

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

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**NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF THE
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE
WEST FALSE RIVER DROUGHT SALINITY BARRIER PROJECT
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES**

Notice is hereby given that a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) prepared by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) Division of Operations and Maintenance is available for public review.

Title: West False River Drought Salinity Barrier project (proposed project)

Project Location: The drought salinity barrier would be located on West False River approximately 0.4 mile east of its confluence with the San Joaquin River, in Contra Costa County between Jersey and Bradford islands, approximately 4.8 miles northeast of the City of Oakley. The staging area would be located on the Jersey Island levee. Embankment rock used to construct the barrier may be sourced from a commercially operated rock quarry in San Rafael, DWR's Rio Vista stockpile in Solano County, or the Weber stockpile in San Joaquin County. The proposed project may use multiple stockpile sites and off-loading sites. With the installation of the barrier, three new water quality monitoring stations would also be installed in Woodward Cut and Railroad Cut in San Joaquin County.

Project Description: The proposed project consists of a temporary barrier in the West False River that DWR may install up to two times between 2023 to 2032, including consecutive years, if drought conditions occur, for a period of up to 20 months. In the years where the barrier is installed, DWR would construct the barrier no sooner than April 1 and remove the barrier by November 30 of the subsequent year or the same year, when DWR determines the barrier is no longer needed based on hydrologic conditions. A barrier in West False River would be an effective tool to protect the beneficial uses of the interior Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Delta) water by reducing saltwater intrusion while preserving the use of critically needed reservoir water. The proposed project would be constructed if DWR, in cooperation with other State and federal agencies including the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, determines that drought conditions have reduced water storage in State Water Project (SWP) and Central Valley Project (CVP) facilities to critical levels, such that projected Delta outflow would not be sufficient to control increased salinity intrusion into the Delta, thereby worsening water quality and threatening the drinking and irrigation water supply and harming interior Delta agriculture.

The approximately 800-foot-long barrier would consist of approximately 84,000 cubic yards of well-graded 18-inch minus embankment rock extending from the Jersey Island levee on the south side of West False River to the Bradford Island levee on the north side. This is the same location where a drought salinity barrier was constructed in 2015 and 2021/22. Depending on drought conditions, if the barrier is left in a subsequent year a notch may be constructed in the middle portion of the barrier in January after the installation year to allow for fish passage and vessel navigation through West False River and the notch would be refilled as early as the first week of April.

Review: The DEIR will be circulated for a 45-day public notice period beginning Thursday, July 7, 2022, and ending Monday, August 22, 2022.

Written comments on the DEIR are due no later than 5 p.m. on Monday, August 22, 2022.

Please submit your written comments via mail or email to:

California Department of Water Resources
Division of Operations and Maintenance
Robert Trang, Manager
WPPM Delta Planning Section
1516 9th Street, 2nd Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Email address: wfrdsb_ceqa@water.ca.gov

If comments are provided via email, please include the project title in the subject line, attach comments in Microsoft Word format, if possible, and include the commenter's U.S. Postal Service mailing address.

PLEASE NOTE: All comments received will be made available for public review in their entirety in the Final EIR, including the names and addresses of the respondents. Individual commenters may request that DWR withhold their name and/or home addresses, etc., but if you wish DWR to consider withholding this information you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments.

The DEIR is available for review online on DWR's website (under the "DWR Activities" tab):

<https://water.ca.gov/Water-Basics/Drought>

A copy of the DEIR is also available for review during normal business hours at the following locations:

California Department of Water Resources, Division of Operations and Maintenance,
WPPM Delta Planning Section, 1516 9th Street, 2nd Floor, Sacramento, CA 95814

Sacramento Central Public Library, 828 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

DEIR Public Meeting: DWR will host a virtual public meeting to provide a brief presentation on the project and DEIR with time for public comments on the DEIR. The meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 27, 2022, at 6 p.m. Please register in advance of the meeting at the following link:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_iKuyb6Eft7-OMvRyf6JTLQ. Registration will be open until the start of the meeting on July 27, 2022.

Jacob McQuirk

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