



Topic: **Authority Board Agenda Item 3.1**

**2020 May 27**

Subject: **Environmental Planning and Permitting Update**

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**Requested Action:**

Review and comment on Recirculated EIR and key permits milestone schedule and key decision points.

**Detailed Description/Background:**

Since approval of the Phase 1B Work Plan and the Sites Value Planning Report, staff has been moving forward with executing the environmental planning and permitting components for the “rightsized” project. The attached milestone schedule describes the roadmap for completing the Recirculated EIR and obtaining key permits. Current activities and key upcoming decision points (shown in bold) are as follows:

- California Environmental Quality Act / National Environmental Policy Act (CEQA / NEPA) – The project team is currently developing an approach for completing the Recirculated Environmental Impact Report (EIR). This approach will outline key components of the work ahead, including assessing the extent of revisions to each section of the 2017 document. The project team is also working to **formulate a recommended approach to alternatives and baseline conditions that we anticipate reviewing with the Reservoir Committee and Board in June**. The team is proceeding to coordinate a joint EIR/EIS. No final decision has been made yet by Reclamation, but it is assumed that the EIS will be supplemented and recirculated with the EIR.
- Federal Endangered Species Act and California Endangered Species Act (Fish and Game Code Section 2081) – Similar to above, the project team is currently developing the approach for completing the Biological Assessment and Section 2081 Permit applications in coordination with the resource agencies and Reclamation. The environmental and operations teams continue to work closely on modeling components and refinement of operational criteria for project diversions from the Sacramento River. The **operating regimes for diversions and releases and a review of the storage policy will be reviewed with the Reservoir Committee and Board in July**.
- National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106 – This effort will be initiated in September.
- California Water Right Application (California Water Code) – The project team is currently working to **formulate a recommend approach to identify key components of the water right application for discussion with the Reservoir Committee and Board in September**. These key components

include Place of Use, Points of Diversion, Points of Rediversion, and Purpose of Use – all of which will form the basis of the application.

- Clean Water Act Section 404 and 401 – This effort will be initiated shortly.
- River and Harbors Act Section 408 – This effort will be initiated in late July as more design and engineering information becomes available.

All of the actions and activities identified above remain on the overall schedule (some priorities have shifted around, but the overall schedule remains the same). All actions and activities are also within budget. The attached figure provides an overview of the key environmental planning and permitting efforts underway along with the schedule for key milestones and deliverables.

**Prior Action:**

None.

**Fiscal Impact/Funding Source:**

Costs to undertake the current efforts were included in the Amendment 2 Work Plan which was approved by the Sites Project Authority at its April 22, 2020 Board meeting.

**Staff Contact:**

Ali Forsythe

**Attachments:**

Environmental Planning and Permitting Schedule – The schedule needs to be attached to this staff report.

