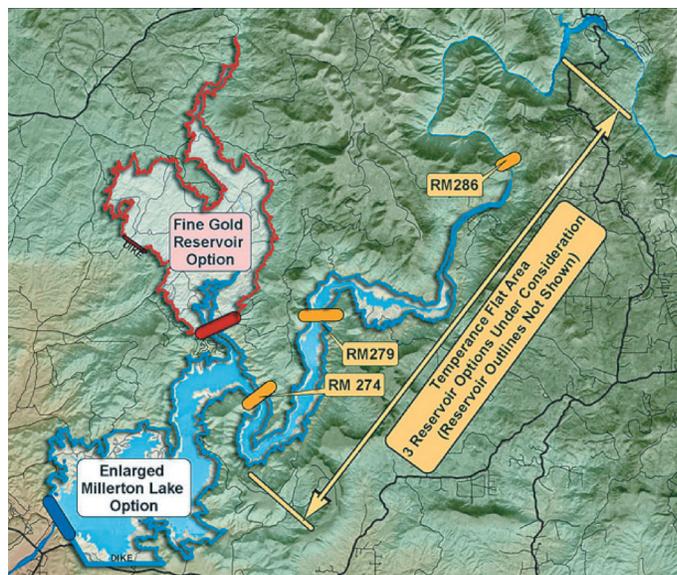
- Consideration of storage options suggested by power utilities
- Operating scenarios of how surface storage options could be operated to meet the project objectives
- Preliminary costs for these surface storage options
- Technical appendices describing the hydrologic, flood benefit, engineering, and hydropower characteristics of the surface storage options

- Opportunities for conjunctive management of surface water and groundwater that are supported by local stakeholders and water users

DWR is continuing to identify options for conjunctive management, subject to screening criteria that recognize hydrological, physical, institutional, and legal constraints. Assumptions regarding the operation of Millerton Lake will be identified with specific options.

Ongoing public and stakeholder outreach throughout the process is an important component of the Investigation. Reclamation and DWR will hold a stakeholder workshop in early 2005 to discuss the analysis underway for the IAIR.

Options retained for further study*



*Yokohl Valley Reservoir option not shown on this map.