

**Notice of Determination****- 1 -****To:**

Office of Planning and Research  
 For U.S. Mail:  
 P.O. Box 3044  
 Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

**Street Address:**

1400 Tenth Street  
 Sacramento, CA 95814

**From:**

Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)  
 Ecosystem Conservation Division – Water Branch  
 1010 Riverside Parkway, West Sacramento, CA 95605  
 Contact: Kristal Davis Fadtko  
 Phone: (916) 701-3226

**Lead Agency:**

Sites Project Authority  
 P.O. Box 517, Maxwell, CA 95955  
 Contact: Alicia Forsythe  
 Phone: (530) 428-2309

**SUBJECT: Filing of Notice of Determination pursuant to Public Resources Code § 21108**

State Clearinghouse Number: 2001112009

Project Title: Operations of the Sites Reservoir Project (California Endangered Species Act Incidental Take Permit No. 2081-2023-051-00 (ITP))

Project Location (include county): The Operations of the Sites Reservoir Project consists of a newly constructed off-stream reservoir with a 1.5-million-acre feet storage capacity and associated water conveyance facilities, west of the community of Maxwell in Glenn and Colusa Counties (Latitude 39.30908, Longitude -122.34022). The Project will divert water from the upper Sacramento River utilizing two previously existing water diversions, fish screen facilities, and pumping stations. The primary diversion facility is the Red Bluff Pumping Plant, and the secondary diversion facility is the Hamilton City Pump Station. Water diversions from the primary and secondary diversion facilities to the Sites Reservoir will be conveyed via previously existing and newly constructed facilities within the Tehama Colusa Canal, Glenn Colusa Irrigation District Main Canal and Funks Reservoir. Newly constructed facilities for the Project include a Terminal Regulating Reservoir, pump generating plants, and inlet-outlet works facilities that will convey water to and from the Sites Reservoir. The Project will also conduct operational exchanges with the State Water Project and Central Valley Project reservoirs, and real-time exchanges of water and transfers with participants.

Water releases for downstream participants will be conveyed through existing canals within the Tehama Colusa Canal, Glenn Colusa Irrigation District Main Canal and Colusa Basin Drain. The Project will also construct a new pipeline, the Dunnigan Pipeline, and associated outfall that will convey water from the Tehama Colusa Canal to the previously existing Colusa Basin Drain. All water conveyed in the Colusa Basin Drain will be released at two previously existing locations. The primary release location at the Knights Landing Outfall Gates will release water into the lower Sacramento River. The secondary location will release water through the Knights Landing Ridge Cut into the Yolo Bypass through the Wallace Weir. The direction of flow from the Colusa Basin Drain to Knights Landing Outfall Gates or Knights Landing Ridgecut is determined by the operation of the gates at Knights Landing Outfall Gates and Wallace Weir. Knights Landing Outfall Gates and Wallace Weir are operated by the California Department of Water Resources and Reclamation District 108. The previously existing and newly constructed conveyance facilities are located in Tehama County, Glenn County, Colusa County, and Yolo County, in the State of California. Project operations will occur in the facilities described above and, in all fish-bearing waterways within the Project Area that include the Sacramento River, Sutter Bypass floodplain, Yolo Bypass floodplain, Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, Suisun Marsh, and Suisun Bay.

Project Description: This proposed Project is limited to: (1) Permittee's diversion of upper Sacramento River water from the Bureau of Reclamation's Red Bluff Pumping Plant and the Glenn Colusa Irrigation Districts Hamilton City Pump Station to divert a combined total of up to 986 thousand acre-feet (TAF) annually; (2) Permittee facilitated water exchanges with Oroville Reservoir of up to 136 TAF annually; (3) Permittee facilitated water exchanges with Shasta Reservoir of up to 188 TAF annually; (4) Permittee facilitated real-time exchanges and transfers between participants of up to 160 TAF annually; (5) Permittee releases of up to 139 TAF annually for north-of-Delta participants and wildlife refuges north-of-Delta; (6) Permittee releases of up to 637 TAF annually for downstream and south-of-Delta participants into the Tehama Colusa Canal, Colusa Basin Drain, and the Knights Landing Outfall Gates to the (lower) Sacramento River and releases into Knights Landing Ridge Cut to the Yolo Bypass through Wallace Weir; and (7) Limited fish screen maintenance activities associated with the Permittee's diversions at the Red Bluff Pumping Plant and Hamilton City Pump Station diversion facilities.

The Project will result in impacts to longfin smelt (*Spirinchus thaleichthys*), Delta smelt (*Hypomesus*

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*transpacificus*), spring-run Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), winter-run Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), and white sturgeon (*Acipenser transmontanus*). The Project is expected to result in incidental take of: longfin smelt, designated as a threatened species; Delta smelt, designated as an endangered species; spring-run Chinook salmon, designated as a threatened species; winter-run Chinook salmon, designated as an endangered species; and white sturgeon, designated as a candidate threatened species under the California Endangered Species Act. The ITP referenced above as issued by CDFW authorizes incidental take of species listed under CESA that may occur as a result of Project implementation.

This is to advise that CDFW, acting as [ the lead agency /  a responsible agency] approved the above-described project on \_\_\_\_\_ and made the following determinations regarding the above described project:

- 1. The project [ will /  will not] have a significant effect on the environment (This determination is limited to effects within CDFW's permitting jurisdiction as a responsible agency).
  - 2. [ An environmental impact report /  A negative declaration] was prepared by the lead agency for the original project.
  - 3. Additional mitigation measures [ were /  were not] made a condition of CDFW's approval of the project.
  - 4. A mitigation reporting or monitoring plan [ was /  was not] adopted by CDFW for this project.
  - 5. A Statement of Overriding Considerations [ was /  was not] adopted by CDFW for this project.
  - 6. Findings [ were /  were not] made by CDFW pursuant to Public Resources Code § 21081(a).
  - 7. Compliance with the environmental filing fee requirement at Fish and Game Code § 711.4 (check one):
    - Payment is submitted with this notice.
    - A copy of a receipt showing prior payment was submitted to CDFW.
- Responsible Agency statement: The EIR prepared by the lead agency for the Project is available to the general public at the office location listed above for the lead agency. CDFW's administrative record of proceedings related to the incidental take permit is available to the public for review at CDFW's headquarters.

DocuSigned by:  
*Joshua Grover*  
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Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

10/24/2024

Joshua Grover, Deputy Director

Date Received for filing at OPR: \_\_\_\_\_