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San Luis Low Point Improvement Project

Background

The United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation and the Santa Clara Valley Water District (Valley Water, previously SCVWD) are proposing the San Luis Low Point Improvement Project (SLLPIP) to address water supply reliability and service interruption issues for Valley Water associated with low water levels in San Luis Reservoir. The SLLPIP alternatives would help to maintain a high quality, reliable, and cost-effective water supply for Valley Water, and would ensure that they receive their annual Central Valley Project (CVP) contract allocations at the time and at the level of quality needed to meet their existing water supply commitments.



San Luis Reservoir

Reclamation and the California Department of Water Resources jointly own and operate the San Luis Reservoir to provide seasonal storage for the CVP and the State Water Project (SWP). During the summer, high temperatures and declining water levels in San Luis Reservoir create conditions that foster algae growth. The algae growth can lead to taste and odor issues for municipal and industrial water users relying on existing water treatment facilities in Santa Clara County. As water levels decline and algae reaches the Upper San Felipe Intake, that intake is no longer used. The low point problem occurs when the water levels continue to decline and the algal blooms reach the Lower San Felipe Intake.

For additional information, please visit:

<https://www.usbr.gov/mp/sllpp/>

Objectives

- Avoiding supply interruptions when water is needed by increasing the certainty of meeting the requested delivery schedule throughout the year to south-of-Delta contractors, including Valley Water, dependent on San Luis Reservoir.
- Increasing the reliability and quantity of yearly allocations to south-of-Delta contractors, including SCVWD, dependent on San Luis Reservoir.
- In addition to the two primary objectives, the SLLPIP may also support a secondary objective to provide opportunities for ecosystem enhancement.

Potential Benefits

Water Quality

SCVWD experiences water quality issues that affect treatability and use when San Luis Reservoir reaches an elevation of 369 feet due to the presence of algae blooms. These water quality issues would be avoided, increasing water users' access to usable storage capacity.

Water Supply

Valley Water experiences water quality issues that affect treatability and use when San Luis Reservoir reaches an elevation of 369 feet due to the presence of algae blooms. Water supply delivery curtailments during low point events would be avoided, allowing water to be utilized by Valley Water that would have otherwise remained in San Luis Reservoir.

Groundwater

Improved water supply reliability during low-point years would reduce Santa Clara County's reliance on local groundwater supplies to make up the difference between water demands and available local and imported water supplies.

Project Status

- 2020: Prepare and Release the Final SLLPIP Environmental Impact Statement/
Environmental Impact Report
- 2021: Issue Record of Decision
- 2022: Permitting, and Development of Final Engineering and Design
- 2024: Start of Construction

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