

## **CHAPTER 6. NEXT STEPS**

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The Phase 1 Investigation Report represents an early milestone in developing the Upper San Joaquin River Basin Storage Investigation Feasibility Study. As described earlier, the objectives of the Phase 1 Investigation Report are to describe the problems and opportunities that are being addressed in the feasibility study, identify options for consideration, and present the results of technical studies that support initial screening of storage options. As presented in this report, a total of 17 surface water storage options was initially identified and considered. Through the initial screening process, six options were retained for further consideration in the feasibility study. The report described potential accomplishments, costs, and environmental effects of the retained surface storage options. The report also described the approach underway to identify potential conjunctive management options that could support Investigation purposes.

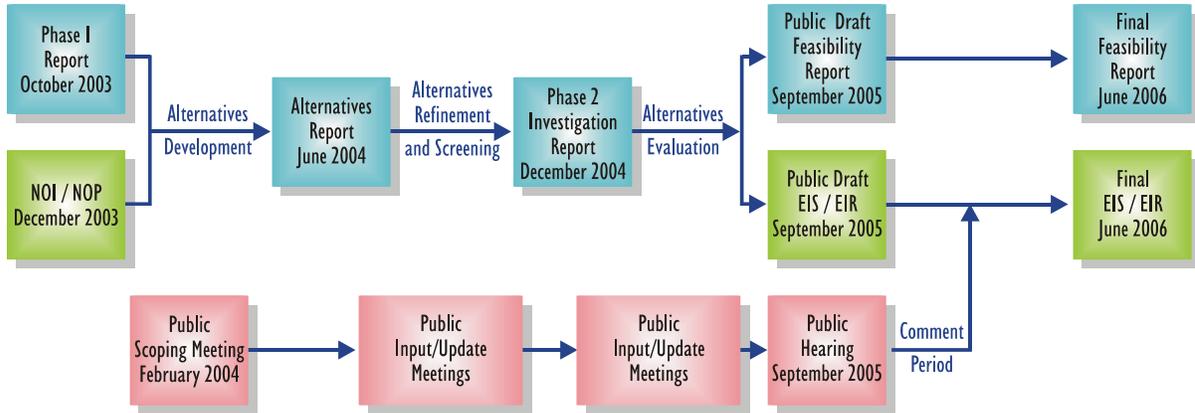
The surface water storage options that were retained for consideration will undergo additional study in the coming months. Technical studies will be tailored to allow definition of initial alternatives and identification of alternatives that will be evaluated throughout the remainder of the feasibility study. Several additional important milestones will be needed before a final document can be prepared for consideration by Federal, State, and local decision-makers. The following sections describe future planned milestones in the development of the Feasibility Report. During the fall of 2003, detailed work plans will be developed to address the planning, technical, and administrative activities to support the remainder of the Feasibility Study. A schedule of Phase 2 milestones is shown in Figure 6-1.

### **NOTICE OF INTENT / NOTICE OF PREPARATION**

Phase 1 planning activities were completed in advance of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) activities. A very active stakeholder involvement process was implemented to obtain input and feedback on planning activities and findings as initial studies were completed. With the completion of initial screening, Reclamation and DWR will formally initiate Federal and State of California environmental review processes in accordance with NEPA and CEQA, respectively. A Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS and a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an EIR will be issued in early 2004. The NOI/NOP will describe the purposes of the feasibility study and indicate the type of decision that will be made based on the final documents.

### **ALTERNATIVES REPORT**

The surface storage options retained for further study will be compared in terms of accomplishment, cost, environmental impacts, and implementation issues to identify options that will form the basis of the initial alternatives. Alternatives will be formulated as a combination of options and operational objectives. The costs and benefits of initial alternatives will be compared and a set of final alternatives to be evaluated in the EIS will be identified. The Alternatives Report is planned for release in June 2004.



**FIGURE 6-1. PHASE 2 MILESTONES**

## PHASE 2 INVESTIGATION REPORT

Preliminary analysis of costs, accomplishments, and environmental impacts of the final set of alternatives will be presented in the Phase 2 Investigation Report. This document will precede the Feasibility Report and EIS/EIR and will provide information on environmental effects of the alternatives. Recommended mitigation may be included, although this information may still be under development. It is expected that the Phase 2 Information Report will be issued in December 2004.

## DRAFT FEASIBILITY REPORT AND EIS/EIR

The Draft Feasibility Report will fully describe and evaluate the final alternatives, including costs and benefits, and the preferred alternative will be identified. The EIS/EIR will disclose the environmental consequences, both beneficial and adverse, of the alternatives and will describe proposed mitigation for the preferred alternative. The Draft EIS/EIR will be circulated for formal public review and comment in accordance with NEPA and CEQA requirements. The Draft Feasibility Report and EIS/EIR are scheduled for June 2005.

## FINAL FEASIBILITY REPORT AND EIS/EIR

Following receipt of public comments on the Draft Feasibility Report and EIS/EIR, the study team will prepare responses to comments and incorporate necessary revisions and clarifications into the documents. The Final Feasibility Report will include an implementation plan that describes the involvement of Federal, State, and local agencies in implementing the preferred alternative, if it is different from the no-action alternative. The Final EIS/EIR will include responses to comments and will form the basis for developing a ROD, which will be prepared immediately following issue of the Final EIS/EIR. The Final Feasibility Report and EIS/EIR are scheduled for June 2006.