

NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

DATE: December 12, 2022

Based upon the conclusions set forth in the Initial Study, the CEQA Lead Agency finds that the Turlock Irrigation District's (TID's) Turlock Lake Rehabilitation Project (proposed project), which includes measures and mitigations designed to minimize environmental impacts, would not result in significant adverse effects on the environment. The CEQA Lead Agency has prepared this Notice of Intent to adopt the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration pursuant to 14 CCR Section 15072.

Title: Turlock Lake Rehabilitation Project

Project Description: Turlock Lake is an off-stream reservoir, impounded by 18 dams around its perimeter, that receives water from the Tuolumne River via the Upper Main Canal and from McDonald Creek. The reservoir regulates the supply of irrigation flows in TID's system by releasing flows into the Turlock Main Canal through either the outlet works structure or the powerhouse within Dam A, on the west side of Turlock Lake.

Turlock Lake currently has a DSOD-certified maximum reservoir elevation of 240.6 feet (U.S. Geological Survey [USGS] datum), providing a maximum storage capacity of nearly 45,600 acre-feet. However, TID has been operating Turlock Lake 3 to 4 feet below this certified elevation because of concern about worsening seepage losses through the dams at higher pool elevations. In 2018 and 2019, TID evaluated all 18 of the dams around Turlock Lake for seepage issues, seismic stability, and dam performance. As a result of the inspections, TID determined that Dams C, H, J, L, Q, and S should be retrofitted for seepage remediation and seismic stability and that vegetation clearing should take place (for dam safety purposes) at Dams C, D, E, H, J, and L.

The proposed project would rehabilitate Dams C, H, J, L, Q, and S for seismic stability and seepage remediation via the placement of buttress fills on the downstream slopes, including chimney drains and a filter-compatible sand and gravel toe drain to safely collect and control seepage. Clearing of trees and woody vegetation would occur at Dams C, D, E, H, J, and L for dam safety purposes.

Project Location: The proposed project includes eight of the 18 dams located around the reservoir perimeter of Turlock Lake, which is located in the eastern corner of Stanislaus County, approximately 1 mile from the county's border with Merced County.

Project Proponent: TID

Lead Agency: TID

Public Review Period: A 30-day public review period will begin on December 12, 2022. Written comments must be submitted to the Lead Agency no later than 5:00 PM on January 11, 2023.

Available Material: A copy of the draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) and supporting material are available online at <https://www.tid.org/news-and-resources/public-notice> or physically at TID's offices, 333 East Canal Drive, Turlock, CA 95380, during normal business hours.

Contact for Public Comments: Written comments on the draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration may be addressed to: Evan Lucas, Turlock Irrigation District, PO Box 949, Turlock, CA 95381; (209) 883-8608; emlucas@TID.org.