EL DORADO IRRIGATION DISTRICT
TEMPORARY RESERVOIR RE-OPERATION
WATER TRANSFER PROJECT
CEQA Initial Study/Negative Declaration

June 2024

El Dorado Irrigation District

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FIGURES

TABLES

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AF	acre-feet
APCD	Air Pollution Control District
AQMD	Air Quality Management District
Banks pumping plant	Harvey O. Banks pumping plant
Buyers	Federal and/or State Water Contractors South of the Delta
CAA	federal Clean Air Act
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standards
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CCAA	California Clean Air Act
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
cfs	cubic feet per second
CO	carbon monoxide
CO_2	carbon dioxide
Cortese List	Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites List
CVP	Central Valley Project
CWC	California Water Code
Delta	Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta
DOC	California Department of Conservation
DMC	Delta Mendota Canal
DTSC	California Department of Toxic Substances Control
DWR	California Department of Water Resources
EID	El Dorado Irrigation District
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
FERC	Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
GHG	greenhouse gas
IS/ND	initial study/proposed negative declaration
Jones pumping plant	C.W. Bill Jones pumping plant
LAR	lower American River
MDB&M	Mount Diablo Base and Meridian
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NO_2	nitrogen dioxide
PG&E	Pacific Gas & Electric Company
PM_{10}	particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter
$PM_{2.5}$	particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter
PORD	Point of Rediversion
POU	Place of Use
PRC	Public Resources Code

proposed project	Temporary Reservoir Re-operation Water Transfer
RPS	Renewable Portfolio Standards
SLR	San Luis Reservoir
SO_2	sulfur dioxide
SWP	State Water Project
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND REGULATORY GUIDANCE

El Dorado Irrigation District (EID) has prepared this initial study/proposed negative declaration (IS/ND) to address the potential environmental consequences of the proposed EID Temporary Reservoir Re-operation Water Transfer (proposed project). Under the proposed project, EID would transfer up to 4,300 acre-feet (AF) of water to federal and/or state water contractors south of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Delta), The sources of water available for transfer are EID water rights from Weber Reservoir, Caples Lake, and Silver Lake. Chapter 2 "Project Description" presents the detailed project information.

This document has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq.) and the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations Section 15000 et seq.). An initial study is prepared by a lead agency to determine if a project may have a significant effect on the environment (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15063[a]), and thus to determine the appropriate environmental document. In accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15070, a "public agency shall prepare…a proposed negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration…when: (a) The Initial Study shows that there is no substantial evidence…that the project may have a significant impact on the environment, or (b) The Initial Study identifies potentially significant effects but revisions to the project plans or proposal are agreed to by the applicant and such revisions would reduce potentially significant effects to a less-than-significant level." In this circumstance, the lead agency prepares a written statement describing its reasons for concluding that the project would not have a significant effect on the environment and, therefore, does not require the preparation of an environmental impact report.

1.2 WHY THIS DOCUMENT?

As described in the environmental checklist (Chapters 3 and 4), the project would not result in any significant environmental impacts. Therefore, an IS/ND is the appropriate document for compliance with the requirements of CEQA. This IS/ND conforms to these requirements and to the content requirements of State CEQA Guidelines Section 15071.

Under CEQA, the lead agency is the public agency with primary responsibility over approval of the project. EID is the CEQA lead agency because they are responsible for carrying out the proposed water transfer. The purpose of this document is to present to decision-makers and the public information about the environmental consequences of implementing the project. This disclosure document is being made available to the public for review and comment. This IS/ND will be available for a 30-day public review period from June 7 to July 8, 2024.

This document is available for review at:

El Dorado Irrigation District
2890 Mosquito Road
Placerville, CA 95667

Submit email comments to 2024ReopWaterTransfer@eid.org and include the name and mailing address of the commenter in the body of the email and "Reservoir Reop Water Transfer Comment" in the subject line. Comments may also be submitted by mail to:

Brian Deason, Environmental Resources Supervisor
El Dorado Irrigation District
2890 Mosquito Road
Placerville, CA 95667

Written comments (including via e-mail) must be received by 5:00 pm on July 8, 2024.

After comments are received from the public and reviewing agencies, EID may (1) adopt the ND and approve the project; (2) undertake additional environmental studies; or (3) abandon the project. If the project is approved and funded, EID may elect to, but is not required to, proceed with the project.

1.3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Chapter 3, "Environmental Checklist," contains the analysis and discussion of potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. Based on the issues evaluated in that chapter, EID has determined that the proposed project would not result in any significant impacts and, therefore, no mitigation is required or proposed.

The proposed project would result in no impacts related to the following issue areas:

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Air quality
- Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Wildfire

The proposed project would result in less-than-significant impacts related to the following issue areas:

- Biological Resources
- Energy
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Public Trust Resources
- Mandatory Findings of Significance

1.4 DOCUMENT ORGANIZATION

This IS is organized as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction. This chapter provides an introduction to the environmental review process. It describes the purpose and organization of this document as well as presents a summary of findings.

Chapter 2: Project Description. This chapter describes the purpose of and need for the proposed project, identifies project objectives, and provides a detailed description of the project.

Chapter 3: Environmental Checklist. This chapter presents an analysis of a range of environmental issues identified in the CEQA Environmental Checklist and determines if project actions would result in no impact, a less-than-significant impact, a less-than-significant impact with mitigation incorporated, or a potentially significant impact.

Chapter 4: References. This chapter lists the references used in preparation of this IS.

2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This chapter describes the proposed project, which would involve the transfer of water held under water rights by EID to federal and/or state water contractors south of the Delta, collectively the Buyers. The proposed project seeks to transfer water to the Buyers during summer and fall of 2024 as part of the Buyers' efforts to purchase supplemental water supplies when allocations of other water supplies are constrained. The project location and background are described along with project objectives, project characteristics, and discretionary actions and approvals that may be required.

2.1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

EID proposes to transfer up to a maximum of 4,300 acre-feet (AF) of water during summer and fall 2024 to the Buyers through re-operations of three EID reservoirs (i.e., Weber Reservoir, Caples Lake, and Silver Lake). The proposed project is similar to past temporary water transfers that EID has conducted through the re-operation of one or more of these three reservoirs (EID 2015, EID 2018, EID 2020, and EID 2022a). The proposed water transfer would follow the historic pattern and existing operating conditions for the waterways and facilities affected.

With the proposed project, up to 750 AF would be released from EID's Weber Reservoir, which stores water pursuant to Water Right License 2184 (Application 1692). This portion of the transfer would require approval of a Temporary Change pursuant to California Water Code Section 1725 et seq from the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), requested through a Petition for Change Involving Water Transfers to change the Place(s) of Use (POUs) and Point(s) of Rediversion (PORDs) under License 2184 to include the Harvey O. Banks (Banks) pumping plant, the C.W. Bill Jones (Jones) pumping plant, and San Luis Reservoir as PORDs, the Buyers service areas as POUs, and their PORDs for the water transfer. While a SWRCB petition is required, on its own the Weber Reservoir portion of the transfer would be exempt from CEQA under California Water Code (CWC) Section 1725 and CEQA Guidelines 15282(u) as long as the transfer would not injure any legal user of the water or unreasonably affect fish, wildlife, or other instream beneficial uses. However, the Weber Reservoir portion of the transfer is addressed together with the Caples Lake and Silver Lake portions in this document to provide a complete description of the proposed water transfer and environmental impacts thereof.

With the proposed project, up to a combined total of 3,550 AF would be released from EID's Caples and Silver lakes, both of which store water pursuant to pre-1914 water rights (Statement 015941 and Statement 004708, respectively). Transfer of the stored pre-1914 water in these lakes is subject to CEQA review but would not require a petition to SWRCB. Under the proposed transfer, EID would rely on water stored in Jenkinson Lake to meet consumptive demands during the transfer period in lieu of using water from Caples and Silver lakes.

The transfer volumes may be lower than those evaluated in this IS. However, this document addresses the maximum potential transfer volume of 4,300 AF. In addition, the reservoir storage and release schedules may vary from what is presented in the transfer scenarios depending on final hydrology for 2024, when the agreements and authorizations for the transfer are finalized, and other factors, but they would be consistent with the historic pattern of operations of the facilities.

Releases from Caples and Silver lakes would be conducted in accordance with all applicable requirements and operating criteria, including the Project No. 184 Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) license and associated agreements (e.g., League to Save Sierra Lakes 2004 Settlement Agreement). Releases from Weber Reservoir would be conducted in accordance with all applicable requirements and operating criteria, including the terms in Water Right License 2184 and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between EID and CDFW (EID 2005).

2.1.1 El Dorado Irrigation District

EID was organized in 1925 under the Irrigation District Law (Water Code Section 20500, et seq.). EID provides water to a population of approximately 126,000 people within its service area for municipal and industrial (M&I) and irrigation uses, as well as wastewater treatment and recycled water services, to meet the growing needs of its customers. It also operates recreational facilities as a condition of its Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) license. As such, EID is one of the few California districts that provides a full complement of water services.

EID is located in El Dorado County on the western slope of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. The service area is bounded by Sacramento County to the west and the community of Strawberry to the east. The area north of the communities of Coloma and Lotus establishes the northern-most part of the service area, while the communities of Pleasant Valley and South Shingle Springs establish the southern boundary. EID's contiguous service area spans 220 square miles and ranges from 400 feet in elevation, at the Sacramento County line, to more than 4,000 feet in elevation in the eastern portion of the service area. Two hundred pressure-regulating zones are required for reliable operation. The water system contains more than 1,245 miles of pipeline, 27 miles of ditches, five treatment plants, 36 storage tanks and reservoirs, and 37 pumping stations.

EID owns and operates a FERC-licensed hydroelectric power generation system consisting of a powerhouse, five reservoirs (Echo Lake, Lake Aloha, Caples Lake, Silver Lake, and El Dorado Forebay), and more than 22 miles of flumes, canals, siphons, and tunnels. Project facilities are located east of Placerville in El Dorado, Alpine, and Amador counties. EID also owns and operates several other water facilities including Jenkinson Lake and numerous other water rights and reservoirs acquired in the 1900s including Weber Reservoir and many pre-1914 water rights.

2.1.2 Central Valley Project Contractors

The Central Valley Project (CVP) has long-term agreements to supply water to more than 270 contractors in 29 of California's 58 counties (CVP Contractors). Deliveries by the CVP include an annual average of 5 million acre-feet of water for agriculture, 600,000 acre-feet of water for M&I uses (enough water to supply about 2.5 million people for a year), and water for wildlife refuges and maintaining water quality in the Delta. Most CVP Contractors do not rely solely on their CVP water supply as they have other sources of water available, such as their own water rights, groundwater, State Water Project (SWP) water and other sources. U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) operates the CVP in coordination with the SWP under the Coordinated Operation Agreement between the federal government and the State of California (authorized by Public Law 99–546). The CVP and SWP operate pursuant to water rights permits and licenses that are issued by the SWRCB. The proposed project could transfer water to any CVP Contractors south of the Delta (Buyers), which include the following:

- City of Avenal
- City of Fresno
- City of Lindsay
- City of Tracy
- San Benito County Water District
- Banta Carbona Irrigation District
- Byron-Bethany Irrigation District
- Del Puerto Water District
- Eagle Field Water District
- Fresno Irrigation District
- Garfield Water District
- International Water District
- James Irrigation District
- Lewis Creek Water District
- Lindsay-Strathmore Irrigation District
- M.L. Dudley Company
- Orange Cove Irrigation District
- City of Coalinga
- City of Huron
- City of Orange Cove
- Fresno County Water Works District No. 18
- Arvin-Edison Water Storage District
- Broadview Water District
- Coelho Family Trust
- Delano-Earlimart Irrigation District
- Exeter Irrigation District
- Fresno Slough Water District
- Grasslands Water District
- Ivanhoe Irrigation District
- Laguna Water District
- Lindmore Irrigation District
- Lower Tule River Irrigation District
- Mercy Springs Water District
- Oro Loma Water District

- Panoche Water District
- Porterville Irrigation District
- San Benito County Water District
- Saucelito Irrigation District
- Southern San Joaquin Municipal Utilities District
- Tea Pot Dome Water District
- Tranquility Public Utility District
- West Stanislaus Water district
- Patterson Water District
- Reclamation District 1606
- San Luis Water District
- Shafter-Wasco Irrigation District
- Stone Corral Irrigation District
- Terra Bella Irrigation District
- Tulare Irrigation District
- Westlands Water District

2.1.3 State Water Project Contractors

California Department of Water Resources (DWR) has long-term contracts with 29 water agencies (i.e., SWP Contractors) statewide to deliver water supplies developed from the SWP system. These contracts are with both M&I and agricultural water users and provide more than 3 million acre-feet for East Bay, San Joaquin Valley and southern California water users (DWR 2019). Approximately 30 percent of SWP water is used to irrigate approximately 750,000 acres of agricultural land, located mostly within the San Joaquin Valley (Water Education Foundation; WEF 2024). Twenty-four SWP Contractors are located south of the Delta and could receive water from the proposed project. Those contractors include the following:

- Alameda County Water District
- Zone 7 Water Agency
- Santa Clara Valley Water District
- Oak Flat Water District
- Empire West Side Irrigation District
- County of Kings
- Tulare Lake Basin Water Storage District
- Dudley Ridge Water District
- San Luis Obispo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District
- Kern County Water Agency
- Antelope Valley – East Kern Water Agency
- Mojave Water Agency
- Santa Barbara County Flood Control and Water Conservation District
- Ventura County Flood Control District
- Castaic Lake Water Agency
- Palmdale Water District
- Littlerock Creek Irrigation District
- Crestline – Lake Arrowhead Water Agency
- San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District
- San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District
- San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency
- Desert Water Agency
- The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
- Coachella Valley Water District

2.2 PROJECT LOCATION

The EID service area is located in western El Dorado County and the EID reservoirs that would be involved in the proposed project are located in western El Dorado County, northwestern Alpine County, and northeastern Amador County (Figure 2-1).

Weber Reservoir is located approximately 5.5 miles southeast of Placerville in El Dorado County, within Sections 17 and 18 of Township (T) 10N, Range (R) 12E, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian (MDB&M) of the Camino United States Geological Survey 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle. Weber Reservoir is located on North Fork Weber Creek, tributary to Weber Creek, tributary to South Fork American River (SFAR), thence Folsom Lake.

Caples Lake is located approximately 0.4 mile east of Kirkwood in Alpine County, off State Route 88. Caples Lake is within Sections 22 and 23 of T10N, R17E and Sections 18, 19, 20, and 30 of T10N, R18E, MDB&M, of the Caples Lake 7.5-minute quadrangle. Caples Lake is located on Caples Creek, tributary to Silver Fork American River (Silver Fork), tributary to the SFAR, thence Folsom Reservoir.

Silver Lake is located approximately 3 miles southwest of Kirkwood in Amador County, off State Route 88. Silver Lake is within Sections 32 and 33 of T10N, R17E and Sections 4, 5, and 8 of T9N, R17E, MDB&M, of the Caples Lake 7.5-minute quadrangle and within Section 8 of T9N, R17E, MDB&M, of the Tragedy Spring 7.5-minute quadrangle. Silver Lake is located on the Silver Fork, tributary to SFAR, thence Folsom Reservoir.

Jenkinson Lake is located in Pollock Pines in El Dorado County, off Sly Park Road and Mormon Emigrant Trail. Jenkinson Lake is within Sections 8, 9, 10, 16, 17, and 18 of T10N, R13E, MDB&M, of the Sly Park 7.5-minute quadrangle. Jenkinson Lake is located on Park Creek and receives inflow from Park, Hazel, and Camp creeks, all of which are tributary to the North Fork Cosumnes River.

The flow path of water released from Weber Reservoir is shown if Figure 2-2. Water is discharged into Weber Creek then travels downstream to the SFAR and thence into Folsom Reservoir. The flow path of water released from Caples and Silver lakes is shown in 2-2 and 2-3. Water released from Weber Reservoir, Caples Lake, and Silver Lake that is available for transfer in 2024 would otherwise be directed for consumptive use within EID's service area.

Source: DWR and Reclamation 2016, DWR 2019, adapted by Ascent Environmental

Figure 2-1 CVP and SWP Contractor Service Areas

2.3 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the proposed project would include transfer of water during 2024 that otherwise would be consumed by EID customers and/or stored within the EID network of reservoirs to the Buyers.

The specific project objectives are to:

- Provide for the beneficial use of water from Weber Reservoir, Caples Lake, and Silver Lake in 2024 by transferring water to Buyers south of the Delta; and
- Generate non-rate revenue through the sale of water to offset the costs of EID's operations, thereby reducing the pressure on customer rate revenue.

The Buyers are interested in augmenting their water supply through this transfer. This interest is based on the reduced availability of their CVP/SWP contract water to provide their agricultural customers a critical water supply for irrigation of their crops during the 2024 growing season and to support existing M&I water uses. Transfer water that EID provides to the Buyers would be used entirely within the Buyers' existing service areas.

2.4 PROPOSED PROJECT

EID proposes to transfer up to 4,300 AF of water to the Buyers during summer and fall 2024. EID would make the water available through re-operation of EID reservoirs to release water otherwise planned to be consumed by EID customers and/or stored within the EID network of reservoirs. Specifically, the transfer quantity would be derived from the following re-operations:

1. Up to 750 AF would be released from Weber Reservoir that would otherwise be maintained in storage.
2. Up to a total of 3,550 AF would be released from Caples and Silver lakes and re-diverted at the El Dorado Diversion Dam for non-consumptive hydropower generation and discharged back into the SFAR through the El Dorado Powerhouse just upstream from Slab Creek Reservoir or in the event that the El Dorado Powerhouse is not operating the water released from Caples and Silver lakes would not be diverted at the El Dorado Diversion Dam and would remain instream in the SFAR, and then travel downstream to Folsom Reservoir.

Without the proposed project, water that has been stored in Weber Reservoir is typically maintained or conveyed to Folsom Reservoir and re-diverted at EID's raw water pump station for treatment and delivery to EID's western service area, while summer and early fall water that has been stored in Caples and Silver lakes is either delivered directly to EID's Reservoir 1 Water Treatment Plant (WTP) or delivered through the Hazel Creek Tunnel (via EID's El Dorado Diversion Dam and El Dorado Canal) into Jenkinson Lake. Under the proposed project, EID would instead use water already stored in Jenkinson Lake to meet these demands during this time period in lieu of water from Caples and Silver lakes, and Jenkinson Lake would not be replenished with water from Caples and Silver lakes during this time period. This would allow water stored in Caples and Silver lakes to instead be released to Folsom Reservoir between July and November 30, 2024 for transfer to the Buyers. EID would draw on Jenkinson Lake storage for meeting its own customer demands.

The proposed project would result in the temporary decreased storage of up to 750 AF in Weber Reservoir and up to 3,550 AF in Jenkinson Lake, and increased inflow of up to 4,300 AF into Folsom Reservoir.

The transfers would not require construction of any new facilities.

The actual transfer quantity from each reservoir and total transfer volume of up to 4,300 AF would be subject to hydrologic conditions leading up to and during the transfer period as well as compliance with all other water right, FERC license, and related requirements. Figures 2-2 and 2-3 illustrate the proposed Weber Reservoir, Caples Lake, and Silver Lake re-operations.

Releases from Weber Reservoir and Caples and Silver lakes would be conducted in accordance with all applicable rules and requirements governing operations, and would be coordinated with the Buyers as well as Reclamation and DWR, as appropriate, for CVP and SWP water system operations, respectively.

To accomplish this transfer, the following temporary (1 year or less) changes in POU and PORD are being sought by Petition to SWRCB pursuant to EID Water Right License 2184 (Application 1692) and consistent with CWC Sections 1725-1732:

1. Proposed Point of Rediversion: The Banks pumping plant would be added as a PORD to allow DWR to pump and remanage delivery of the transfer water to the Buyers' service areas (see Figure 2-1).
2. Proposed Point of Rediversion: The Jones pumping plant would be added as a PORD to allow Reclamation to pump and remanage delivery of the transfer water to the Buyers' service areas (see Figure 2-1).
3. Proposed Point of Rediversion: The SLR would be added as a PORD to allow DWR to pump and remanage delivery of the transfer water to the Buyers (see Figure 2-1). SLR is identified on maps filed with the SWRCB Division of Water Rights under Application 5630 (SWP).
4. Proposed Additional Places of Use: The transfer water would be used within the Buyers' specific service areas contained within the CVP and SWP service areas (see Figure 2-1).

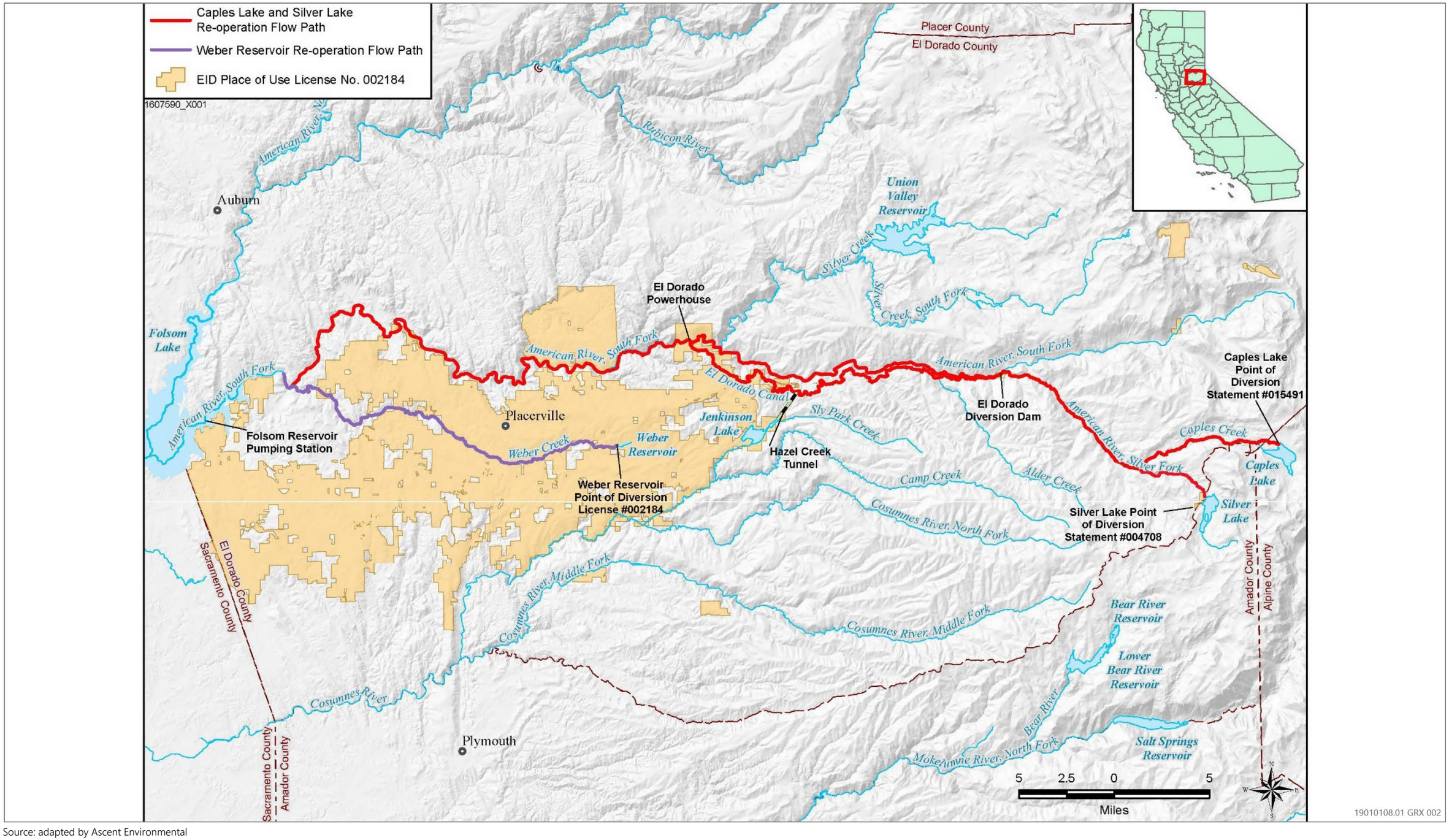
2.4.1 Weber Reservoir Re-Operation

As needed to meet consumptive demands, EID makes discretionary releases from Weber Reservoir to provide non-federal supplies for its own use through a Warren Act Contract at Folsom Reservoir. Because of the availability of other supplies in 2024 and strategic management of reservoir operations, EID does not anticipate releasing stored water currently available in this reservoir during 2024. Therefore, absent the transfer or any unforeseen system constraints, EID would only make minimum releases as required by law in 2024. For the transfer, EID would re-operate Weber Reservoir to draw it down under a schedule coordinated with the Buyers, Reclamation, and DWR and deliver this water to the Buyers.

It is anticipated that with the proposed project, EID releases from Weber Reservoir between July and November 30 would be consistent with the historic release patterns for Weber Reservoir when it is used to meet consumptive demands in the EID service area. A maximum of up to approximately 750 AF for transfer (above minimum releases) could be released during this transfer window.

EID would obtain SWRCB approval of temporary changes to its Weber Reservoir licensed water right (License 2184; Application 1692) under CWC Section 1725, et seq. EID would release the planned transfer volume above minimum releases in accordance with anticipated refill/conveyance agreement criteria, and would meet all water rights requirements in WY 2024 and 2025.

This page intentionally left blank

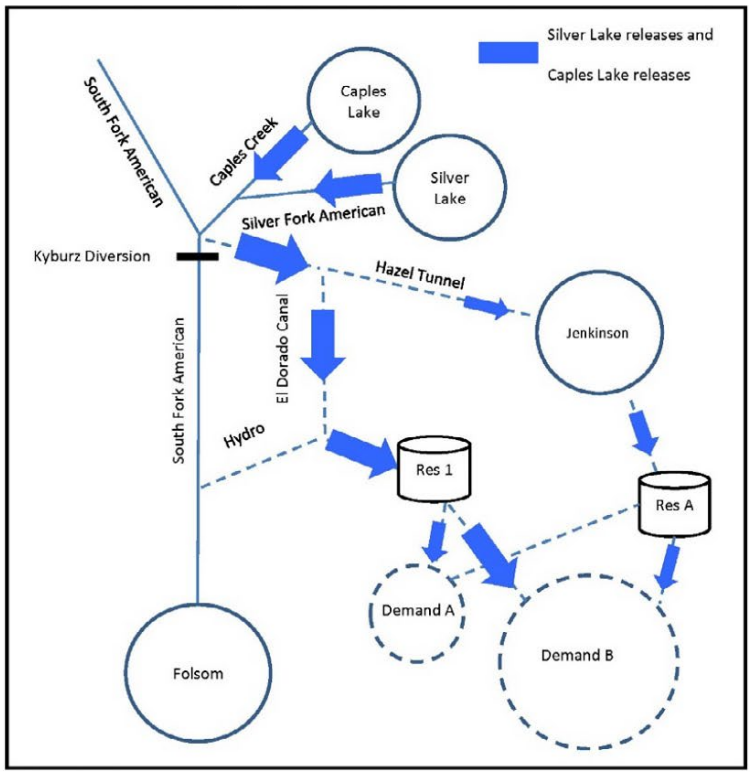


Source: adapted by Ascent Environmental

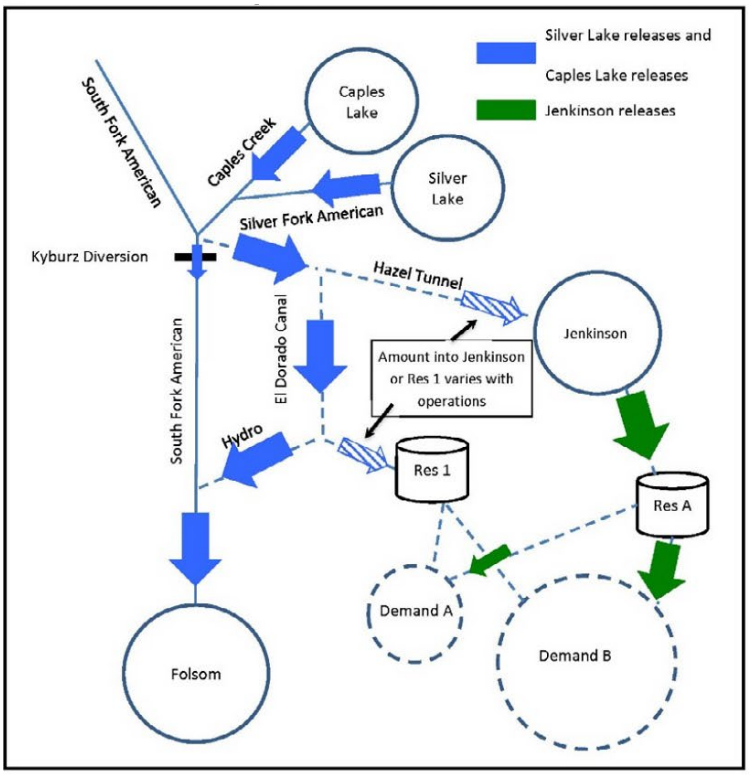
Figure 2-2 Re-operation Flow Paths

This page intentionally left blank

Caples Lake and Silver Lake: 2024 Planned without Transfer



Caples Lake and Silver Lake: 2024 Planned with Transfer



19010108.01 GRX 001

Figure 2-3 Proposed Caples Lake and Silver Lake Re-Operations Schematic

The authorized capacity of Weber Reservoir is 1,125 AF and EID's water right authorizes diversion of up to 1,000 AF per year. The reservoir storage rating table for Weber Reservoir was updated in 2022 based on new bathymetric data and the maximum current capacity is 1,006 AF. The water right requires measures for the protection of fish and wildlife including 1) maintaining a minimum storage of 200 AF on September 1 annually in order to ensure minimum releases can be provided in September, October, and November, 2) providing minimum releases not less than 1 cfs to protect and enhance fish, wildlife, and recreation in Weber Creek downstream of Weber Reservoir when active reservoir storage is available and 3) implementing a ramping rate for changes in releases from Weber Reservoir to protect fish and wildlife from adverse impacts caused by sudden change in Weber Creek hydrology. All requirements specified in the water right would be met with the proposed project.

Weber Reservoir is projected to be at or near capacity at the onset of the transfer period and the maximum transfer amount would not exceed 750 AF. Figure 2-4 provides an overview of Weber Reservoir operations with and without the proposed transfer based on modeling of current and forecasted hydrology for 2024. Figure 2-4 includes an example of a potential release pattern of transfer water from Weber Reservoir and the corresponding changes in storage at Weber Reservoir with and without the transfer. While Figure 2-4 shows an example transfer scenario, actual releases and transfer volumes could vary and would depend on the following factors:

- hydrologic conditions at the time of the transfer
- timing of when all agreements and authorizations for the transfer are finalized
- when Buyers request delivery of water
- authorized transfer period (e.g., if the transfer period is extended into October and November)
- flexible management of Silver Lake, Caples Lake, and Weber Reservoir during the transfer period as EID decides how best to meet its consumptive demands and transfer objectives while still meeting all operational and flow requirements

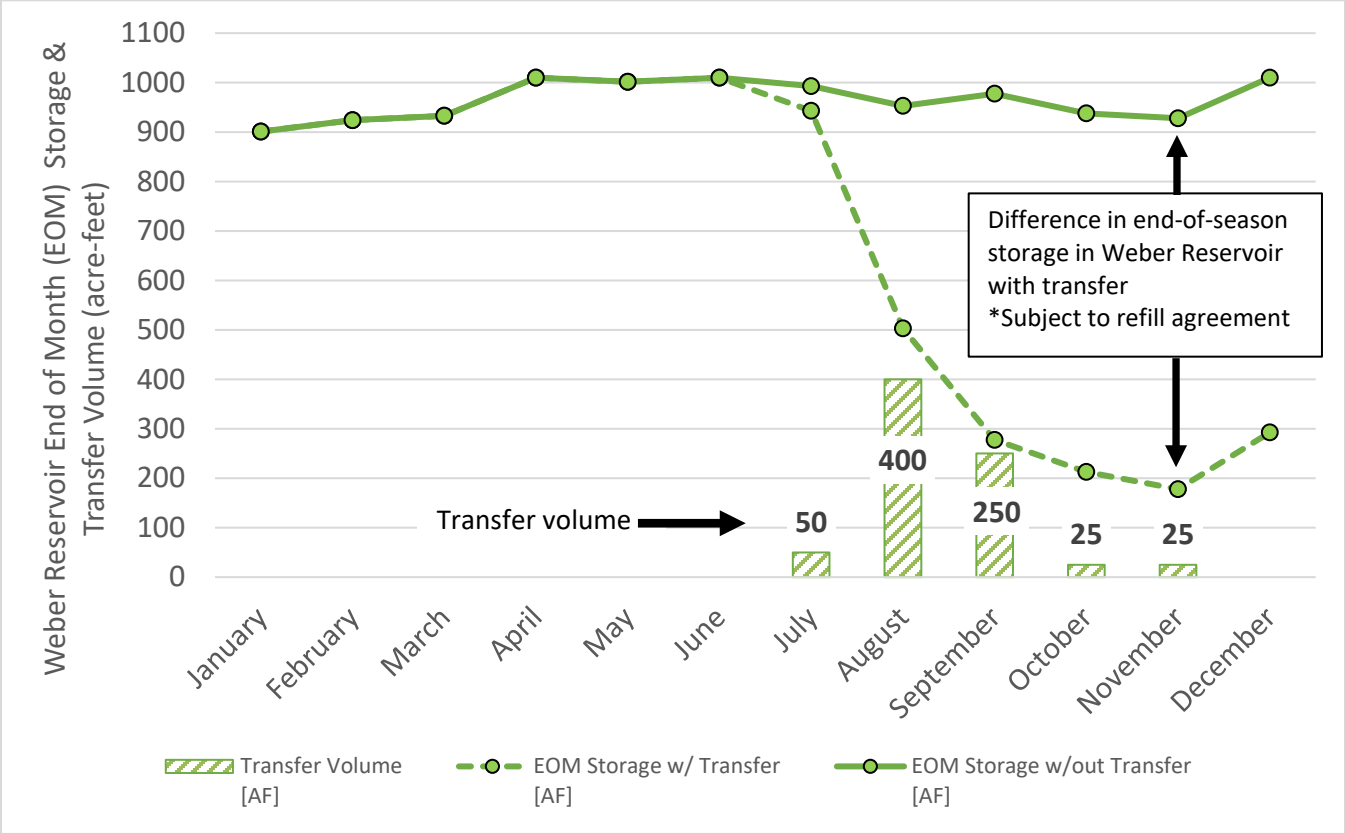


Figure 2-4 Weber Reservoir End-of Month Storage and Transfer Volume Release Pattern Example

2.4.2 Caples Lake/Jenkinson Lake and Silver Lake/Jenkinson Lake Re-Operations

The transfer also includes up to 3,550 AF that EID would make available through the re-operation of pre-1914 water rights captured in EID's Caples and Silver lakes, respectively, and managed during the year between Caples and Silver lakes and Jenkinson Lake. EID operates Jenkinson Lake and upstream Project 184 reservoirs, including Caples and Silver lakes, cooperatively to optimize available water supplies and provide desired carry-over for subsequent years (see Figure 2-3).

EID's 2024 existing operation plan is to release water from Caples and Silver lakes previously diverted and stored under these lakes' pre-1914 water rights for immediate consumptive use and/or conveyance into Jenkinson Lake (in the Cosumnes River watershed). This planned without-transfer action would re-divert releases of water previously stored in Caples and Silver lakes via EID's El Dorado Diversion Dam and El Dorado Canal, for immediate consumptive uses or to replenish Jenkinson Lake after it has been drawn down during summer (see Figures 2-3 and 2-5). Because EID would utilize the water from Caples and Silver lakes without the transfer as described, storage levels at Caples and Silver lakes would be the same in 2024 with or without the transfer.

Under the proposed transfer, EID would rely on water stored in Jenkinson Lake to meet consumptive demands during the transfer period in lieu of using water from Caples and Silver lakes. This re-operation would allow water previously stored in Caples and Silver lakes (up to a combined 3,550 AF) to instead be released and re-diverted at Banks or Jones pumping plant between July and November 30, 2024 for transfer to the Buyers. The decrease in Jenkinson Lake storage would be equivalent to the water released from Caples and Silver lakes for transfer. With the proposed transfer, the release patterns and corresponding changes in storage levels would be within the historic range of operations for the facilities involved.

Figure 2-5 provides an overview of operations with and without the proposed transfer based on modeling of current and forecasted hydrology for 2024. Figure 2-5 includes an example of a potential release pattern of transfer water from Caples and Silver lakes and the corresponding changes in storage levels at Caples Lake, Silver Lake, and Jenkinson Lake with and without the transfer. Please note that only Jenkinson Lake storage would change as a result of the transfer because operation of Caples and Silver lakes would be the same with or without the transfer. While Figure 2-5 shows an example transfer scenario, actual releases and transfer volumes could vary and would depend on the following factors:

- hydrologic conditions at the time of the transfer
- timing of when all agreements and authorizations for the transfer are finalized
- when Buyers request delivery of water
- authorized transfer period (e.g., if the transfer period is extended into October and November)
- flexible management of Silver Lake, Caples Lake, and Weber Reservoir during the transfer period as EID decides how best to meet its consumptive demands and transfer objectives while still meeting all operational and flow requirements

Caples Lake has a capacity of 22,340 AF, Silver Lake has a capacity of 8,640 AF, and Jenkinson Lake has a capacity of 41,033 AF.

Transfer of the Caples Lake water stored under pre-1914 water right, S015941, and the Silver Lake water stored under pre-1914 water right, S004708, would not require petitions to SWRCB. Releases from Caples and Silver lakes would be conducted in accordance with all applicable requirements and operating criteria, including the Project No. 184 FERC license and associated agreements (e.g., League to Save Sierra Lakes 2004 Settlement Agreement), and would be coordinated with the Buyers.

Because EID would draw on Jenkinson Lake and Weber Reservoir storage for meeting transfer objectives, resulting in a lower than planned end-of-season storage absent the transfer, a refill/conveyance agreement with DWR in coordination with Reclamation for the water transferred from these two reservoirs would be required. Conversely,

carryover storage in Caples and Silver lakes would be consistent with past operations and would be the same with or without the proposed transfer, so no refill/conveyance agreement would be applicable to Caples or Silver lakes.

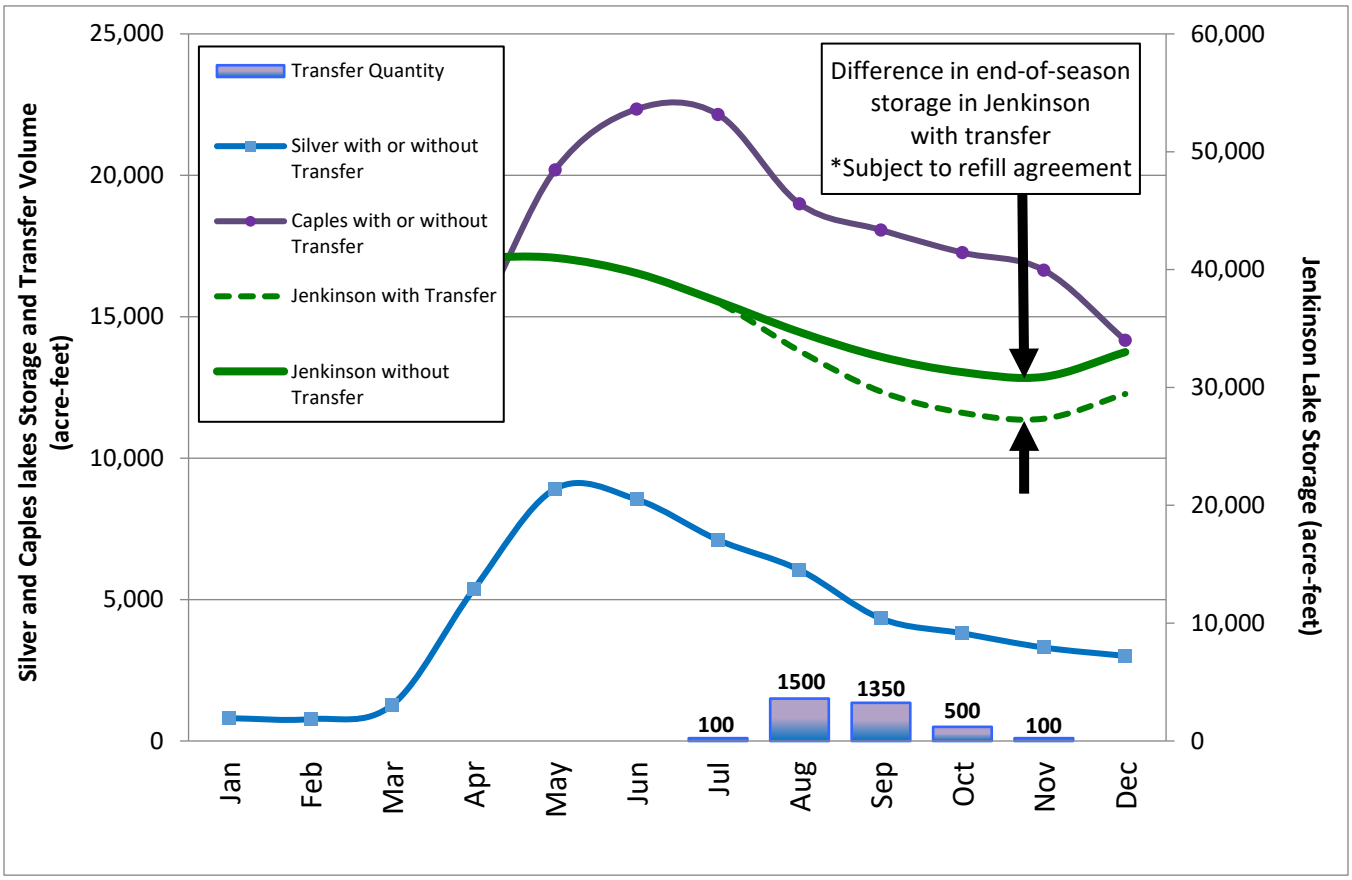


Figure 2-5 Caples, Silver, and Jenkinson Lakes End-of Month Storage and Transfer Volume Release Pattern Example

2.4.3 Flow Path of Transfer Water

With the proposed transfer, transfer water released from EID facilities would flow to Folsom Reservoir. Specifically, the combined release flows of transfer water from Caples and Silver lakes would re-diverted at the El Dorado Diversion Dam and conveyed to the El Dorado Powerhouse before being discharged back into the SFAR or in the event the El Dorado Powerhouse is offline, transfer water would be bypassed at the El Dorado Diversion Dam and then travel downstream to Folsom Reservoir. Releases from Weber Reservoir would follow their normal flow path down Weber Creek to the SFAR and into Folsom Reservoir (see Figures 2-2 and 2-3). Once in Folsom Reservoir, the transfer water would be released through Folsom Dam, and then re-operated via Lake Natoma into the LAR. The transfer water released from Folsom Reservoir would be coordinated with the systemwide operation of the CVP and SWP. Coordinated operations of the CVP and SWP are subject to compliance with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) 2019 Biological Opinions for the Long-Term Operation of the CVP and SWP (2019 BiOps) (USFWS 2019; NMFS 2019), SWRCB Water Rights Decision 1641 (D-1641), as well as any temporary or modified regulatory requirements that may be in effect. Reclamation would provide the transfer water in such a manner that would not disrupt normal CVP and SWP operations, while complying with all current flow standards for the LAR from Lake Natoma to the confluence with the Sacramento River, 2019 BiOps, as well as the most up-to-date regulatory requirements for the Delta. From the LAR, transfer water would flow for an additional approximately 22 miles to the confluence with the Sacramento River. The transfer water would then continue down the Sacramento River approximately 55 miles where it meets the San Joaquin River at the head of the Delta. From this location, transfer water would enter the tidal portion of the San Joaquin River and would be diverted 45 miles away at the SWP's intake facility, Banks pumping plant, or the CVP's intake facility, Jones pumping plant, both of which are

located near the City of Tracy. Use of the Delta Cross Channel, when available, would decrease the total distance to the PORDs by approximately 18 miles.

From the Banks pumping plant PORD, the transfer water could be conveyed south via the California Aqueduct to a Buyer's service area; conveyed south approximately 70 miles to the San Luis Reservoir (SLR) PORD for temporary storage in the SLR prior to delivery to a Buyer's service area; or conveyed southwest in the South Bay Aqueduct to a Buyer's services area in the East Bay. Alternatively, the transfer water could be diverted at the Jones pumping plant PORD; conveyed south approximately 70 miles to the SLR PORD for temporary storage in the SLR prior to delivery to a Buyer's service area, or conveyed south for up to 117 miles in the Delta-Mendota Canal and thence to a Buyer's service area. The service areas of potential Buyers of the transfer water are shown in Figure 2-1.

The transfer water may also be subject to the terms and conditions specified in the Warren Act Contract between Reclamation and the Buyer and/or a Conveyance Agreement with DWR, which would include terms to apply carriage losses to the transfer water to protect water quality in the Delta and account for conveyance losses during delivery (e.g., up to an estimated 30% carriage loss through the Delta and additional 5% percent for conveyance losses for the use of the canal system).

2.4.4 Absent an Approved Transfer

Absent approval from state and federal agencies for this proposed transfer to the Buyers, EID would: (1) maintain a higher end-of-season storage level in Weber Reservoir, and (2) divert all available supplies from Caples and Silver lakes for immediate consumptive use or delivery to Jenkinson Lake to maintain a higher end-of-season storage level in Jenkinson Lake. Caples and Silver lakes would reach the same end-of-season level with or without a transfer. Absent an approved transfer, up to 4,300 AF less water would enter Folsom Reservoir during summer and fall 2024.

2.4.5 Schedule

The proposed water transfer is scheduled to take place between July and November 30, 2024. Water would begin to be transferred to Folsom Reservoir as soon as all necessary approvals are received, and the Buyers and EID have coordinated with Reclamation and DWR, as appropriate.

Once Reclamation releases the water from Folsom Reservoir, DWR or Reclamation, depending on the Buyers, would provide transfer water to the POD at Banks and/or Jones pumping plants for transfer to the Buyers on a schedule that is mutually agreeable and/or beneficial to DWR/Reclamation and the Buyers, such that it would not disrupt normal CVP or SWP operations and would adhere to all current flow standards for the LAR from Lake Natoma to the confluence with the Sacramento River, as well as the most up-to-date requirements for the Delta as directed by the SWRCB.

Reclamation could release the transfer water: (1) on top of (in addition to) projected operations resulting in increased LAR flows; (2) as part of operations consistent with the Flow Management Standard (FMS) resulting in increased (by up to 4,300 AF) Folsom Reservoir storage; or (3) some combination of (1) and (2). Ultimately, the water would be released by Reclamation, DWR or Reclamation would re-divert the water at the Banks and/or Jones pumping plants, and the Buyers would coordinate with DWR or Reclamation to determine the timing and flow rate of transfer water releases from the PORD for immediate delivery and/or storage in SLR.

2.5 PUBLIC TRUST DOCTRINE AND CALIFORNIA WATER RIGHT LAW

Under the public trust doctrine, certain resources are held to be the property of all citizens and subject to continuing supervision by the State. Originally, the public trust was limited to commerce, navigation, and fisheries, but over the years the courts have broadened the definition to include recreational and ecological values. In a landmark case, the California Supreme Court held that California water right law is an integration of both public trust and appropriative

right systems, and that all appropriations may be subject to review if "changing circumstances" warrant their reconsideration and reallocation.

SWRCB is required to consider the effects of the proposed project on public trust resources and protect those resources where feasible. SWRCB is a key responsible agency for the proposed project. Under the public trust doctrine, SWRCB must balance the potential value of a proposed or existing water diversion with the impact it may have on the public trust. This IS includes a section (Section 3.21) that analyzes the effects on public trust resources from the proposed temporary water transfer.

2.6 REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS, PERMITS, AND APPROVALS

As the lead agency, EID has the principal responsibility for approving and carrying out the proposed project and for complying with the requirements of CEQA, State CEQA Guidelines, and all other applicable regulations. The following agencies may also have permitting approval or review authority over portions of the proposed project:

- SWRCB: Temporary Change Petition, requested through a Petition for Change Involving Water Transfers, for License 2184 (Application 1692) approval consistent with CWC Sections 1725-1732
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife: Concurrence that the proposed project would not result in unreasonable effects on fish and wildlife
- Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board: Concurrence that the proposed project would not have potential effects on water quality and other instream beneficial uses. (California Code of Regulations Title 23, Section 794.)
- DWR/Reclamation: Refill/conveyance agreements, as appropriate with EID and Buyers in coordination with Reclamation and/or DWR depending on which SWP and CVP facilities are utilized to facilitate the transfer.

3 ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

PROJECT INFORMATION

1.	Project Title:	El Dorado Irrigation District Temporary Reservoir Re-operation Water Transfer
2.	Lead Agency Name and Address:	El Dorado Irrigation District 2890 Mosquito Road Placerville, CA 95667
3.	Contact Person and Phone Number:	Brian Deason, Environmental Resources Supervisor El Dorado Irrigation District Phone: (530) 642-4064 Email: 2024ReopWaterTransfer@eid.org
4.	Project Location:	Water would be released from El Dorado Irrigation District storage facilities in El Dorado, Alpine, and Amador counties; flow through El Dorado, Sacramento, and San Joaquin counties; and be used by Federal and/or State water contractors (Buyers) in their service areas in Alameda, Santa Clara, San Benito, Stanislaus, Merced, Fresno, Kings, Tulare, Kern, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura, Los Angeles, San Bernadino, Orange, Riverside, San Diego, and Imperial counties; see Section 2.2, "Project Location."
5.	Project Sponsor's Name and Address:	El Dorado Irrigation District
6.	General Plan Designation:	Various, See Section 3.11 "Land Use and Planning"
7.	Zoning:	Various, See Section 3.11 "Land Use and Planning"

8. Description of Project: (Describe the whole action involved, including but not limited to later phases of the project, and any secondary, support, or off-site features necessary for its implementation. Attach additional sheets if necessary.)

   El Dorado Irrigation District (EID) proposes to transfer up to 4,300 acre-feet (AF) of water to the Buyers, which could include federal and/or state South-of-Delta water service contractors during summer and fall 2024. EID would make the water available through re-operations of three EID reservoirs to release water otherwise planned to be consumed by EID customers and/or stored within the EID network of reservoirs. The proposed maximum 4,300-AF transfer quantity would consist of releases from Weber Reservoir (up to 750 AF) that would otherwise remain in storage and releases from Caples/Silver lakes (up to a combined amount of 3,550 AF) that would otherwise be released to Jenkinson Lake and used directly to meet summer/fall 2024 demands. With the transfer these demands would instead be met with water previously stored in Jenkinson Lake. Additional detail is provided in Chapter 2, "Project Description."

9.	Surrounding Land Uses and Setting: (Briefly describe the project's surroundings)	See "Environmental Setting" discussion under each issue area in Chapter 3, "Environmental Checklist."

10. Other public agencies whose approval is required: (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement)

    See Section 2.6, "Regulatory Requirements, Permits, and Approvals."

11. Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1? If so, is there a plan for consultation that includes, for example, the determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc.?

    Under AB 52, the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians, United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria, Wopumnes Nisenan-Mewuk Nation of El Dorado County, and Wilton Rancheria have requested EID, as a CEQA lead agency, formally notify them of any proposed projects within their geographic area of traditional and cultural affiliation. EID sent formal notification of the project to these tribes on March 25, 2024. No responses from tribes were received.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages. Where checked below, the topic with a potentially significant impact will be addressed in an environmental impact report.

☐ Aesthetics	☐ Agriculture and Forest Resources	☐ Air Quality
☐ Biological Resources	☐ Cultural Resources	☐ Energy
☐ Geology / Soils	☐ Greenhouse Gas Emissions	☐ Hazards / Hazardous Materials
☐ Hydrology / Water Quality	☐ Land Use / Planning	☐ Mineral Resources
☐ Noise	☐ Population / Housing	☐ Public Services
☐ Recreation	☐ Transportation	☐ Tribal Cultural Resources
☐ Utilities / Service Systems	☐ Wildfire	☐ Mandatory Findings of Significance

DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

☒ I find that the proposed project could not have a significant effect on the environment, and a **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.

☐ I find that although the proposed project COULD have a significant effect on the environment, there WILL NOT be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A **MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.

☐ I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a significant effect on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required.

☐ I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier **EIR** or **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier **EIR** or **NEGATIVE DECLARATION**, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

	June 6, 2024
Signature	Date

Brian Deason	Environmental Resources Supervisor
Printed Name	Title

El Dorado Irrigation District

Lead Agency

3.1 AESTHETICS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. Aesthetics.				
Except as provided in Public Resources Code section 21099 (where aesthetic impacts shall not be considered significant for qualifying residential, mixed-use residential, and employment centers), would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage points.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.1.1 Environmental Setting

The proposed project would transfer up to 4,300 AF in 2024 through existing waterways and infrastructure from Caples Lake in Alpine County, Silver Lake in Amador County, and Weber Reservoir in El Dorado County to the Buyers' service areas. State Highways 50 and 89 in El Dorado County; State Highway 88 and 49 in Amador County; and State Highways 88, 89, and 4 in Alpine County are Officially Designated State Scenic Highways (Caltrans 2024). In addition, several designated or eligible state scenic highways are located within the Buyers' service areas. The lower American River (LAR) (from Lake Natoma to the confluence with the Sacramento River) is designated as "Recreational" under the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 (California Natural Resources Agency 2024).

3.1.2 Discussion

a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

No Impact. The temporary water transfer would occur entirely within existing waterways over a period of up to approximately 5 months in summer and fall 2024 using existing water conveyance infrastructure. No construction or other ground disturbing activities would be required to implement the project. The relatively small volume of water transferred (i.e., up to 4,300 AF) would not result in visual changes to the streams and rivers that carry transfer water from Weber Reservoir, and Caples and Silver lakes, where the water would be released because releases would be consistent with historic patterns and existing operating conditions for the waterways and facilities affected. In Weber Creek, releases from Weber Reservoir would be within the range of historic operations over the past 14 years (see Table 3-4 in Section 3.4, "Biological Resources"). In the Silver Fork and Caples Creek, releases would also be within the range of historic operations over the past 14 years during the transfer period (see Tables 3-2 and 3-3 in Section 3.4, "Biological Resources"). Given the existing volumes of water in Folsom Reservoir and downstream areas, the small volume of transfer water (up to 4,300 AF) would not result in visual changes to these downstream areas and would

also be within the range of historic conditions. Water would be used to support continued agricultural and M&I operations and would be transported via existing conveyance and storage facilities within the Buyers' service areas. The proposed project would not change a scenic vista or have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista. **No impact** would occur.

b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

No Impact: The temporary water transfer would not substantially damage a scenic resource within a state scenic highway. A short reach of Caples Creek and the Silver Fork are located adjacent to State Highway 88, an Officially Designated State Scenic Highway near Caples and Silver lakes. Additionally, a short reach between the confluence of the Silver Fork and SFAR and the El Dorado Diversion Dam is located adjacent to Highway 50, an Officially Designated State Scenic Highway. However, the views of these reaches are seen primarily by passing motorists and most views are obscured by native vegetation. Additionally, the change in water elevations would be very small and would not be noticeable from the adjacent highway. Because the change in flows would be very small and would be consistent with the pattern of historic operations, the project would not damage any scenic resources or change views from these scenic highways. In addition, the water transfer would not damage any scenic resources within any State Scenic Highways in the Buyers' service areas. **No impact** would occur.

c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage points.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

No Impact: The proposed project would not degrade the existing visual character or quality of the project sites or their surroundings. The proposed project would not result in substantial changes in flows in stream reaches or flows through the Buyers' service areas, which would occur via existing conveyance and storage facilities; therefore, the visual character would not be degraded in any of the affected areas. The proposed project could result in temporary lower elevation levels in Jenkinson Lake and Weber Reservoir with the primary differences occurring over the main transfer window of July, August, and September. Those temporary differences would occur during the typical draw down period of the reservoirs and would extend until inflows replenished the vacated storage. Given the small scale of the project, the short-term nature of the water transfer, and that the change in reservoir levels would be within the typical fluctuations of these waterbodies, these temporary changes would not substantially degrade the visual character of the affected reservoirs. **No impact** would occur.

d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

No Impact: No new sources of light or glare are proposed. Therefore, the project would not adversely affect day or nighttime views. **No impact** would occur.

3.2 AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
II. Agriculture and Forest Resources.				
In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997, as updated) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board.				
Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.2.1 Environmental Setting

Water stored in Weber Reservoir is typically used for M&I, fire protection, fish and wildlife protection and/or enhancement, and recreation. Water from Caples and Silver lakes typically serves irrigation, domestic, industrial, power generation, fire protection, fish and wildlife protection and/or enhancement, and recreation purposes.

Agricultural uses and zoning occur in both the EID and Buyers' service areas, and the lands include areas that are designated as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland by the California Department of Conservation (DOC) (DOC 2020). Approximately 5 million AF of water from the CVP and 900,000 AF of water from the SWP is used for agriculture.

Under the California Land Conservation Act of 1965, also known as the Williamson Act, local governments can enter into contracts with private property owners to protect land (within agricultural preserves) for agricultural and open

space purposes. Lands under active Williamson Act contracts are located in both the EID and Buyers' service areas (DOC 2022).

For the purposes of this analysis, forest land is defined as land that can support 10 percent native tree cover of any species that allows for management of timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, recreation, and other public benefits (Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 12220(g)). Timberland, a subset of forest land, is defined by PRC Section 4526 and consists of non-federal land that is available for, and capable of, growing a crop of trees of any commercial species used to produce lumber and other forest products. Some lands surrounding the EID reservoirs are timberlands. No timberland is located in the Buyers' service areas.

3.2.2 Discussion

a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

No Impact: As discussed above, lands within the EID and Buyers' service areas are designated by the DOC as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland. Water would be temporarily transferred under the proposed project via existing waterways and infrastructure and at least a portion of the transfer water, if not all, would be used for continued agricultural irrigation within agricultural areas of the Buyers' service areas, including on Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland within the Buyers' service areas. The proposed project would not convert farmland to nonagricultural uses and could prevent farmland from becoming fallowed. No impact would occur.

b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?

No Impact: A portion, if not all, of the transfer water would be used in areas zoned for agricultural use. Lands under active Williamson Act contracts are located within the EID and Buyers service areas; the proposed project would increase available water supplies to irrigate agricultural lands that may be designated as Williamson Act lands within the Buyers' service areas, supporting this use. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural uses or a Williamson Act contract. No impact would occur.

c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?

No Impact: Although there is timberland in the vicinity of the EID reservoirs, the proposed project would not include construction of any new facilities or removal of any timberlands. The project would not affect existing timberlands and therefore not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forestry resources. No timberland is located in the Buyers' service areas. No impact would occur.

d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No Impact: The proposed project would not result in construction of any new facilities or convert any forest land to non-forest uses. No impact would occur.

e) Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No Impact: As discussed in Questions a through d above, the proposed project would not result in changes in the physical environment that could result in the conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural use or the conversion

of forest land to non-forest uses. If Jenkinson Lake and/or Weber Reservoir did not refill to normal levels in 2025 as a result of the transfer, customer demands could still be met through previously stored water in Jenkinson Lake or through other EID supplies. The transfer water would augment the reduced Buyers' water supply for use in the Buyers' service areas and a portion, if not all, would be used for irrigation of existing agricultural crops, within the Buyers' service areas. **No impact** would occur.

3.3 AIR QUALITY

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
III. Air Quality.				
Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied on to make the following determinations.				
Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.3.1 Environmental Setting

The EID service area is located in the Mountain Counties Air Basin which lies along the northern Sierra Nevada, close to or contiguous with the Nevada border, and covers approximately 11,000 square miles. The El Dorado County Air Quality Management District is the local agency authorized to regulate air quality sources in El Dorado County; the Great Basin Air Pollution Control District is the local agency that regulates air quality sources in Alpine County; and Amador County Air Pollution Control District is the local agency that regulates air quality sources in Amador County.

Portions of the Buyers' service areas are located in the San Francisco Bay, San Joaquin Valley, South Central Coast, South Coast, Mojave Desert, San Diego, and Salton Sea air basins. Bay Area Air Quality Management District (AQMD), Monterey Bay Air Resources District, San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (APCD), San Luis Obispo County APCD, Ventura County APCD, Eastern Kern APCD, Antelope Valley AQMD, Mojave Desert AQMD, South Coast AQMD, San Diego County APCD, and Imperial County APCD are the local agencies that regulate air quality sources for these air basins.

GENERAL AIR QUALITY ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The federal Clean Air Act (CAA) and the California Clean Air Act (CCAA) required the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and California Air Resources Board (CARB) to establish health-based air quality standards at the federal and state levels. National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) were established for the following criteria pollutants: carbon monoxide (CO), ozone, sulfur dioxide (SO_2), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter (PM_{10}), particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter ($PM_{2.5}$), and lead. These standards have been established with a margin of safety to protect the public's health. Both EPA and CARB designate areas of the state as attainment, nonattainment, maintenance, or unclassified for the various pollutant standards according to the CAA and the CCAA, respectively.

An "attainment" designation for an area signifies that pollutant concentrations did not violate the NAAQS or CAAQS for that pollutant in that area. A "nonattainment" designation indicates that a pollutant concentration violated the standard at least once, excluding those occasions when a violation was caused by an exceptional event, as identified in the criteria. A "maintenance" designation indicates that the area previously had a nonattainment status and currently has an attainment status for the applicable pollutant; the area must demonstrate continued attainment for a

specified number of years before it can be redesignated as an attainment area. An "unclassified" designation signifies that data do not support either an attainment or a nonattainment status.

Under the NAAQS, Alpine, Amador, and El Dorado counties and portions of the Buyers' service areas are designated as nonattainment for 8-hour ozone. A portion of El Dorado County and portions of the Buyers' service areas are designated as nonattainment for $PM_{2.5}$. Alpine and Amador counties are both unclassified for $PM_{2.5}$. El Dorado, Alpine, and Amador counties and portions of the Buyers' service areas are unclassified for PM_{10}. Some portions of the Buyers' service areas are in attainment and some are in nonattainment for PM_{10}. Under the CAAQS, Alpine County, Amador County, and El Dorado County, and the Buyers' service areas are designated as unclassified for ozone, $PM_{2.5}$, and PM_{10} (CARB 2022).

3.3.2 Discussion

a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

No Impact: Air quality plans describe air pollution control strategies to be implemented by an air district, city, county, or region. No construction activities are proposed with the project and no long-term operational or maintenance activities that would generate emissions are proposed. The transfer water would augment the Buyers' existing water supply for use in the Buyers' service areas and would be used for irrigation of agricultural crops and existing M&I uses. Although agricultural and M&I operations may generate air quality emissions, these land uses are existing land uses that would occur without the project. If the proposed water transfer did not occur, the Buyers would buy water from another water purveyor, pump groundwater to serve the existing land uses in their service areas, and/or fallow existing irrigated agricultural crops. Because water transfer operations and farming and M&I operations would be within the historic range of typical use, the proposed project would not generate new emissions that would conflict with or obstruct implementation of an air quality plan. There would be no impact.

b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?

No Impact: The analysis of cumulative effects focuses on whether implementing a specific project would result in cumulatively considerable emissions to a significant cumulative impact. For the reasons discussed under a) above, the proposed project would not generate new air quality emissions, and existing agriculture and M&I water uses would not increase as a result of the project. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable incremental contribution to a significant cumulative impact. There would be no impact.

c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

No Impact: Some people are especially sensitive to air pollutant emissions and need to be given special consideration when evaluating air quality impacts from projects. These people include children, older adults, and persons with preexisting respiratory or cardiovascular illness. Sensitive receptors include residences, schools, playgrounds, childcare centers, athletic facilities, long-term health-care facilities, rehabilitation centers, convalescent centers, and retirement homes. As discussed above under a), the project would not result in an increase in pollutant concentrations. There would be no impact.

d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

No Impact: Human response to odors is subjective, and sensitivity to odors varies greatly. Typically, odors are regarded as an annoyance rather than a health hazard. However, manifestations of a person's reaction to foul odors can range from psychological (e.g., irritation, anger, anxiety) to physiological (e.g., circulatory and respiratory reactions, nausea, vomiting, headaches). As discussed above under a), existing agriculture and M&I water uses would not increase as a result of the project. Therefore, the proposed project would not create new objectionable odors or any other emissions that would adversely affect a substantial number of people. There would be no impact.

3.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
IV. Biological Resources.				
Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.4.1 Environmental Setting

The proposed project involves a temporary water transfer of up to 4,300 AF of water during summer and fall 2024 to Buyers south of the Delta through re-operation of three EID reservoirs (i.e., Weber Reservoir, Caples Lake, and Silver Lake). EID has conducted previous temporary water transfers through the re-operation of one or more of these reservoirs with a maximum of 8,000 AF transferred in 2020 (EID 2015, EID 2018, EID 2020, and EID 2022a).

Under the proposed project, EID would release up to 4,300 AF of water (up to 750 AF from Weber Reservoir and up to a combined total of 3,550 AF from Caples and Silver lakes) that would otherwise be released and consumed by EID customers and/or stored within the EID network of reservoirs in 2024. Transfer water would be conveyed via natural waterways from EID's reservoirs to Folsom Reservoir, through Lake Natoma, the LAR, the Sacramento River, the Delta, and ultimately be delivered to Buyers for use in their service area located south of the Delta.

The proposed project would transfer water through existing facilities and waterways from late July through November 2024. The water transfer would follow the historic pattern and existing operating conditions for the waterways and facilities affected. The proposed project does not involve any ground disturbance or construction. Given that the water transfer would occur within the range of existing authorized operational ranges of the facilities and waterways involved, the lack of ground disturbance or construction, the small volume of water to be transferred, and the short duration of the temporary transfer, it is reasonable to conclude that there would be no effect to special status terrestrial species or their habitat that may occur within the project area and therefore, potential impacts to terrestrial species are not analyzed further in this document. This is consistent with the analysis contained in previous environmental review documents for EID's water transfers from Weber Reservoir, Caples Lake and Silver Lake.

The analysis of potential effects to special status aquatic biological resources for the proposed project is described below in the following hydrologic segments: 1) Caples Lake and Caples Creek, 2) Silver Lake and Silver Fork of the American River, 3) the South Fork American River (SFAR) between the El Dorado Diversion Dam and Folsom Reservoir, 4) Weber Reservoir and Weber Creek, and 2) Folsom Reservoir to the Buyers' service area.

Caples Lake and Caples Creek

Suitable habitat for Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog (*Rana sierrae*) is present along the shorelines of Caples Lake and tributaries. However, Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog has not been documented during several years of surveys conducted along the shorelines at Caples Lake and was last observed in a tributary to Caples Lake in 2002 (Kleinfelder 2023).

Caples Lake has been stocked since 1930 for recreational fishing. Historically, Caples Lake has been planted with rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*), brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*), brown trout, and lake trout (*Salvelinus namaycush*). Caples Lake currently supports populations of non-game fish such as Lahontan redsides (*Richardsonius egregius*) and tui chub (*Gila bicolor*). Angler surveys indicate that Caples Creek contains predominantly brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*) and rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*), with 50% and 45%, respectively, of the reported catch. Brown trout (*Salmo trutta*) are also present with the reported catch of approximately 5% (CDFW 2020). Surveys conducted in 2022 found brook trout to be the only trout species present in the surveyed reach of Caples Creek near the confluence with Kirkwood Creek (AECOM 2023).

Silver Lake and Silver Fork

Suitable habitat for Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog (*Rana sierrae*) is present along the shorelines of Silver Lake and tributaries. However, Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog has not been documented during several years of surveys conducted along the shorelines at Silver Lake. Heavy recreational use and the presence of predatory fish may preclude frogs from permanently inhabiting the lake. Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog were observed in the Camp Silverado tributary to Silver Lake in 2004 and in an unnamed tributary to Silver Lake in 2002, 2011, 2016, and 2022 (Kleinfelder 2023).

Similar to Caples Lake, Silver Lake has also been stocked historically for recreational fishing. Rainbow trout, lake trout, and brown trout are found in Silver Lake. Rainbow trout and brown trout are present in the Silver Fork (Garcia and Associates 2018, AECOM 2023).

SFAR upstream of Folsom Reservoir

The SFAR is located on the west slope of the Sierra Nevada mountain range and is characterized by forested slopes and steep canyons. The SFAR is characterized by deep, fast runs flowing into cascades or falls, deep pools, and riffle habitat that support both native and non-native fish species. Fish species present in the South Fork between El Dorado Diversion Dam and Folsom Reservoir include hardhead (*Mylopharadon conocephalus*), Sacramento pikeminnow (*Ptychocheilus grandis*), speckled dace (*Rhinichthys osculus*), California roach (*Lavinia symmetricus*), Sacramento sucker (*Catostomus occidentalis*), rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*), brown trout (*Salmo trutta*), brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*), prickly sculpin (*Cottus asper*), and riffle sculpin (*Cottus gulosus*). Special status aquatic biological resources that are documented in the SFAR and/or its tributaries include foothill yellow-legged frog (*Rana boylii*), red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*), and western pond turtle (*Actinemys marmorata*).

Weber Reservoir and Weber Creek

The fish fauna of Weber Reservoir predominantly consists of rainbow trout and several non-native centrarchid (bass and sunfish) species. Other native fish species that may potentially be present in Weber Reservoir include Sacramento sucker, California roach, and prickly sculpin. Non-native fish species may include brown trout, largemouth bass (*Micropterus salmoides*), smallmouth bass (*Micropterus dolomieu*), spotted bass (*Micropterus punctulatus*), bluegill (*Lepomis macrochirus*), green sunfish (*Lepomis cyanellus*), and common carp (*Cyprinus carpio*).

No special-status fish or amphibian species are present in Weber Reservoir. California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*) were historically (but not currently) sighted in lower Weber Creek below Weber Reservoir. The only current population of California red-legged frog in El Dorado County is present in the upper Weber Creek watershed in a 63-acre area known as Spivey Pond, owned by the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management. Bullfrogs and non-native predatory fish are abundant in Weber Reservoir, which precludes the presence of California red-legged frog in the reservoir. California red-legged frog breeding occurs from mid-December through early April along the margins and shallow parts of natural or manmade ponds, or wide slow sections of streams without predatory, non-native fish species. Breeding sites require inundation into summer for tadpoles to reach a size for metamorphosis.

No special-status fish or amphibian species are currently known to be present in lower Weber Creek. California red-legged frog is present in the American River basin and have been historically (but not currently) sighted in lower Weber Creek (see discussion of Weber Reservoir). Potentially suitable aquatic habitat for western pond turtle (*Actinemys marmorata*) is present within Weber Reservoir and lower Weber Creek. The closest documented occurrences are along North Fork Weber Creek in Spivey Pond, which is approximately 5 miles east of Weber Reservoir. Western pond turtles have also been observed in the El Dorado Forebay located approximately 7 miles from Weber Reservoir (Stantec 2024). The stream habitat present within in lower Weber Creek may only provide marginal suitable habitat for western pond turtles due to a lack of pools and exposed banks for basking.

Rainbow trout, a spring spawner, is the only native trout species in Weber Creek, with non-native brown trout, a fall spawner, potentially present. Other fish species that may occur in Weber Creek are as described above for Weber Reservoir; however, Sacramento sucker, California roach, and prickly sculpin are likely the more abundant species, along with the numerically dominant rainbow trout.

Jenkinson Lake

The aquatic resources residing in Jenkinson Lake, and especially the fish community, are similar to those found in Weber Reservoir.

Folsom Reservoir to the Buyers' Service Area

Folsom Reservoir is the principal reservoir on the American River, with a maximum storage capacity of 977,000 AF. Reclamation operates Folsom Dam and Reservoir for many reasons including water supply, water quality in the Delta (primarily to prevent salinity intrusion from the Pacific Ocean), and for endangered and threatened species. Reclamation has contracts with the following agencies for water supply from Folsom Reservoir: EID, City of Roseville, Sacramento County Water Agency, Sacramento County (assignment from Sacramento Municipal Utility District), San Juan Water District, East Bay Municipal Utility District, Sacramento Municipal Utility District, Placer County Water Agency, and City of Folsom.

Folsom Reservoir supports a "two-story" fishery during the stratified portion of the year (April through November), with warmwater species using the upper, warmwater layer and coldwater species using the deeper, colder portion of the reservoir. Native species that occur in the reservoir include hardhead and Sacramento pikeminnow. However, introduced largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, spotted bass, bluegill, black and white crappie (Pomoxis nigromaculatus and P. annularis), and catfish (*Ictalurus spp. and Ameiurus spp.*) constitute the primary warmwater sport fisheries of Folsom Reservoir. The coldwater sport species present in the reservoir include rainbow and brown trout, kokanee salmon (*Oncorhynchus nerka*), and Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), all of which are currently or have been stocked by CDFW. Although brown trout are no longer stocked, a population still remains in

the reservoir. Because these coldwater salmonid species are stream spawners, they do not reproduce within Folsom Reservoir. However some spawning by one or more of these species may occur in the tributaries upstream of Folsom Reservoir.

Folsom Reservoir's coldwater pool is important not only to the reservoir's coldwater fish species identified above, but also is important to LAR fall-run Chinook salmon and Central Valley steelhead (Oncorhynchus mykiss). Seasonal releases from the reservoir's coldwater pool provide thermal conditions in the LAR that support annual in-river production of these salmonid species. However, Folsom Reservoir's coldwater pool must be managed to facilitate coldwater releases during the warmest months (July through September) to provide maximum thermal benefits to over-summering juvenile steelhead rearing in the LAR, and coldwater releases during October and November to maximally benefit fall-run Chinook salmon immigration, spawning, and embryo incubation. Consequently, management of the reservoir's coldwater pool on an annual basis is essential to providing thermal benefits to both fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead, within the constraints of coldwater pool availability.

Releases from Folsom Dam are conveyed to Lake Natoma, which serves as the Folsom Dam afterbay. Lake Natoma is operated as a re-regulating reservoir that accommodates the diurnal flow fluctuations caused by the power peaking operations at Folsom power plant. Nimbus Dam, along with Folsom Dam, regulate water releases to the LAR. The LAR flows approximately 23-mile from Nimbus Dam to the confluence of the Sacramento River. The Sacramento River flows approximately 55 miles where it meets the San Joaquin River at the head of the Delta. Federal- and/or State-listed species within the project area include (winter- and spring-run Chinook salmon, steelhead, delta smelt [*Hypomesus transpacificus*], and green sturgeon [*Acipenser medirostris*]); and State species of special concern (late fall-run Chinook salmon, green sturgeon, hardhead, longfin smelt [*Spirinchus thaleichthys*], river lamprey [Lamptera ayresi], Sacramento perch [*Archoplites interruptu*], Sacramento splittail [*Pogonichthys macrolepidotus*], and California roach).

The Delta estuary and tributaries also support a diverse community of resident fish which includes, but is not limited to, Sacramento sucker, prickly and riffle sculpin, California roach, hardhead, hitch, Sacramento blackfish, Sacramento pikeminnow, speckled dace, Sacramento splittail, tule perch, inland silverside, black crappie, bluegill, green sunfish, largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, white crappie, threadfin shad, carp, golden shiner, black and brown bullhead, channel catfish, white catfish, and a variety of other species which inhabit the more estuarine and freshwater portions of the Bay-Delta system (Moyle 2002).

From the Delta, transfer water would be re-diverted at the Banks pumping plant or Jones pumping plant and conveyed through the system of canals for delivery to a Buyer's service area.

3.4.2 Discussion

a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Less-than-Significant Impact.

WATER TRANSFER EFFECTS ON CAPLES LAKE AND CAPLES CREEK

As described in Section 2.4.2, "Caples Lake/Jenkinson Lake and Silver Lake/Jenkinson Lake Re-Operations" EID's 2024 existing operation plan is to release previously stored water from Caples Lake for immediate consumptive use and/or conveyance into Jenkinson Lake. This planned without-transfer action would re-divert releases of water previously stored in Caples Lake via EID's El Dorado Diversion Dam to the El Dorado Canal, for immediate consumptive uses or to replenish Jenkinson Lake after it has been drawn down during summer (see Figure 2-3 in Section 2.4.1). Because

EID would utilize the same volume of water from Caples Lake with or without the transfer, storage levels at Caples Lake would be the same in 2024 with or without the transfer (see Figure 3-1). Because storage levels at Caples Lake would be the same with or without the transfer, there would be no impact, direct or indirect, to protected species that may be present at or in proximity to Caples Lake.

Table 3-1 shows one potential release pattern for Caples Lake with and without the transfer based on modeling of current and forecasted hydrology for 2024. Up to a maximum of 3,550 AF of water would be released from Caples Lake into Caples Creek beginning in late July and continuing through approximately November 30. The pattern of releases from Caples Lake during the transfer period could vary with or without the transfer. However, with or without the transfer water would be released from Caples Lake to Caples Creek in compliance with all regulatory requirements (e.g., minimum streamflows, lake levels, ramping rates) and at a magnitude within the range of minimum and maximum releases provided during the transfer period over the past 14 years (Table 3-1). The quantity of water released and overall seasonal timing of releases into Caples Creek during Caples Lake re-operation would be the same with or without the water transfer. Therefore, there would be no differences in stream habitat characteristics (e.g., wetted channel width, stream depth, water velocities) in Caples Creek and there would be no impact, direct or indirect, to special status aquatic species that may be present in Caples Creek.

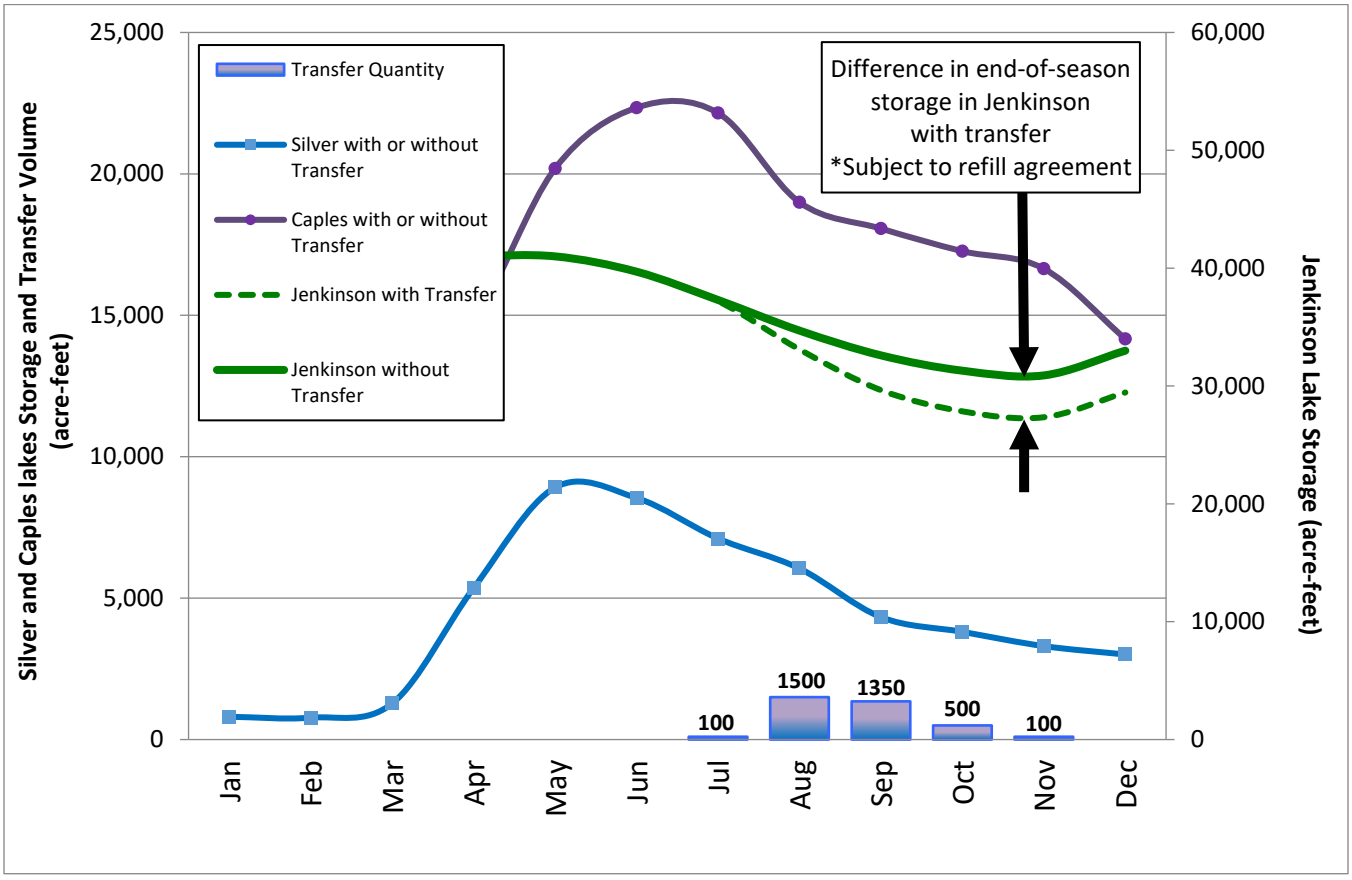


Figure 3-1 Caples, Silver, and Jenkinson Lakes End-of Month Storage and Transfer Volume Release Pattern Example

Table 3-1 Caples Lake Releases* 2009 through 2023 Historical Data and Planned Reservoir Operations with and without the Transfer (All Values in CFS)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Transfer Period					Dec
							Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	
Maximum	386	39	136	148	361	429	300	121	89	208	96	138
Minimum	5	3	5	5	11	14	5	5	5	5	6	6
Average	27	14	29	32	78	95	59	37	29	10	16	24
2024 Planned without Transfer Condition												
Released from Caples Lake							25	40	12	8	8	10
Routed to Jenkinson or directly to WTP							25	40	12	8	8	10
Increased Jenkinson release to meet WTP demand							0	0	0	0	0	0
2024 Planned with Transfer Condition												
Released from Caples Lake (target)							25	40	12	8	8	10
Routed to Jenkinson or directly to WTP							0	0	0	0	0	0
Increased Jenkinson release to meet WTP demand							25	40	12	8	8	10

*** Releases from Caples Lake include minimum releases and discretionary releases and are measured with U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) gage 11436999 - Caples Creek Release Below Caples Dam Near Kirkwood Ca**

WATER TRANSFER EFFECTS ON SILVER LAKE AND THE SILVER FORK

As described in Section 2.4.2, "Caples Lake/Jenkinson Lake and Silver Lake/Jenkinson Lake Re-Operations" EID's 2024 existing operation plan is to release previously stored water from Silver Lake for immediate consumptive use and/or conveyance into Jenkinson Lake.[1] This planned without-transfer action would re-divert releases of water previously stored in Silver Lake via EID's El Dorado Diversion Dam to the El Dorado Canal, for immediate consumptive uses or to replenish Jenkinson Lake after it has been drawn down during summer (see Figure 2-3 in Section 2.4.1). Because EID would utilize the same volume of water from Silver Lake with or without the transfer, storage levels at Silver Lake would be the same in 2024 with or without the transfer (see Figure 3-1). Because storage levels at Silver Lake would be the same with or without the transfer, there would be no impact, direct or indirect, to protected species that may be present at or in proximity to Silver Lake.

Table 3-2 shows one potential release pattern for Silver Lake with and without the transfer based on modeling of current and forecasted hydrology for 2024. Up to a maximum of 3,550 AF of water would be released from Silver Lake into Silver Fork beginning in late July and continuing through approximately November 30. The pattern of releases from Silver Lake during the transfer period could vary with or without the transfer. However, with or without the transfer water would be released from Silver Lake to Silver Fork in compliance with all regulatory requirements (e.g., minimum streamflows, lake levels, ramping rates) and at a magnitude within the range of minimum and maximum releases provided during the transfer period over the past 14 years (Table 3-2). The quantity of water released and overall seasonal timing of releases into Silver Fork during Silver Lake re-operation would be the same with or without the water transfer. Therefore, there would be no differences in stream habitat characteristics (e.g., wetted channel width, stream depth, water velocities) in Silver Fork as a result of the transfer and there would be no impact, direct or indirect, to special status aquatic species that may be present in Silver Fork.

[1] Releases from Silver Lake include minimum releases from Silver Lake Dam and leakage from Silver Lake from July – September 15, which are augmented by discretionary releases from September 16 through November

Table 3-2 Silver Lake Releases* 2009 through 2023 Historical Data and Planned Reservoir Operations with and without the Transfer (All Values in CFS)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Transfer Period					Dec
							Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	
Maximum	613	443	152	359	519	672	287	33	139	518	142	320
Minimum	6	4	1	5	6	17	13	10	7	5	2	5
Average	26	25	26	64	126	104	41	17	30	27	19	30
2024 Planned without Transfer Condition												
Released from Silver Lake							20	17	27	6	4	8
Routed to Jenkinson or directly to WTP							20	17	27	6	4	8
Increased Jenkinson release to meet WTP demand							0	0	0	0	0	0
2024 Planned with Transfer Condition												
Released from Silver Lake (target)							20	17	27	6	4	8
Routed to Jenkinson or directly to WTP							0	0	0	0	0	0
Increased Jenkinson release to meet WTP demand							20	17	27	6	4	8

*** Releases from Silver Lake include minimum releases from Silver Lake Dam and leakage from Silver Lake from July – September 15, which are augmented with discretionary releases from September 16 through November; flow data from USGS gage 11436000 - Silver Lake Outlet Near Kirkwood CA and USGS gage 11436510 - Oyster Creek Near Kirkwood CA.**

WATER TRANSFER EFFECTS ON THE SOUTH FORK AMERICAN RIVER BELOW EL DORADO DIVERSION DAM

The confluence of the Silver Fork with the SFAR is located immediately upstream of the El Dorado Diversion Dam. Proposed water transfer flows to this point would mimic historic flows and would continue to be diverted at El Dorado Diversion Dam. With the proposed project, instead of being directed for consumptive use, the transfer release flow would be discharged back into the SFAR through the El Dorado Powerhouse just upstream from Slab Creek Reservoir or bypassed at the El Dorado Diversion Dam, and then travel downstream to Folsom Reservoir. As in the Silver Fork and Caples Creek, the water transfer would have no effects to aquatic resources in the SFAR from the El Dorado Diversion Dam to the SFAR upstream of the El Dorado Powerhouse because with or without the proposed project, water would be diverted at the El Dorado Diversion Dam. Without the proposed project, water released from Caples and Silver lakes would not be returned to the SFAR because it would be immediately used consumptively or conveyed to Jenkinson Lake for subsequent consumptive use. With the proposed project, water released from Caples and Silver lakes would be returned to the SFAR through the El Dorado Powerhouse resulting in a slight increase in flows in the SFAR below the El Dorado Powerhouse and Folsom Reservoir. However, this increase would represent only a small fraction of SFAR flows in this reach and the water would enter Chili Bar Reservoir approximately ¾ miles downstream where it would be re-regulated and released by the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) for hydropower generation and/or instream flows. Due to the small quantity of water to be released from the El Dorado Powerhouse and the short reach of the SFAR that would experience slight increases in flows, there would be minimal to negligible differences in stream habitat characteristics (e.g., wetted channel width, stream depth, water velocities) in the SFAR as a result of the transfer. Likewise, there would be minimal to negligible impact, direct or indirect, to special status aquatic species that may be present in the SFAR.

WATER TRANSFER EFFECTS ON JENKINSON LAKE

Without the proposed project, summer and early fall water that has been stored in Caples and Silver lakes is either delivered directly to EID's Reservoir 1 WTP or delivered through the Hazel Creek Tunnel (via EID's El Dorado Diversion Dam and El Dorado Canal) into Jenkinson Lake for treatment at the Reservoir A WTP. Under the proposed project, EID would instead use water already stored in Jenkinson Lake to meet these demands during this time period in lieu of water from Caples and Silver lakes, and Jenkinson Lake would not be replenished with water from Caples and Silver lakes during this time period. This would allow water stored in Caples and Silver lakes to instead be released to Folsom Reservoir between July through November 2024 for transfer to the Buyers. EID would draw on Jenkinson Lake storage for meeting EID's consumptive demands, resulting in a lower than planned end-of-season storage in Jenkinson Lake. [2]

Since 1990, refill to full storage occurs during the immediate winter months in most years. If EID were unable to refill the reservoir completely in 2025, EID would be able to fulfill its anticipated customer demands while also meeting any applicable refill agreement and/or conveyance agreement obligations by Reclamation and DWR, respectively. Adverse effects to aquatic resources in the Cosumnes River drainage downstream from Jenkinson Lake (e.g., Park Creek, Camp Creek, and North Fork Cosumnes River) would not be expected since operations would be within the range of historic operations and there would be minimal to negligible differences in stream habitat characteristics (e.g., wetted channel width, stream depth, water velocities) in these streams as a result of the transfer. Likewise, there would be minimal to negligible impact, direct or indirect, to special status aquatic species that may be present in these streams.

WATER TRANSFER EFFECTS ON WEBER RESERVOIR AND WEBER CREEK

As described in Section 4.2.1. "Weber Reservoir Re-Operation," because of the availability of other supplies in 2024 and strategic management of reservoir operations, EID does not anticipate releasing stored water currently available in Weber Reservoir during 2024. Therefore, absent the transfer or any unforeseen system constraints, EID would only make minimum releases from Weber Reservoir as required by law in 2024. For the transfer, EID would re-operate Weber Reservoir by making releases above minimum flow requirements to draw down the reservoir to deliver water to the Buyers during the 2024 transfer period (see Figure 3-2).

The water transfer from Weber Reservoir would be made in compliance with all water rights requirements including measures for the protection of fish and wildlife. One such storage-related requirement is to maintain a minimum of 200 AF in Weber Reservoir as of September 1 in order to ensure minimum releases can be provided in September, October, and November. As depicted in Figure 3-2, with the transfer Weber Reservoir storage is forecasted to be 503 AF on August 31, 2024 and 278 AF on September 30, 2024, well above the minimum level of 200 AF on September 1. No long-term impacts to Weber Reservoir storage are anticipated with implementation of the proposed project. Traditionally, Weber Reservoir easily refills as evident even during the historically dry periods of 2014 and 2015 when the reservoir refilled. Actual refill during 2025 would be subject to a refill/conveyance agreement to be entered into with Reclamation and/or DWR as appropriate. EID would be able to meet applicable obligations under these agreements and also meet all applicable water right requirements. Because storage levels at Weber Reservoir would be within the range of normal operations and in compliance with the operational requirements specified in the water right license for the protection of fish and wildlife, the potential impacts, direct or indirect, to aquatic species that may be present at or in proximity to Weber Reservoir are expected to be negligible.

Table 3-3 shows one potential release pattern for Weber Reservoir with and without the transfer based on modeling of current and forecasted hydrology for 2024. However, the actual flow schedule could vary from what is presented in Table 3-3 and would depend on hydrologic conditions at the time of the transfer, date when all agreements and authorizations are received, amount of and timing for water requested by the Buyer(s), and operational and flow

2 Jenkinson Lake has a capacity of 41,033 AF. Storage in Jenkinson Lake at the beginning of June 2024 was approximately 41,000 AF. Based on modeled releases and current forecasting, by September 30, 2024, with the transfer storage would be approximately 27,850 AF compared to storage without the water transfer of approximately 31,300 AF. By November 30, 2024, with the transfer storage would be approximately 27,350 AF compared to storage without the water transfer of approximately 30,900 AF.

requirements. With the example provided in Table 3-3, up to a maximum of 750 AF of water would be released from Weber Reservoir into Weber Creek beginning in late July and continuing through approximately November 30.

The proposed water transfer would likely have minor temporary beneficial effects to aquatic resources in Weber Creek during the transfer period because there would be an increase of flows than would otherwise be released from Weber Reservoir in 2024; minimum reservoir release to Weber Creek is approximately 1 cfs throughout the year, depending on the previous month's inflow and reservoir storage conditions. With the proposed project, releases from Weber Reservoir would not exceed 15 cfs and would be within the range of minimum and maximum releases provided during the transfer period over the past 14 years (Table 3-4). Additionally, the ramping rates specified in the water rights license to protect fish and wildlife from adverse impacts caused by sudden change in Weber Creek hydrology would be implemented. Differences in stream habitat characteristics (e.g., wetted channel width, stream depth, water velocities) between the proposed water transfer and historic (over the past 14 years) conditions would be negligible, as average water depth at the maximum flow (15 cfs) would increase by less than 5 inches over depths observed at minimum flow (1 cfs). Likewise, there would be negligible or minor beneficial temporary impacts to aquatic species that may be present in the Weber Creek.

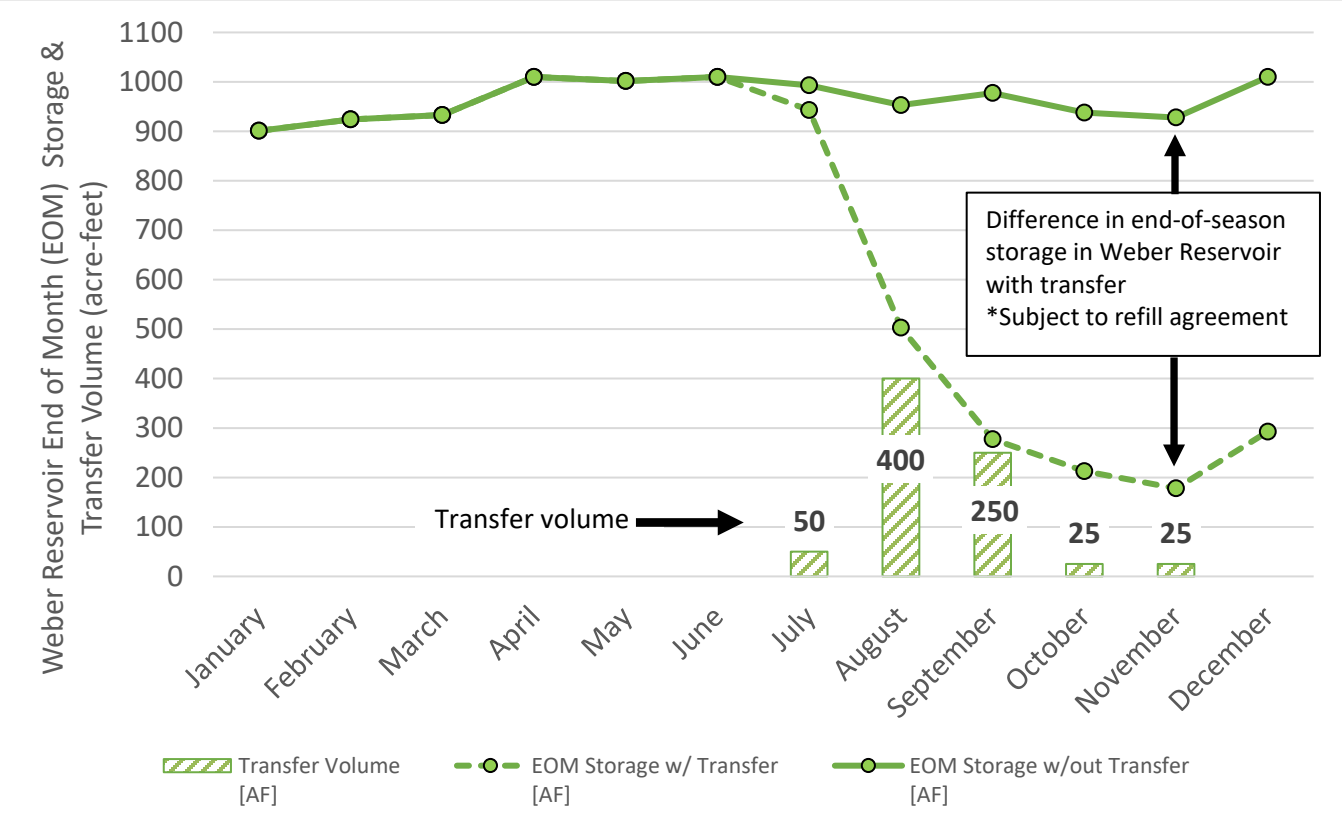


Figure 3-2 Weber Reservoir End-of Month Storage and Transfer Volume Release Pattern Example

Table 3-3 Weber Reservoir Releases 2009 through 2023 Historical Data and Planned Reservoir Operations with and without the Transfer (All Values in CFS)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Transfer Period					Dec
							Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	
Maximum	49	32	50	35	15	6	12	14	15	13	5	49
Minimum	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Average	6	6	9	7	4	3	3	3	4	2	2	3
2024 Planned without Transfer Condition												
Released from Weber Reservoir							1	1	1	1	1	3
2024 Planned with Transfer Condition												
Released from Weber Reservoir (target)							2	8	5	1	1	3

WATER TRANSFER EFFECTS BELOW FOLSOM RESERVOIR

The proposed project is not anticipated to have a detectable effect to Folsom's coldwater pool. Releases from Caples Lake, Silver Lake, and Weber Reservoir are not anticipated to influence the temperature of the water entering Folsom Reservoir given the small volume of water being transferred as compared to total SFAR inflow. Folsom Reservoir has a capacity of 977,000 acre-feet (AF). Average annual inflow into Folsom Reservoir is about 2.7 million AF. The transfer amount of the proposed project is up to 4,300 AF, which represents less than 0.2 percent of annual inflow and 0.4 percent of the maximum capacity of Folsom Reservoir. As such, the proposed water transfer would not be expected to have a direct impact on the coldwater pool within the reservoir, regardless of when water is transferred into Folsom Reservoir.

Water temperature measured in the SFAR near Pilot Hill (USGS gage 11446030 SF AMERICAN R NR PILOT HILL CA) (USGS 2024) during previous water transfers from Weber Reservoir, Caples Lake, and Silver Lake is provided in Figures 3-3, 3-4, 3-5, and 3-6. USGS gage 11446030 is located downstream of the confluence of Weber Creek and upstream of the ordinary high water mark of Folsom Reservoir and transfer water from Weber Reservoir, Caples Lake, and Silver Lake pass this location before entering Folsom Reservoir. This data indicates there is not a distinguishable effect on water temperature in the SFAR during previous transfer deliveries. A key factor to the lack of distinguishable effect during previous transfer deliveries is likely due to the small rate and volume of water being delivered from the three reservoirs relative to the total flow in the SFAR. For the proposed project, water would be released from Weber Reservoir, Caples Lake, and Silver Lake at rates similar to these prior water transfers. As such, implementation of the proposed project is not expected to adversely affect water temperature or coldwater pool storage in Folsom Reservoir.

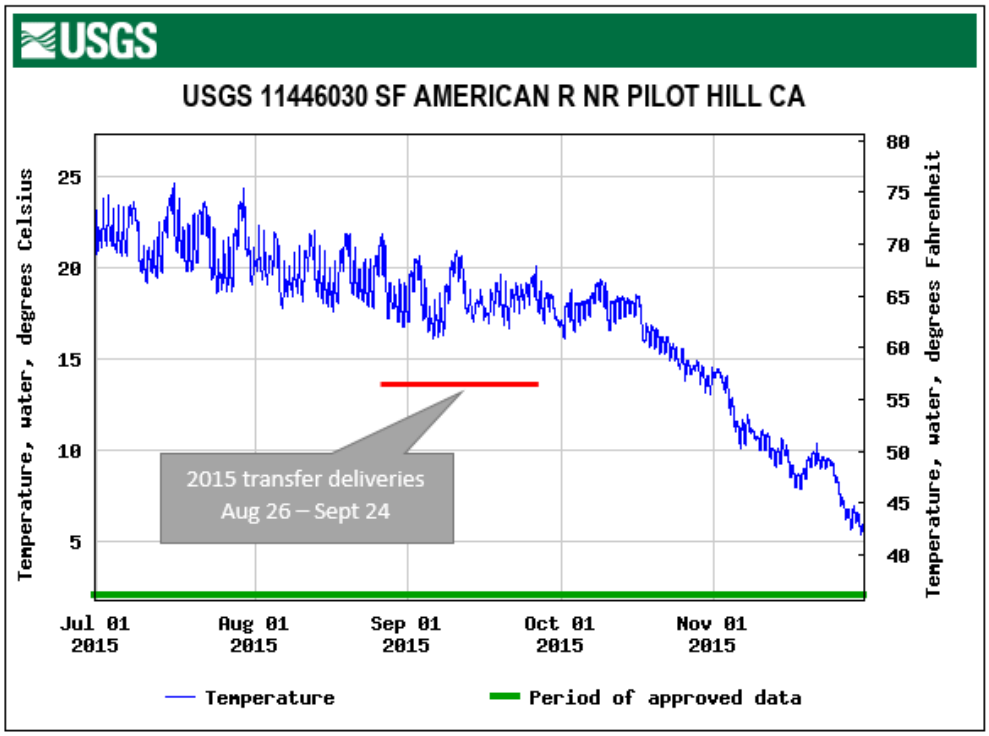


Figure 3-3. SFAR water temperature measured at USGS gage 11446030

July 1 to November 30 2015

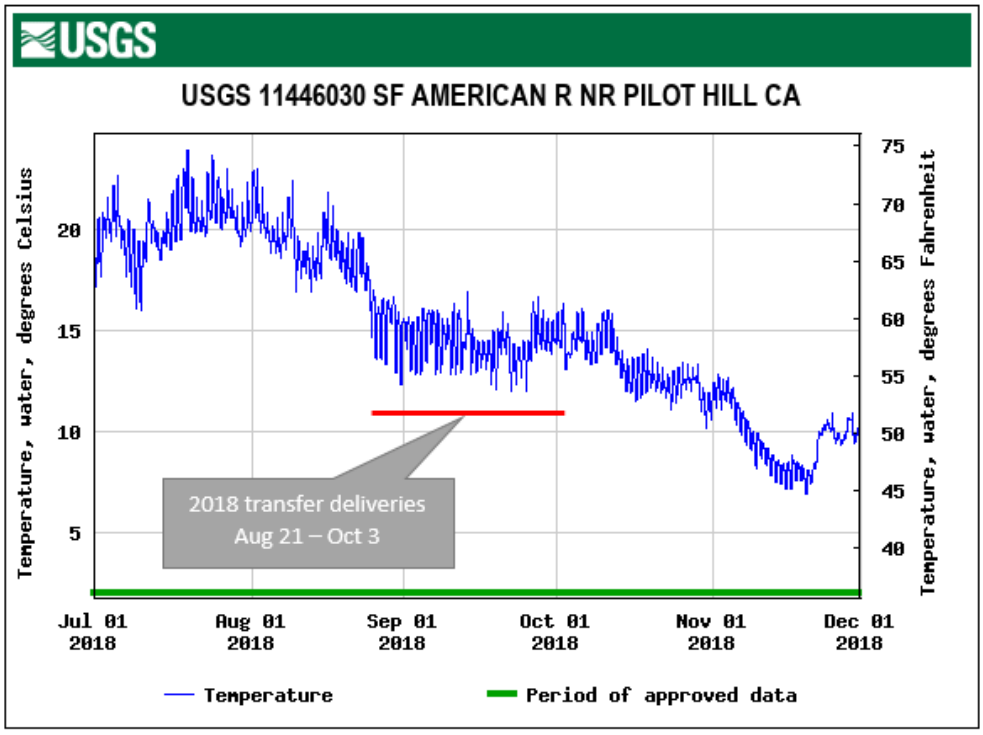


Figure 3-4. SFAR water temperature measured at USGS gage 11446030, July 1 to November 30 2018

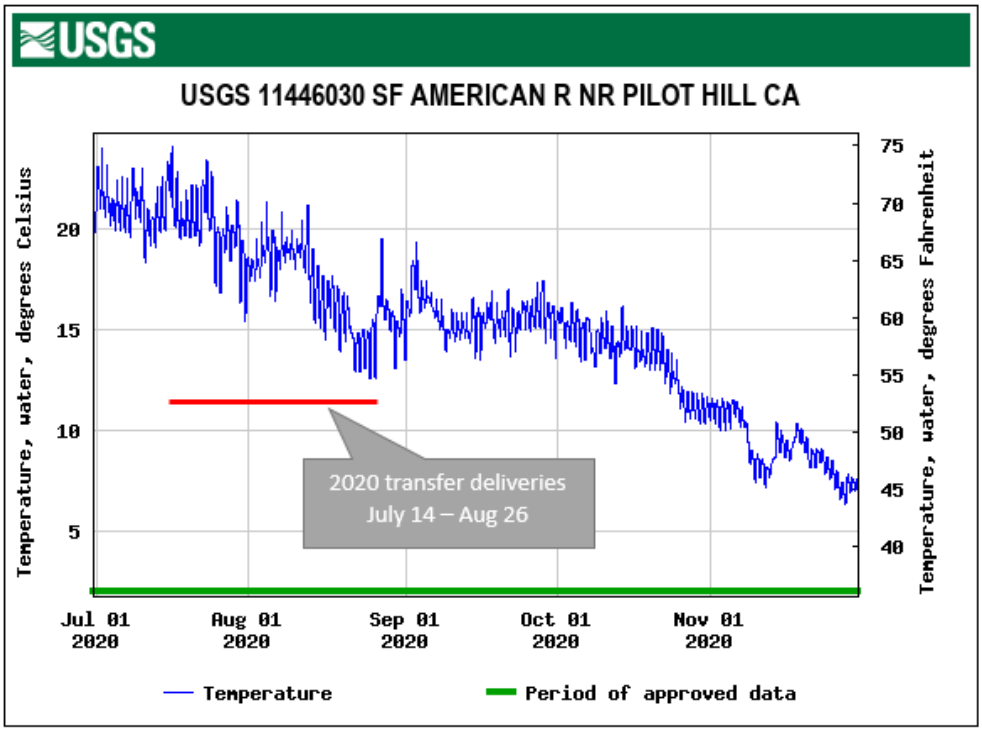


Figure 3-5. SFAR water temperature measured at USGS gage 11446030, July 1 to November 30 2020

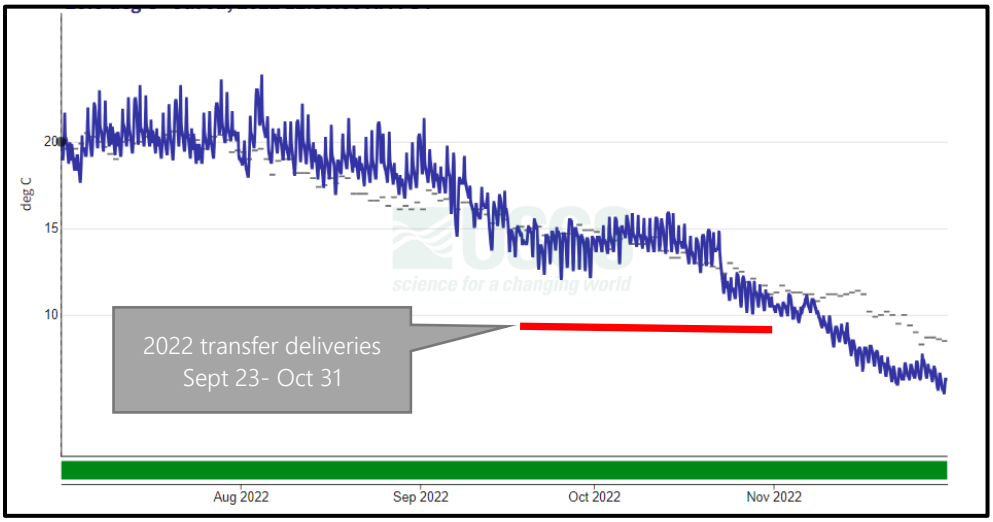


Figure 3-6. SFAR water temperature measured at USGS gage 11446030, July 1 to November 30 2022

Water temperature is also a primary parameter of concern for the LAR. Reclamation has indicated that the temperature target for the LAR in 2024 will be 66°F – 67°F (American River Group Notes, Draft May 16, 2024). Given the small volume of the total transfer (up to 4,300 AF) and because the proposed transfer is not anticipated to have a detectable effect on Folsom Reservoir's coldwater pool (see discussion above), implementation of the proposed project would not affect Reclamation's ability to implement meet temperature goals in the LAR in 2024. As such, implementation of the proposed project is not expected to affect special status aquatic species in LAR.

Reclamation would be responsible for coordination and scheduling the volume and timing of releases of transfer water from Folsom Reservoir for delivery to the Buyers. Releases from Folsom of approximately 17 cfs during the transfer period from late July through November would be sufficient to convey the maximum amount of water proposed for transfer (up to 4,300 AF).[3] For comparison, instream flows in the LAR in 2022, a dry water year, ranged from approximately 1,254 cfs to 5,268 cfs from July through November (DWR 2023a). In 2021, a critically dry water year, instream flows in the LAR ranged from approximately 552 cfs to 2,850 cfs from July through November (DWR 2023b). Even under the lowest flow condition during this period (i.e., 552 cfs) releases of 17 cfs would only represent 3% of the total flow in the LAR. This small change in instream flows in the LAR with implementation of the proposed project would have minimal to negligible effects. Additionally, because hydrologic conditions in 2024 are closer to normal and not critically dry, it is anticipated that the flows in the LAR during the transfer period in 2024 will be higher than the flows provided in 2021 and therefore the releases needed to facilitate the proposed project would make up an even smaller percentage of the total flows in the LAR. Given these factors, there would be minimal to negligible potential impacts, direct or indirect, to aquatic resources in the LAR.

Release of the transfer water would be coordinated with Reclamation and the regulatory agencies in compliance with all applicable requirements for flow and temperature in the LAR to protect aquatic resources. The transfer water released from Folsom Reservoir would be coordinated with the systemwide operation of the CVP and SWP. Coordinated operations of the CVP and SWP are subject to compliance with the 2019 BiOps (USFWS 2019; NMFS 2019), SWRCB Water Rights Decision 1641 (D-1641), as well as any temporary or modified regulatory requirements that may be in effect. Reclamation would provide the transfer water in such a manner that would not disrupt normal CVP and SWP operations, while complying with all current flow standards for the LAR from Lake Natoma to the confluence with the Sacramento River, 2019 BiOps, as well as the most up-to-date regulatory requirements for the Delta.

From the LAR, transfer water would flow to the Sacramento River and then to the Delta. The relative proportion of transfer water would be further reduced when introduced to the flows in the Sacramento River and Delta. As such, discernable effects to aquatic resources would be unlikely in the Sacramento River or Delta with implementation of the proposed project.

From the Delta, transfer water would be re-diverted at the Jones pumping plant or Banks pumping plant. From the Banks pumping plant, the transfer water could be conveyed south via the California Aqueduct to a Buyer's service area; conveyed south approximately 70 miles to the San Luis Reservoir for temporary storage prior to delivery to a Buyer's service area; or conveyed southwest in the South Bay Aqueduct to a Buyer's services area in the East Bay. Alternatively, the transfer water could be diverted at the Jones pumping plant; conveyed south approximately 70 miles to the San Luis Reservoir prior to delivery to a Buyer's service area, or conveyed south for up to 117 miles in the Delta-Mendota Canal and thence to a Buyer's service area. Once re-diverted at the Jones pumping plant or Banks pumping plant, the transfer water would be conveyed in existing canals and facilities that do not provide suitable habitat for special status aquatic species. As such, there would be no impact to aquatic resources from the Jones pumping plant or Banks pumping plant to the Buyer's service area with implementation of the proposed project.

SUMMARY

In total, up to 4,300 AF would be transferred from Caples and Silver lakes, and Weber Reservoir, through release into Caples Creek, Silver Fork, Weber Creek, SFAR, LAR, and into the Sacramento River and Delta from July through November 2024. All operations would be in compliance with all regulatory requirements (e.g., minimum streamflows, lake levels, ramping rates) and at a magnitude within the range of minimum and maximum releases provided during the transfer period over the past 14 years. There would be no or minimal differences in stream habitat characteristics (e.g., wetted channel width, stream depth, water velocities) along the affected waterways. The lack of changes in streamflow or minimal changes in streamflow during the proposed water transfer would likely have no or negligible effects on aquatic resources in 1) Caples Lake and Caples Creek, 2) Silver Lake and Silver Fork, 3) the SFAR between the El

[3] Estimated releases from Folsom calculated as 4,300 AF / 124 days = 35 AF/day = approximately 17 cfs

Dorado Diversion Dam and Folsom Reservoir, 4) Weber Reservoir and Weber Creek, and 2) Folsom Reservoir to the Buyers' service area.

Therefore, all impacts to aquatic resources from the proposed transfer, in particular to special-status species, would be **less than significant**.

b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Less-than-Significant Impact: Because the proposed project would be temporary and would not result in fluctuations in the reservoir and streamflow levels that are outside of historic range, the potential for adverse effects on riparian habitat would be minimal. Such potential impacts would be limited primarily to vegetation immediately adjacent to Jenkinson Lake and Weber Reservoir; however, vegetation would not be substantially affected by the proposed single-year water transfer because water levels typically fluctuate based on precipitation and the transfer would occur during the summer and fall when the reservoirs are typically drawn down on an annual basis. Habitats, including plant assemblages, that occur within the affected stream reaches and reservoir high water lines are acclimated to historic fluctuations in water levels. Temporary increases in the downstream areas also would not result in levels that are greater than historic conditions and would not cause adverse effects on riparian habitat. The impact would be **less than significant**.

c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

Less-than-Significant Impact: The proposed project would not result in any construction activities or fill of wetlands or Waters of the U.S. Reservoir releases would be consistent with historic patterns the potential for adverse effects on wetlands would be minimal. Therefore, the impact would be **less than significant**.

d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

Less-than-Significant Impact. The proposed project would provide slightly more water (up to 4,300 AF total) in Weber Creek, SFAR, LAR, lower Sacramento River, and into the Delta. This slight increase in flow from July through November would have negligible effects on river flows and resulting movements or migrations of any fish or wildlife species. Reduced reservoir elevations in Weber Reservoir would also not significantly affect movements or migrations of any fish or wildlife species, especially given that Weber Reservoir typically has little to no inflow during the July to November timeframe of the proposed water transfer. Adherence to minimum pool requirements (Division of Water Rights Order WR 2007-0035-DWR) would further protect habitat for those fish species that are resident to Weber Reservoir. Reduced reservoir elevations in Jenkinson Lake would also not significantly affect movements or migrations of any fish or wildlife species. Therefore, the proposed transfer project would not interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites. The impact would be **less than significant**.

e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

No Impact: The proposed project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance. **No impact** would occur.

f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

No Impact: The proposed project would not conflict with a habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. No impact would occur.

3.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
V. Cultural Resources.				
Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.5.1 Environmental Setting

Native American and Euro-American peoples have inhabited and traveled through present-day El Dorado, Amador, Alpine counties and the Buyers' service areas for thousands of years. Their long record of occupation and activities has left numerous prehistoric and historic-era remains on the landscape, including scattered artifacts, the remains of seasonal and long-term occupation, human interments, buildings, structures, and in some cases heavily altered landscapes.

3.5.2 Discussion

a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?

No Impact: No new ground-disturbing activities are proposed with the project. It is not anticipated that the proposed project would cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource given that changes in lake and reservoir water levels and streamflow levels as a result of the water transfer would be within historical ranges, water would be transferred using existing waterways and infrastructure, and water delivered to the Buyers would be used to maintain existing agricultural activities and supply existing M&I water users. There would be **no impact**.

b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?

No Impact: No new ground-disturbing activities are proposed with the project. It is not anticipated that the proposed project would cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource given that changes in lake and reservoir water levels and streamflow levels as a result of the water transfer would be within historical ranges, water would be transferred using existing waterways and infrastructure, and water delivered to the Buyers would be used to maintain existing agricultural activities and supply existing M&I water users. There would be **no impact**.

c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

No Impact: No new ground-disturbing activities are proposed with the project. It is not anticipated that the proposed project would disturb any human remains given that changes in water would be transferred using existing waterways and infrastructure, and water delivered to the Buyers would be used to maintain existing agricultural activities and supply existing M&I water users. There would be **no impact**.

3.6 ENERGY

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VI. Energy.				
Would the project:				
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.6.1 Environmental Setting

ENERGY FACILITIES AND USAGE

EID uses utility grid power throughout its service area through approximately 168 different Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E) service connections to provide drinking water, wastewater, recycled water, and recreational services. EID also operates the 21-megawatt El Dorado Hydroelectric Project, which is located on the SFAR and utilizes direct diversions and releases from storage from four upstream reservoirs (Silver Lake, Caples Lake, Lake Aloha, and Echo Lake) to generate hydroelectric power. Power generated at the El Dorado Powerhouse is delivered to the PG&E transmission system at the Powerhouse switchyard.

Reclamation operates Folsom and Nimbus Dams to generate hydroelectric power. Folsom is a 198-megawatt peaking powerplant which is dedicated first to meeting the requirements of the CVP facilities. The remaining energy is marketed to various preference customers in northern California. This plant also provides power for the pumping plant, which supplies the local domestic water supply. Nimbus Dam, located 7 miles downstream of Folsom Dam on the American River, regulates releases made through Folsom Dam. Nimbus Powerplant's two generators have a capacity of 7.8-megawatts (Reclamation 2024a).

The San Luis & Delta Mendota Water Authority operates the Jones pumping plant for Reclamation. The pumping plant near Tracy, California, lifts water at the southern end of the Delta into the canal system, which delivers water to CVP water service contractors, exchange contractors, and wildlife refuges. The pumping plant lifts water nearly 200 feet from the Delta into the canal system through 15-foot diameter pipes with six 22,500-horsepower motors capable of pumping a total of 8,500 acre-feet per day (Reclamation 2024b). DWR operates the Banks pumping plant at Clifton Court Forebay just south of Stockton, CA. Banks pumping plant contains 11 pumps lift the water 244 feet from the Delta into the canal system and can pump up to 10,300 cfs (WEF 2024).

No natural gas is directly consumed to operate the EID reservoirs or the Banks or Jones pumping plants.

3.6.2 Discussion

a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?

Less-than-Significant Impact. The project would not include construction that would result in any short-term increases in energy or fuel consumption. Water released from Weber Reservoir, Caples Lake, and Silver Lake flows downstream from higher elevations and therefore would not require electricity or pumping to facilitate the transfer of

water. A small increase in the overall pumping at the Banks and/or the Jones pumping plants would be required to pump the transfer water into the California Aqueduct and/or Delta Mendota Canal for distribution. If the project does not occur, it is likely that the Buyers would purchase water from a different seller, which would require pumping at the Banks or Jones pumping plants; would use groundwater pumping to replace the shortfall in surface water with groundwater; or possibly fallow some area of irrigated agriculture. These actions would be consistent with historic operations in the Buyers' service areas. Furthermore, the energy being consumed is for the conveyance of water, which is a necessary resource for agriculture, manufacturing, and drinking water. Any additional electricity needs would be minimal and would be within the range of typical demands because the project is intended to partially make up for water that typically flows through the pumps but is otherwise not available for transfer this year. The project would not result in any significant short- or long-term increases in natural gas or fuel use. Therefore, the proposed project's energy consumption during operation would not be considered wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary. This impact would be **less than significant**.

b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

No Impact. There are no energy policies or plans that would be applicable to the proposed project and therefore there would be no impact. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. There would be **no impact.**

3.7 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VII. Geology and Soils.				
Would the project:				
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? (Refer to California Geological Survey Special Publication 42.)	☐	☐	☐	☒
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☐	☒
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☐	☒
iv) Landslides?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994, as updated), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.7.1 Environmental Setting

The EID service area is located in the Sierra Nevada geomorphic province, which consists of a northwest-trending mountain range approximately 400 miles long and 40–100 miles wide. Portions of the Buyers' service areas are located in the Great Valley, Southern Coastal Ranges, Transverse Ranges, Peninsular Ranges, Colorado Desert, Mojave Desert, and Basin and Range geomorphic provinces. Active faults are present within all of the geomorphic provinces in EID and the Buyers' service areas.

The fossil yielding potential of a particular area is highly dependent on the geologic age and origin of the underlying rocks, which vary in distribution and surface exposure throughout the service areas.

3.7.2 Discussion

a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:

i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? (Refer to California Geological Survey Special Publication 42.)

No Impact: Surface fault rupture is most likely to occur on active faults (i.e., faults showing evidence of displacement within the last 11,700 years). While there are active faults within the Sierra Nevada geomorphic province, no Alquist-Priolo earthquake fault zones are mapped within the EID service area and no active faults are located in the vicinity of the EID reservoirs. Portions of the Buyers' service areas are within Alquist-Priolo earthquake fault zones and are adjacent to active faults; however, land uses would not change in the Buyers' service areas and no new structures would be constructed as part of the project. Therefore, the proposed project would not expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects from fault rupture. There would be no impact.

ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?

No Impact: No modification to EID dams and no new structures within the Buyers' service areas are proposed. Each dam is included in an ongoing dam safety program by DWR's Division of Dam Safety to ensure the facility meets all current dam safety standards. Caples Lake Dam and Silver Lake Dam are additionally regulated through the Project 184 Dam Safety Program under FERC's authority. The proposed project would not expose people or structures to strong seismic ground shaking. The dams would be operated in a manner consistent with historical operations. There would be no impact.

iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

No Impact: No modification to EID dams and no new structures within the Buyers' service areas are proposed. In addition, EID and the Buyers' service areas are not in mapped liquefaction zones. The proposed project would not expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects from seismic-related ground failure. There would be no impact.

iv) Landslides?

No Impact: The proposed project would not include construction of any structures or modification of existing structures, and the water transfer would not increase the potential for landslides. Therefore, the proposed project does not have the potential to expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects from landslides. There would be no impact.

b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

No Impact: No activities are proposed that could result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil. The lakes, reservoirs, and waterways affected by the project would be operated within the range of historical conditions. Water would be transferred with the proposed project via existing waterways and infrastructure and would be used for continued agricultural irrigation and existing M&I uses in the Buyers' service areas. Therefore, there would be no increased potential for erosion with the project. There would be no impact.

c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?

No Impact: None of the facilities involved with the proposed project are located within geologic units or on soil that would be unstable or would become unstable as a result of the project. In addition, the transfer of water within existing systems would not cause any geologic areas to become unstable. There would be no impact.

d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994, as updated), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?

No Impact: The proposed project would not create substantial risks to life or property as a result of expansive soils because the proposed temporary water transfer would use existing waterways and infrastructure, and no new structures would be constructed. There would be no impact.

e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?

No Impact: The proposed project would not include septic tanks or wastewater treatment. There would be no impact.

f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

No Impact: No new ground-disturbing activities are proposed with the project. It is not anticipated that the proposed project would directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or a unique geologic feature given that changes in lake or reservoir water levels and streamflow levels as a result of the water transfer would be within historical ranges, water would be transferred using existing waterways and infrastructure, and water delivered to the Buyers would be used to maintain existing agricultural activities and supply existing M&I water users. There would be no impact.

3.8 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VIII. Greenhouse Gas Emissions.				
Would the project:				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.8.1 Environmental Setting

California is a substantial contributor of global greenhouse gases (GHGs), emitting over 420 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MMTCO2e) per year. GHGs are global in their effect, which is to increase the earth's ability to absorb heat in the atmosphere. As primary GHGs have a long lifetime in the atmosphere, accumulate over time, and are generally well-mixed, their impact on the atmosphere is mostly independent of the point of emission. Every nation emits GHGs and as a result makes an incremental cumulative contribution to global climate change; therefore, global cooperation will be required to reduce the rate of GHG emissions enough to slow or stop the human-caused increase in average global temperatures and associated changes in climatic conditions. Emissions of GHGs contributing to global climate change are attributable, in large part, to human activities associated with on-road and off-road transportation, industrial/manufacturing, electricity generation by utilities and consumption by end users, residential and commercial on-site fuel usage, and agriculture and forestry. Emissions of CO2 are, largely, byproducts of fossil fuel combustion.

Assembly Bill 32 was established by CARB to provide statewide GHG emissions cap for 2020, adopt mandatory reporting rules for significant sources of GHG, and adopt comprehensive Climate Action Scoping Plans to help identify how emission reductions will be achieved. Assembly Bill 32 was then amended by Senate Bill 32 on September 16, 2016, and further required that statewide GHG emissions are reduced to 40 percent below the 1990 level by the year 2030. In 2022, CARB released the latest scoping plan, which lays out a path to achieve the carbon neutrality targets set by AB 1279 as well as reduce GHG emissions by 85 percent below 1990 levels no later than 2045 (CARB 2022).

The CEQA Guidelines focus on the effects of GHG emissions as cumulative impacts, and therefore GHG emissions should be analyzed in the context of CEQA's requirements for cumulative impact analyses (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064[h][3]). A project's incremental contribution to a cumulative impact can be found not cumulatively considerable if the project would comply with an approved plan or mitigation program that provides specific requirements to avoid or substantially lessen the cumulative problem within the geographic area of the project.

3.8.2 Discussion

a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

No Impact: The proposed project does not include any construction or substantial operational activities that would increase GHG emissions. Water would be transferred through the existing facilities and no alterations of these facilities would occur. Therefore, because the proposed project would not result in any construction or substantial

operational changes, the proposed project would not generate any new GHG emissions that would have a significant impact on the environment. Agriculture and M&I operations generate GHG emissions; however, given that the purpose of the proposed project is to provide the Buyers with water to offset shortages due to a reduced allocation of CVP and SWP water for uses south of the Delta, the proposed project would not increase normal farming or M&I activities and would not increase GHG emissions compared to baseline conditions.

The proposed project would not involve long-term maintenance or operational activities and the proposed project would not substantially increase the use of electricity or generation of water, wastewater, or solid waste. Additionally, the proposed project would have a beneficial effect associated with GHG emissions because it would result in increased generation of hydroelectric power associated with the Caples Lake and Silver Lake water releases that would otherwise be used consumptively and not be used for hydroelectric generation purposes. The power would replace power that would otherwise need to be acquired from other sources that could generate GHG emissions. Therefore, there would be no impact.

b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

No Impact: The proposed project would not conflict with plans, policies, or regulations prepared or established to reduce GHG emissions. For the reasons discussed above under a), the proposed project's incremental contribution to the cumulative impact of increasing atmospheric levels of GHGs would not be cumulatively considerable. There would be no impact.

3.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
IX. Hazards and Hazardous Materials.				
Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and/or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.9.1 Environmental Setting

General Hazards

Hazardous materials such as diesel, gasoline, oils, and lubricants are typically associated with construction activities and industrial uses. No hazardous materials are associated with the proposed project.

Schools

There are numerous schools located within EID and Buyers' service areas, most of which are centered around developed areas.

Airports

There are numerous airports within EID and Buyers' service areas.

Cortese List Sites

The Cortese list, which is compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962, is used to comply with CEQA requirements and provides a list of the known locations of hazardous material release sites. The EnviroStor and GeoTracker databases, which are managed by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) and SWRCB, respectively, are used to determine the proximity of a project to the nearest hazardous materials site. A desktop review of both the EnviroStor and GeoTracker databases identified numerous hazardous materials sites throughout EID's service area and Buyers' service areas (DTSC 2024, SWRCB 2024), however there are no known hazardous materials sites within the proposed project area.

Wildfires

The severity of wildland fires is influenced primarily by vegetation, topography, and weather (temperature, humidity, and wind). The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) hazard severity scale considers vegetation, climate, and slope to evaluate the level of wildfire hazard in a State Responsibility Area (SRA). CAL FIRE designates three levels of Fire Hazard Severity Zones (Moderate, High, and Very High) to indicate the severity of fire hazard in a particular geographical or SRA area. El Dorado County and the EID service area contain areas that include Very High, High, and Moderate fire zones, as identified on the Fire Hazard Severity Zone Viewer developed by CAL FIRE (CAL FIRE 2024). Moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity zones are also mapped within the Buyers' service areas (CAL FIRE 2024).

3.9.2 Discussion

a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

No Impact: The proposed water transfer would not require use of acutely hazardous materials or substances. Agricultural activities could involve the use and storage of hazardous materials (e.g., fuels, fertilizers, insecticides), but use and storage of these materials would not increase as a result of the proposed project. Therefore, the proposed project would not create a significant hazard to the public related to hazardous materials. There would be no impact.

b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and/or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

No Impact: The proposed water transfer would not require use of acutely hazardous materials or substances. Agricultural activities could involve the use and storage of hazardous materials (e.g., fuels, fertilizers, insecticides), but use and storage of these materials would not increase as a result of the proposed project. Therefore, the proposed project would not create a significant hazard to the public through reasonably foreseeable upset and/or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials. There would be no impact.

c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

No Impact: No existing or proposed schools are located within 0.25 mile of the EID lakes or reservoirs. Schools are located throughout the Buyers' service areas, but the proposed water transfer would not emit hazardous emissions or involve the handling of hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school. There would be no impact.

d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code §65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

No Impact As discussed in Section 3.9.1, Environmental Setting, above, there are numerous hazardous materials/Cortese listed sites within EID's service area and Buyers' service areas (DTSC 2024, SWRCB 2024). However, the proposed project does not include substantial changes in operational use such that interference or interaction with any of these sites could occur. Water would be transferred through existing facilities and waterways and no changes to these facilities would occur. There would be no impact.

e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?

No Impact: No airports are located within 2 miles of the EID lakes and reservoirs. Several airports are located within the Buyers' service areas. However, the proposed project would not create a hazard associated with airport operations for people residing or working in the area of the proposed project. There would be no impact.

f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

No Impact: Land-based emergency response routes and plans would not be affected by the proposed project and in-water navigation would not be interrupted by the proposed project because the project would not involve construction- or any changes in operations-related traffic. Implementation of the proposed project would not significantly impair or interfere with emergency access to local roads and evacuation routes, or significantly reduce emergency response. There would be no impact.

g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?

No Impact: The proposed project would not include construction of any structures that could be exposed to fire risk. In the event of a fire, existing access roads could be used to accommodate fire-fighting crews and equipment. No features of the proposed project would increase the fire danger in the EID or Buyers' service areas. There would be no impact.

3.10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
X. Hydrology and Water Quality.				
Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
i) Result in substantial on- or offsite erosion or siltation;	☐	☐	☒	☐
ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;	☐	☐	☐	☒
iii) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or	☐	☐	☐	☒
iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.10.1 Environmental Setting

HYDROLOGY

EID's water sources are provided from surface water from the west slope of the Sierra Nevada in the SFAR and the Cosumnes River watersheds. Surface water is diverted from streams and reservoirs and conveyed via canals and pipelines. Access to groundwater is relatively limited when compared to surface water due to geologic conditions and the related fragmented/fractured rock groundwater system found in EID's service area, although wells remain a primary source of water in rural areas.

The proposed project involves the transfer of up to 4,300 AF of water that EID would make available through re-operation of EID reservoirs to release water otherwise planned to be consumed by EID customers and/or stored within the EID network of reservoirs (see Figures 2-2 and 2-3).

With the proposed transfer, transfer water released from EID facilities would flow to Folsom Reservoir. Specifically, the combined release flows of transfer water from Caples and Silver lakes would re-diverted at the El Dorado Diversion Dam and conveyed to the El Dorado Powerhouse before being discharged back into the SFAR or in the event the El Dorado Powerhouse is offline, transfer water would be bypassed at the El Dorado Diversion Dam and then travel downstream to Folsom Reservoir. Releases from Caples and Silver lakes would be conducted in accordance with all applicable requirements and operating criteria, including the Project No. 184 FERC license and associated agreements (e.g., League to Save Sierra Lakes 2004 Settlement Agreement). Releases from Weber Reservoir would be conducted in accordance with all applicable requirements and operating criteria, including the Terms in Water Right License 2184 and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between EID and CDFW (EID 2005).

WATER QUALITY

SWRCB requires water providers to conduct a source water assessment to help protect the quality of water supplies. The assessment describes where a water system's drinking water comes from, the types of polluting activities that may threaten the quality of the source water, and an evaluation of the water's vulnerability to the threats.

Updated assessments of EID's drinking water sources were most recently completed in 2023. EID source water is considered most vulnerable to recreation, residential sewer, septic system, and urban runoff activities, which are associated with constituents detected in the water supply. EID source water is also considered most vulnerable to illegal activities, dumping, fertilizer, pesticide and herbicide application, forest activities, and wildfires. EID's water quality monitoring program includes taking samples of raw and treated water throughout the year from many locations in EID's service area. Analyses cover more than 100 different constituents. No maximum contaminant level violations were detected in the most recent reported samplings (EID 2023).

3.10.2 Discussion

a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?

No Impact: The project would not include construction activities that could temporarily degrade surface or groundwater. The proposed water transfer would use existing lakes, reservoirs, streams, and rivers operating within all applicable requirements. Given the relatively small amount of transfer water released, there would not be any existing water quality standards or waste discharge requirements that would not be met. The small amount of the transfer (up to 4,300 AF) being added to Folsom Reservoir would not violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements. No groundwater would be pumped or recharged as a result of the project. In addition, agricultural activities and M&I water uses in the Buyers' service areas would not change as a result of the proposed project, and the project would not result in any violations of water quality standards or waste discharge requirements. There would be no impact.

b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

No Impact: No substantial effects on groundwater hydrology would occur from the proposed project. Flows in the affected waterways would be within typical ranges normally experienced during the July to November transfer period and would not have a noticeable impact on either accretion from or depletion from the stream than would occur absent the transfer. EID participates and directs groundwater monitoring, management, and banking operations

within their service area to improve groundwater levels. The proposed project would not increase groundwater usage within EID or the Buyers' service areas. No impact would occur.

c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:

i) Result in substantial on- or offsite erosion or siltation;

Less-than-Significant Impact: The proposed project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area. The proposed water transfer would use existing lakes, reservoirs, streams, and rivers, and flows from the water transfer would be well within stream bankfull conditions. The release patterns and corresponding changes in storage levels would be within the historic range of operations for the facilities involved. Additionally, the volume and flow rates of transfer water released would be relatively small and there would not be any substantial on-or off-site erosion or siltation. The small amount of the transfer (up to 4,300 AF) would not alter any drainage patterns or the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial on-or off-site erosion or siltation. Agricultural activities and M&I usage in the Buyers' service areas would not change as a result of the proposed project, and no new on- or off-site erosion or siltation would occur. The impact would be less than significant.

ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;

No Impact: The proposed project would not increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in on- or off-site flooding and would not increase flood flows or impose additional flood hazards. The proposed project would release a relatively small amount of water during the summer and fall months in the Buyers' service areas. The proposed project would temporarily provide slightly more water in Weber Creek, SFAR, Folsom Reservoir, LAR, lower Sacramento River, and into the Delta. The proposed water transfer would occur during summer and fall, use existing lakes, reservoirs, streams, and rivers, and flows from the water transfer would be well within stream bankfull conditions and the historic range of operations for the facilities involved and therefore would not result in on- or off-site flooding. There would be no impact.

iii) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or

No Impact: The proposed project would not create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems and, therefore, would not affect any stormwater drainage systems. In addition, the proposed project would not provide any substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. No impact would occur.

iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?

No Impact. The proposed project would not include construction of any structures within the floodplain that could impede or redirect flood flows. Existing lakes, reservoirs, streams, and rivers, and conveyance facilities would be used for the water transfer. Flows from the water transfer would be well within stream bankfull conditions and within historic water levels in the facilities used for the transfer. The project would have no impact on flood flows.

d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

No Impact: The proposed project would not result in inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow. No impact would occur.

e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

No Impact. The project would not include construction activities that could temporarily degrade water quality and the proposed water transfer would not result in degradation of existing water quality in any of the reservoirs or waterways affected by the transfer. No groundwater would be pumped or recharged as a result of the project. In addition, agricultural activities and M&I water uses in the Buyers' service areas would not change as a result of the proposed project, and the project would not result in any violations to water quality standards. Use of the surface water from the proposed project in the Buyers' service areas would not increase groundwater pumping and may result in a decrease in groundwater pumping. Therefore, the project would not interfere with implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan. No impact would occur.

3.11 LAND USE AND PLANNING

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XI. Land Use and Planning.				
Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.11.1 Environmental Setting

Land use in the EID service area is varied and includes residential, commercial, industrial, public facilities, research and development, agricultural lands, open space, and recreational areas. Similar to land uses in EID's service area, land uses in the Buyers' service areas include agriculture, residential, commercial, industrial, public facilities, agricultural lands, open space, and recreational areas.

3.11.2 Discussion

a) Physically divide an established community?

No Impact: Implementing the proposed project would use existing facilities to transfer water and would not result in changes in land use or construction of any new structures. Therefore, the project would not physically divide an established community. **No impact** would occur.

b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

No Impact: The proposed project would not result in a change in land use and would not conflict with an applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. **No impact** would occur.

3.12 MINERAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XII. Mineral Resources.				
Would the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.12.1 Environmental Setting

Within EID's service area, mineral resource areas are mapped in the vicinity of Jenkinson Lake (DOC 2003). Various mineral resources are mapped within the Buyers' service areas including sand, gravel, and oil (DOC 2022).

3.12.2 Discussion

a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?

No Impact: Although mineral resources are mapped in the vicinity of Jenkinson Lake, no ground-disturbing activities are proposed near Jenkinson Lake and the lower Jenkinson Lake water level as a result of the proposed project, so the project would not affect mineral resources. Mineral resources in the vicinity of the Buyers' service areas would not be affected by the water transfer. The proposed project would not require the use of mineral resources and would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource. No impact would occur.

b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?

No Impact: Although mineral resources are mapped in the vicinity of Jenkinson Lake, no ground-disturbing activities are proposed near Jenkinson Lake and the lower Jenkinson Lake water level as a result of the proposed project, so the project would not affect mineral resources. Mineral resources in the vicinity of the Buyers' service areas would not be affected by the project. No loss of locally important minerals would occur with the proposed project. No impact would occur.

3.13 NOISE

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIII.Noise.				
Would the project result in:				
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or in other applicable local, state, or federal standards?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.13.1 Environmental Setting

Typical noise sources in the vicinity of the EID lakes, reservoirs, and waterways used to convey the water are dominated by vehicular traffic on local area roadways, recreational activities, and natural sources (i.e., flowing water, wildlife vocalizations, wind, and birds). Typical noise sources in the Buyers' service areas include equipment for agricultural production and road and air traffic.

3.13.2 Discussion

a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or in other applicable local, state, or federal standards?

No Impact. No increase in ambient noise levels would occur in the EID service area as a result of the proposed project. Since no construction would result from the project and there would be no changes in land use practices, noise sources would not change relative to current conditions within the Buyers' service areas.

The proposed project would not introduce any new temporary or permanent noise sources. In addition, it would not alter the local environment, such as by increasing the noise production/exposure associated with existing, permanent sources of noise in the area of the proposed project. No impact would occur.

b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

No Impact. No temporary or permanent increase in groundborne vibration would result from the proposed project compared to existing conditions. No impact would occur.

c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

No Impact. The proposed project would not affect any airport operations and would not expose people on- or off-site to excessive noise levels. The proposed project would not affect any airstrip operations. Thus, implementing the proposed project would not expose people on- or off-site to excessive noise levels. No impact would occur.

3.14 POPULATION AND HOUSING

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIV. Population and Housing.				
Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.14.1 Environmental Setting

EID serves approximately 126,000 residents in El Dorado County, including residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural users. The Buyers serve thousands of acres of farmland as well as M&I uses south of the Delta.

3.14.2 Discussion

a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

No Impact. The proposed project would not result in a long-term or permanent water supply that would allow construction of new homes or businesses or extension of roadways or other infrastructure that could increase the population in the vicinity of the proposed project. Implementing the proposed project would not directly or indirectly induce substantial population growth. The proposed project could prevent agricultural land from becoming fallowed, but it would not expand agricultural activities beyond existing levels. No impact would occur.

b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

No Impact. Implementation of the proposed project would not displace existing people or housing or necessitate construction of replacement housing elsewhere. No impact would occur.

3.15 PUBLIC SERVICES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XV. Public Services.				
Would the project:				
a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
Fire protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Police protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Schools?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Parks?	☐	☐	☒	☐
Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.15.1 Environmental Setting

The EID reservoirs relevant to the proposed project are located within unincorporated areas of El Dorado, Alpine, and Amador counties, and are within the jurisdiction of the Sheriff's departments and fire protection districts of those counties. CAL FIRE, county sheriff, and city police departments, and fire protection districts provide emergency services in the Buyers' service areas.

School districts in the vicinity of the EID lakes and reservoirs include Pollock Pines Elementary School District, Camino Union School District, and Gold Oak Elementary School District. Numerous school districts are located in the Buyers' service areas.

EID owns and operates several recreational facilities, including facilities at Jenkinson Lake (Sly Park Recreation Area), Caples Lake, and Silver Lake. Weber Reservoir has no recreation facilities or public access. There are also a number of recreational areas located in the Buyers' service areas.

3.15.2 Discussion

a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

Fire protection?

No Impact. The proposed project would not generate new residents and it would not include construction of any structures that would increase the demand for fire protection services. No impact would occur.

Police protection?

No Impact: The proposed project would not involve any activities that would result in an increase in demand for law enforcement services. The proposed water transfer would not result in the construction of any new housing, businesses, or other development that would increase demand for police protection services and facilities. No impact would occur.

Schools?

No Impact: The proposed project would not provide any new housing that would generate new students in the community. Therefore, the proposed project would not increase the demand for school services and facilities. No impact would occur.

Parks?

Less-than-Significant Impact: The proposed project would not provide any new housing that would generate new residents who would require new or expanded park facilities. The proposed project would temporarily draw down water levels in Jenkinson Lake within Sly Park Recreation Area by up to 3,550 AF; however, water levels would not drop below historic levels and any impacts to recreational opportunities at the lake would be minimal. Water levels at Caples Lake and Silver Lake would be the same with or without the project, and Weber Reservoir is not open to the public for recreational uses. No impact on recreational areas in the Buyers' service areas would occur since the project would not provide a permanent supply of water for new park facilities and/or support a permanent change in population increasing the demand for park facilities. The impact would be less than significant.

Other public facilities?

No Impact: Because the proposed project would use existing infrastructure and all operations and agricultural and M&I activities would occur within historical ranges, the project would not result in an increase in demand for public facilities. As part of the proposed project, EID and the Buyers would enter into a refill/conveyance agreement with DWR, in coordination with Reclamation, for Weber Reservoir and Jenkinson Lake with conditions acceptable to all parties. There would be no impact.

3.16 RECREATION

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVI. Recreation.				
Would the project:				
a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.16.1 Environmental Setting

EID owns and operates several recreational facilities, including facilities at Jenkinson, Caples, and Silver lakes. Sly Park Recreation Area at Jenkinson Lake includes 640 surface acres of water, 10 picnic areas, 9 miles of shoreline, hiking and equestrian trails, two boat ramps, 191 individual campsites, and six group camping areas. Water skiing, wake boarding, canoeing, kayaking, fishing, cruising, and sailing are allowed within Jenkinson Lake. In 2022, Sly Park Recreation Area had over 800,000 visitors (EID 2022b). Day use and hiking trails are also available around Caples and Silver lakes, and fishing and boating are allowed within these lakes.

The SFAR provides rafting, kayaking, and fishing opportunities, and trails in the vicinity provide opportunities for hiking, running, mountain biking, and equestrian use. Several recreational areas are located in the Buyers' service areas including state parks, city and county parks, and wildlife refuges.

3.16.2 Discussion

a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?

No Impact: Implementing the proposed project would not cause physical deterioration of existing recreational facilities. The proposed project could result in temporary lower elevation levels in Jenkinson Lake and Weber Reservoir and slightly increased flows downstream of Weber Reservoir (but within historical levels) during the transfer period, but primarily spread over July, August, and September (see Tables 3-1, 3-2, 3-3 and Figures 3-1 and 3-2 in Section 3.4, "Biological Resources"). Given the small scale of the project and short-term nature of the water transfer, these temporary changes would not result in significant or permanent impacts to recreational uses. No impact on recreational facilities or uses in the Buyers' service areas would occur. The proposed project would not introduce new housing or employment opportunities, and thus it would not contribute to increased use of existing regional or local parks, marinas, or other recreational facilities, causing their deterioration. There would be no impact.

b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

No Impact: No recreational facilities are proposed, and the project would not require the construction or expansion of existing recreational facilities. The temporary water transfer would occur primarily during August and September and would result in slightly increased flows downstream of Weber Reservoir and the SFAR downstream of the El Dorado Diversion Dam and El Dorado Powerhouse. However such releases would remain within historical levels. The proposed project would not have a substantial adverse effect on recreation. EID recreation facilities and recreation opportunities downstream of the lakes and reservoirs would continue with the proposed project, and the proposed project would involve a relatively small amount of water that would be transferred over a short duration of time. No impact on recreational areas in the Buyers' service areas would occur. There would be no impact.

3.17 TRANSPORTATION

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVII. Transportation.				
Would the project:				
a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.17.1 Environmental Setting

Roads in the vicinity of the EID reservoirs include Weber Road near Weber Reservoir; Sly Park Road, Mormon Emigrant Trail, Lakewood Drive, and Lakewood Lane around Jenkinson Lake; State Route 88 near Caples and Silver lakes, and Kit Carson, Kays, West Lake, and Plasse roads around Silver Lake. Numerous interstates, highways, and local roadways are located throughout the Buyers' service areas.

3.17.2 Discussion

a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?

No Impact: The proposed project would not conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, nor would it otherwise decrease the performance of such facilities. No impact would occur.

b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3(b), which pertains to vehicle miles travelled?

No Impact. The proposed project would not result in construction activities that would increase vehicle miles travelled (VMT) in the short-term. In addition, the proposed water transfer would not result in long-term changes in land uses or new facilities that would cause increases in VMT. Therefore, the project would have no impact related to increases in VMT.

c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

No Impact. The proposed project would not include any changes to roadway design or introduce incompatible uses. Thus, the project would not increase any roadway hazards or change the safety of the local transportation network. No impact would occur.

d) Result in inadequate emergency access?

No Impact. Implementation of the proposed project would not require any road closures and no traffic flow would be interrupted on any roadway. The proposed project would not impair or interfere with emergency access to local roads and would not result in traffic delays that could substantially increase emergency response times or reduce emergency vehicle access. No impact would occur.

3.18 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVIII. Tribal Cultural Resources.				
Has a California Native American Tribe requested consultation in accordance with Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1(b)?	☐ Yes			☒ No
Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
a) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.18.1 Environmental Setting

The EID service area is situated in the ethnographic territory of the Nisenan, Miwok, and Southern Valley Yokuts Tribes. More specifically, the project extends through Eastern Miwok territory and the southern extent of Nisenan territory (Levy 1978: Figure 1; Wallace 1978: Figure 1; Wilson and Towne 1978: Figure 1). Most tribes in central California, including the Miwok and Nisenan, had similar subsistence-settlement patterns, material culture, and social structures. Southern Valley Yokuts had different subsistence patterns than the Miwok and Nisenan, which is not surprising given the different environments, though political units were very similar in size.

AB 52 CONSULTATION

AB 52, signed by Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr., in September 2014, established a new class of resources under CEQA: "tribal cultural resources." AB 52, as provided in PRC Section 21080.3.1, 21080.3.2, and 21082.3, requires that, within 14 days of determining that an application for a project is complete, the lead agency undertaking CEQA review shall, upon written request of a California Native American Tribe, formally notify the tribal representative that the tribe has 30 days to request consultation. If consultation is requested, it shall begin prior to the release of a negative declaration, mitigated negative declaration, or environmental impact report.

PRC 21074 states the following:

a) "Tribal cultural resources" are either of the following:

   1) Sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either of the following:

A) Included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the CRHR.

B) Included in a local register of historical resources as defined in subdivision (k) of Section 5020.1.

2) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1 for the purposes of this paragraph, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

b) A cultural landscape that meets the criteria of subdivision (a) is a tribal cultural resource to the extent that the landscape is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape.

c) A historical resource described in Section 21084.1, a unique archaeological resource as defined in subdivision (g) of Section 21083.2, or a "nonunique archaeological resource" as defined in subdivision (h) of Section 21083.2 may also be a tribal cultural resource if it conforms with the criteria of subdivision (a).

AB 52 applies to those projects for which a lead agency had issued a notice of preparation of an EIR or notice of intent to adopt a negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration on or after July 1, 2015. Therefore, the requirements of AB 52 apply to the proposed project.

Under AB 52, the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians, United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria, Wopumnes Nisenan-Mewuk Nation of El Dorado County, and Wilton Rancheria have requested EID, as a CEQA lead agency, formally notify them of any proposed projects within their geographic area of traditional and cultural affiliation. EID sent formal notification of the project to these tribes on March 25, 2024. No responses from tribes were received.

3.18.2 Discussion

Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:

a) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k)?

and

b) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe?

No Impact. No Tribal Cultural Resources have been identified in the project area, and no ground-disturbing activities are proposed with the project. In addition, it is not anticipated that the proposed project would cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a Tribal Cultural Resource given that changes in lake and reservoir water levels and streamflow levels as a result of the water transfer would be within historical ranges, water would be transferred using existing waterways and infrastructure, and water delivered to the Buyers would be used to maintain existing agricultural activities and supply existing M&I water users. There would be **no impact**.

3.19 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIX. Utilities and Service Systems.				
Would the project:				
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand, in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.19.1 Environmental Setting

EID serves approximately 126,000 residents in El Dorado County and the Buyers serve hundreds of thousands of acres of agricultural land as well as M&I uses in various counties. As described above in Section 3.6, "Energy," the 21-megawatt El Dorado Hydroelectric Project is located on the SFAR and its tributaries, and on Echo Creek, a tributary to the Upper Truckee River, in El Dorado, Alpine, and Amador counties, and includes Silver Lake and Caples Lake. Power generated at the El Dorado Powerhouse is delivered to the PG&E transmission system at the El Dorado Powerhouse switchyard.

3.19.2 Discussion

a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?

No Impact: The proposed project would not include changes to water treatment requirements for EID or the Buyers. The proposed project would not require wastewater service. Thus, expansion of existing or construction of new water or wastewater facilities would not be required. In addition, the project would not increase demand for natural gas or

telecommunication facilities. As discussed in Section 3.6, "Energy," the proposed water transfer would require pumping to transfer the water. However, the project would not require any new or expanded electrical facilities. There would be no impact.

b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?

Less-than-Significant Impact: No new water supplies would be required for the proposed project. In addition, the proposed project would not include any new development that would require public water supplies. Thus, no new or expanded water supply entitlements would be needed. The proposed project would provide up to 4,300 AF to the Buyers in 2024 to augment their water supply based on the reduced allocation of their CVP and SWP contract water and/or other water supply shortages. The water would be used within the Buyers' service areas in support of ongoing agricultural and/or M&I uses. EID would enter into a refill/conveyance agreements with DWR and Reclamation, as appropriate, for Weber Reservoir and Jenkinson Lake with conditions acceptable to all parties to ensure the proposed project would have minimal or no effect on EID's ability to meet future water demand obligations. The impact would be less than significant.

c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand, in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

No Impact: The proposed project would not increase wastewater generation. Thus, the proposed project would not exceed a wastewater treatment provider's capacity. No impact would occur.

d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?

No Impact: The project is not expected to result in an increase in solid waste generation such that local standards or the capacity of local infrastructure would be exceeded. The project would not otherwise impair attainment of solid waste reduction goals. No impact would occur.

e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

No Impact: The project is not expected to generate solid waste that would need to comply with regulations and reduction statutes. No impact would occur.

3.20 WILDFIRE

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XX. Wildfire.				
Is the project located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as high fire hazard severity zones?				
If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:		☒ Yes		☐ No
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Require the installation of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.20.1 Environmental Setting

The CAL FIRE classifies the areas near the EID lakes and reservoirs that are part of the project as high to very high fire hazard severity zones. Moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity zones are mapped within the Buyers' service areas (CAL FIRE 2024).

3.20.2 Discussion

a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

No Impact. Implementation of the proposed project would not require any road closures and no traffic flow would be significantly interrupted on any roadway. The proposed project would not impair or interfere with emergency access to local roads and would not result in traffic delays that could substantially increase emergency response times or reduce emergency vehicle access. In addition, the project would not alter potential emergency evacuation routes or impair an adopted emergency plan. **No impact** would occur.

b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

No Impact. The proposed project does not include any new housing or other land uses where the public would congregate; there would be no new project occupants that could be exposed to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire. No impact would occur.

c) Require the installation of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?

No Impact. In the event of a fire, existing access roads could be used to accommodate fire-fighting crews and equipment. No other infrastructure (such as roads, emergency water sources, power lines, or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment are proposed. No impact would occur.

d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

No Impact. The proposed project does not have the potential to expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects from post-fire flooding, landslides, or slope instability. The water transfer would not require construction of any new structures. The lakes, reservoirs, and waterways involved would be operated within the range of historical conditions. Water would be transferred with the proposed project via existing waterways and infrastructure and would be used for continued agricultural and/or M&I uses in the Buyers' service areas. Therefore, it would not place people or structures in an area with risks related to post-wildfire flooding, landslides, slope instability, or drainage changes. No impact would occur.

3.21 PUBLIC TRUST RESOURCES

Under the public trust doctrine, certain resources are held to be the property of all citizens and subject to continuing supervision by the State. Public trust resources may include, but are not limited to, fish, wildlife, other aquatic dependent species, riparian areas, and recreation. This IS evaluates potential impacts from the proposed water transfer on public trust resources. All impacts were found to be less than significant, or there would not be any impact at all. No mitigation measures are required because the water transfer has been proposed according to existing laws and regulations and no impacts (direct, indirect, or cumulative) were found to be significant or potentially significant. The ability to transfer water from a user with temporary water supplies to another user in need of additional water supplies has been recognized and encouraged by the State of California. The proposed project can be implemented without causing any unreasonable impacts to fish, wildlife, and other instream beneficial uses. Therefore, the proposed project is compatible with and complies with the public trust doctrine.

3.22 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XXII. Mandatory Findings of Significance.				
a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☐	☒	☐

3.22.1 Discussion

a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

Less-than-Significant Impact. The analysis conducted in this IS concludes that implementation of the proposed project would not have a significant impact on the environment. As evaluated in Section 3.4, "Biological Resources," impacts on biological resources would be less than significant. Therefore, the proposed project would not substantially degrade the quality of the environment; substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species; cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels; threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community; or reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened species.

As discussed in Section 3.5, "Cultural Resources," the proposed project would not eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory and there would be no impact on cultural resources. Overall, this impact would be **less than significant**.

b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)

Less-than-Significant Impact: As discussed in this IS, the proposed project would result in less-than-significant impacts or no impacts on aesthetics, agricultural and forestry resources, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, energy, geology and soils, GHG emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation, tribal cultural resources, utilities and services systems, and wildfire.

The temporary nature of the proposed project, with short-term, minimal changes in hydrology and no construction activities or long-term operations and maintenance activities, would result in no impact or less-than-significant impacts on the physical environment. None of the proposed project's impacts make cumulatively considerable, incremental contributions to significant cumulative impacts. To the contrary, the proposed project provides benefits to agricultural production by keeping more highly productive farmland in production while providing slightly higher flows in several streams within the American River watershed. Overall, these are beneficial effects and can be conducted without significant direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts. This impact would be **less than significant**.

c) Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

Less-than-Significant Impact: The proposed project would result in less-than-significant impacts and would not cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. The impact would be **less than significant**.

4 REFERENCES

1 Introduction

No citations were used in this chapter.

2 Project Description

California Department of Water Resources. 2019 (November 22). Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Long-Term Operation of the California State Water Project. State Clearinghouse (SCH) No. 2019049121. Sacramento, CA. Available: https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/2019049121

California Department of Water Resources and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. 2016 (December). *Bay Delta Conservation Plan/California Waterfix Final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement.* Figure ES-1. Available: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/bay_delta/california_waterfix/exhibits/exhibit102/exhibit102_vol1.html Sacramento, CA. Accessed: February 2020.DWR. *See* California Department of Water Resources.

DWR and Reclamation. *See* California Department of Water Resources and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

El Dorado Irrigation District (EID). 2005. Memorandum of Understanding between EID and CDFW regarding the Proposed Operation of Weber Reservoir on Weber Creek in El Dorado County and the Proposed Petition to Change Place and Purpose ·of Use and to add Folsom Reservoir as Point Of Rediversion Under the Weber Reservoir Water Right License.

_____. 2015. Initial Study/Proposed Negative Declaration 2015 El Dorado Irrigation District to Westlands Water District Temporary Water Transfer Project. Prepared by AECOM. June 2015. SCH No. 2015062065. Available: https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/2015062065

_____. 2018. Initial Study/Proposed Negative Declaration 2018 EID Temporary Water Transfer to Dudley Ridge Water District and Kern County Water Agency Project. Prepared by GEI Consultants, Inc. May 2018. SCH No. 2018052052. Available: https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/2018052052

_____. 2020. Initial Study/Proposed Negative Declaration 2020 El Dorado Irrigation District Temporary Water Transfer Project. Prepared by Ascent Environmental, Inc. March 2020. SCH No. 2020039045. Available: https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/2020039045

_____. 2022. Notice of Exemption Weber Reservoir Reoperation Temporary Water Transfer. Filed with El Dorado County Clerk on July 14, 2022. Available: https://recorderclerkservice.edcgov.us/elweb/document/DOC637S1407?search=DOCSEARCH201S1

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. 2006 (October). El Dorado Irrigation District Project No. 184-065 Order Issuing New License.

League to Save Sierra Lakes. 2004. Settlement Agreement and Release for All Claims between the League to Save Sierra Lakes and Aligned Parties and the El Dorado Irrigation District, El Dorado County Water Agency, and AKT Development Corporation.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 2019. Biological Opinion for the Reinitiation of Consultation on the Coordinated Operations of the Central Valley Project and State Water Project. 10-19-2019. Service File No. 08FBTD00-2019-F-0164. Available: https://www.fws.gov/project/central-valley-project-and-california-state-water-project-consultation

U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service. 2019. Biological Opinion on Long-term Operation of the Central

Valley Project and the State Water Project. 10-21-2019. Consultation Tracking Number: WCRO-2016-00069. Available: https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/biological-opinion-reinitiation-consultation-long-term-operation-central-valley

Water Education Foundation (WEF). 2024. State Water Project. Available: https://www.watereducation.org/aquapedia/state-water-project.

3 Environmental Checklist

AECOM. 2023. Rainbow Trout Monitoring 2022 El Dorado Hydroelectric Project FERC Project No. 184. Prepared for El Dorado Irrigation District. May 2023. Available: https://www.eid.org/home/showpublisheddocument/15951/638205132402870000.

California Air Resources Board. 2022. State and National Area Designation Maps. Available: https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/state-and-federal-area-designations/state-area-designations. Accessed: May 24, 2024.

California Department of Conservation. 2003. Important Mineral Resource Areas. Figure CO-1 in El Dorado County General Plan, Adopted July 19, 2004. Available: https://www.eldoradocounty.ca.gov/Land-Use/Planning-Services/Plans-Documents/Adopted-General-Plan Accessed May 24, 2024.

———. 2022. Mineral Lands Classification Mapper. Available: https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/informationwarehouse/index.html?map=mlc. Accessed May 24, 2024.

———. 2020. California Important Farmland Mapper. Available: https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/DLRP/CIFF/. Accessed May 24, 2024.

———. 2022 (November). *The California Land Conservation Act of 1965: 2022 Status Report.* Available: https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/wa/Documents/WA_Enrollment_Reporting11.17.22.pdf. Accessed May 24, 2024.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2020. Caples Creek Angler Survey Box Results. Available: https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=189093&inline.

_____. 2024a. California Data Exchange Center. Streamflow data for the American River at Fair Oaks (AFO) for 2022. Available: https://cdec.water.ca.gov/jspplot/jspPlotServlet.jsp?sensor_no=8249&end=&geom=&interval=&cookies=. Accessed June 4, 2024.

_____. 2024b. California Data Exchange Center. Streamflow data for the American River at Fair Oaks (AFO) for 2021. https://cdec.water.ca.gov/jspplot/jspPlotServlet.jsp?sensor_no=8249&end=&geom=&interval=&cookies=. Accessed June 4, 2024.

California Department of Toxic Substances Control. 2024. Envirostor Database. Available: http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/. Accessed May 24, 2024.

California Department of Transportation. 2024. California State Scenic Highway System Map. Available: https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/lap-landscape-architecture-and-community-livability/lap-liv-i-scenic-highways. Accessed May 24, 2024.

California Natural Resources Agency. 2012. *Our Changing Climate 2012, Vulnerability and Adaptation to the Increasing Risk from Climate Change in California.* Available: http://www.energy.ca.gov/2012publications/CEC-500-2012-007/CEC-500-2012-007.pdf. Accessed March 5, 2020.

California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA). 2024 National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. American (Lower), California. Available: http://www.rivers.gov/rivers/american-lower.php. Accessed May 24, 2024.

El Dorado Irrigation District. (EID). 2005. Memorandum of Understanding between EID and CDFW regarding the Proposed Operation of Weber Reservoir on Weber Creek in El Dorado County and the Proposed Petition to

Change Place and Purpose ·of Use and to add Folsom Reservoir as Point Of Rediversion Under the Weber Reservoir Water Right License.

_____. 2015. Initial Study/Proposed Negative Declaration 2015 El Dorado Irrigation District to Westlands Water District Temporary Water Transfer Project. Prepared by AECOM. June 2015. SCH No. 2015062065. Available: https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/2015062065

_____. 2018. Initial Study/Proposed Negative Declaration 2018 EID Temporary Water Transfer to Dudley Ridge Water District and Kern County Water Agency Project. Prepared by GEI Consultants, Inc. May 2018. SCH No. 2018052052. Available: https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/2018052052

_____. 2020. Initial Study/Proposed Negative Declaration 2020 El Dorado Irrigation District Temporary Water Transfer Project. Prepared by Ascent Environmental, Inc. March 2020. SCH No. 2020039045. Available: https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/2020039045

_____. 2022a. Notice of Exemption Weber Reservoir Reoperation Temporary Water Transfer. Filed with El Dorado County Clerk on July 14, 2022. Available: https://recorderclerkservice.edcgov.us/elweb/document/DOC637S1407?search=DOCSEARCH201S1

———. 2023. El Dorado Irrigation District 2018 Water Quality Report. Available: https://www.eid.org/home/showpublisheddocument/16999/638502551440730000.

———. 2022b. *Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the Years Ended December 31, 2022 and 2021.* Available: https://www.eid.org/home/showpublisheddocument/16851/638441242430870000.

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. 2006 (October). El Dorado Irrigation District Project No. 184-065 Order Issuing New License.

Garcia and Associates. 2018. *Rainbow Trout Monitoring El Dorado Hydroelectric Project (FERC Project No. 184)*. Prepared for El Dorado Irrigation District. February 2018. Available: https://www.eid.org/home/showdocument?id=9785.Kleinfelder. 2022 (February). *2022 Sierra Nevada Yellow-Legged Frog Monitoring. El Dorado Hydroelectric Project, FERC No. 184.* Prepared for El Dorado Irrigation District. Placerville, CA. Available: https://www.eid.org/home/showpublisheddocument/15957/638205133031970000.

Levy, R. 1978. Eastern Miwok. In Handbook of North American Indians, Vol. 8, edited by Robert F. Heizer, 398-461413. Smithsonian Institution. Washington, D.C.

Moyle, P. B. 2002. Inland Fishes of California. University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA.

Reclamation. 2024a. Projects & Facilities. Available: https://www.usbr.gov/projects/index.php?id=74

_____. 2024b. Jones Pumping Plant Fact Sheet. Available: https://www.usbr.gov/mp/mpr-news/docs/factsheets/jones-pumping-plant.pdf

Stantec 2024. Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Sly Park Intertie Improvements Project. January 2024. Prepared for: El Dorado Irrigation District. Prepared by: Stantec Consulting Services Inc. Available: https://www.eid.org/about-us/project-updates/sly-park-intertie-improvements

State Water Resources Control Board. 2024. Geotracker Database. Available at: http://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/. Accessed May 24, 2024.

Wallace, William J. 1978. Southern Valley Yokuts. In Handbook of North American Indians, Vol. 8, edited by Robert F. Heizer, 448-461. Smithsonian Institution. Washington, D.C.

Wilson, N.L. and A.H. Towne. 1978. Nisenan. In Handbook of North American Indians, Vol. 8, edited by Robert F. Heizer, 387-397. Smithsonian Institution. Washington, D.C.