Background

B.F. Sisk Dam:
- Is a 382-foot-high zoned compacted earth-fill embankment located on the west side of California's Central Valley, about 12 miles west of Los Banos in Merced County.
- Known also as San Luis Dam, it is over 3.5-miles long and impounds San Luis Reservoir, which has a total capacity of more than two million acre-feet.
- Built between 1963 and 1967 to provide supplemental irrigation water storage for the federal Central Valley Project (CVP) and municipal and industrial water for the California State Water Project (SWP).
- Lifts water into the reservoir for storage by the Gianelli Pumping – Generating Plant from the California Aqueduct and from the Delta-Mendota Canal via O'Neill Forebay.
- Owned by the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) and operated by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), reservoir storage space is allotted 55% state and 45% federal.

Pre-Construction Activities

- The Crest Raise Alternative, the preferred alternative, would increase dam height to reduce downstream public safety concerns by reducing the likelihood of overtopping if slumping were to occur during a seismic event. By avoiding embankment failure, the proposed action would also maintain critical water supply deliveries to south of Delta CVP and SWP water service contractors.
- The final EIS/EIR considered and addressed all comments received during its public review period, which ended September 23, 2019. Reclamation signed a record of decision (ROD) in December 2019.
- The 60% final design drawings and specifications for construction's first phase was completed in June 2020.
- Reclamation and DWR are conducting field explorations to obtain information on bedrock depth, material properties, and to inform dewatering design.
- DWR is preparing permit applications for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW).
Funding

Reclamation and DWR plan to sign a cost-share agreement in principle in August 2020 and issue a contract solicitation for construction’s first phase on October 30, 2020. The total project capital costs are estimated at $1.1 billion (2021 dollars).