

# **NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY FOR A DRAFT PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE MERCED IRRIGATION DISTRICT RECREATION FACILITIES PROJECT**

**SCH# 2024051222  
February 2025**

Merced Irrigation District (Merced ID), the lead agency for the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), announces the availability of a Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for the proposed Merced ID Recreation Facilities Improvement Project (Project). The Draft PEIR describes the proposed Project and evaluates potential environmental impacts from the project. Mitigation measures for any significant or potentially significant impacts are identified.

**PUBLIC REVIEW & COMMENT PERIOD: February 7, 2025, to 5:00 p.m., March 9, 2025**

## **PROJECT OVERVIEW**

Following completion of the two dams (New Exchequer and McSwain) in 1967 that created the two lakes, Lake McClure and the McSwain Reservoir have afforded many opportunities for public recreational use. Currently, with everything from fishing to boating, swimming to camping, and biking to hiking, Lake McClure and Lake McSwain offer some of the best recreational opportunities in California.

The purpose of the proposed Project is to maintain flood control benefits provided by the two dams, while also making the most of opportunities to further protect and enhance environmental and recreational resources at the two lakes.

Corresponding with this broader purpose, the objectives of the proposed Project include:

1. Replacing and expanding capacities of aging underground and surface water, sewer and electrical utilities infrastructure, including, as necessary, original equipment that dates back to the 1970's;
2. Continuing the Merced ID recreation legacy by providing upgrades to existing facilities to meet new and evolving recreation customer demands and upgrading facilities to meet new accommodation standards;
3. Expanding capacities at day use and camping areas, houseboats moorings and cabin rentals in response to recognized growth trends in recreation facilities' seasonal use, while minimizing potential recreation use impacts to natural, historic and prehistoric resources; and
4. Modernizing existing recreation areas with new and enhanced features, such as restrooms, adding electric car charging stations, upgrading boat ramps to allow more use during dryer water years, and adding in more fish cleaning and recycling stations.

## **POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS**

The Draft PEIR assesses potential environmental impacts of the proposed Project on the physical, social, and natural environments. A wide variety of resource areas are studied during the environmental review to identify such impacts, including but not limited to air quality, biological

resources, cultural resources, geology, greenhouse gas emissions, hazardous materials, hydrology, water quality, mineral resources, recreation, and wildfire. Measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any potential adverse impacts are identified and evaluated in the Draft PEIR.

### **SUBMITTING COMMENTS**

A thirty-day public review process is being initiated with this notice. Interested individuals and public agencies are invited to submit written comments on the CEQA document during this time.

Merced ID will accept written comments and suggestions concerning the PEIR until 5:00 pm on March 9, 2025. Comments may be submitted via the following communication methods:

E-mail to [RecreationCEQAInfo@mercedid.org](mailto:RecreationCEQAInfo@mercedid.org)

Postal mail: Brooke Gutierrez, Merced ID Parks and Recreation, 9090 Lake McClure Road, Snelling, CA 95369.