



Topic: **Authority Board Agenda Item 6-6**

2019 June 24

Subject: **Environmental Analysis & Permitting – 2019
Geotechnical Evaluations**

Requested Action:

Consider ~~approval to release the Notice of Exemption for authorizing the General Manager to approve~~ the **North of Delta Offstream Storage/Sites Reservoir Feasibility Geotechnical Investigations** ~~and release a Notice of Exemption~~ consistent with comments from the Environmental Work Group, Reservoir Committee recommendations and concurrence from the Sites Project Authority's Coordination Committee.

Detailed Description/Background:

The Reservoir Committee, at their June 20, 2019 meeting, considered this item with any action to be reported at the Authority's June 24, 2019 meeting.

Since the May 17, 2019 Reservoir Committee meeting, staff have continued to coordinate with Reclamation on the scope of work associated with conducting geotechnical evaluations of soil and bedrock characteristics that are important to reduce cost uncertainties in the estimate of the project's construction costs, which is a part of the federal Feasibility Report. Locations for these geotechnical evaluations have been selected to provide additional information at key Sites Project facilities while avoiding and minimizing impacts to environmental and cultural resources, as well as current agricultural and wildlife refuge practices.

Based on continued efforts to better define the scope of work for the collection of additional geotechnical data and to better analyze the potential effects associated with this field data collection, ~~impacts have been determined to be localized, temporary, and minor. As such, the Geotechnical Investigations meet the criteria for a Categorical Exemption pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15304 and 15306 and~~ staff is now preparing a Notice of Exemption. Similarly, Reclamation, plans to complete a Categorical Exclusion. Preparation of the Notice of Exemption (and parallel NEPA Categorical Exclusion) and permit applications are nearly complete. The Environmental Work Group reviewed the CEQA Notice of Exemption. A recommendation from that Work Group will be provided at the June 20, 2019 Reservoir Committee meeting. Additional AB52 consultation which could potentially affect local tribal resources has been initiated.

Prior Authority Board Action:

The Reservoir Committee, at their May 17, 2019 meeting:

CEQA: Approved a recommendation to publish the revised Draft Initial Study consistent with the comments and edits provided by the 2019 Ad Hoc Environmental and Permitting Work Group. Similarly, the Sites Project Authority, at their May 21, 2019 meeting, approved a recommendation to delegate release of this document to the Coordination

Status:	Subject to Change	Preparer:	Forsythe	Phase:	2	Version:	B
Purpose:	Sites Authority Board Staff Report	Checker:	Watson	Date:	2019 June 21		
Caveat:	Informational	QA/QC:		Ref/File #:	12.221		
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Committee pending the Committee's review of the version that has been approved by the 2019 Ad Hoc Environmental and Permitting Work Group.

Progress and Information reports were provided at both the March 22, and April 18, 2019, Reservoir Committee meetings.

Permit Applications: Approved a recommendation to submit the applicable permit applications and fees consistent with the comments and edits provided by the 2019 Ad Hoc Environmental and Permitting Work Group. Similarly, the Sites Project Authority, at their May 21, 2019 meeting, approved a recommendation to delegate submission of the permit applications to the Coordination Committee pending their review of the version that has been approved by the 2019 Ad Hoc Environmental and Permitting Work Group.

Fiscal Impact/Funding Source:

None.

Staff Contact:

Ali Forsythe/Rob Thomson/Kevin Spesert

Attachments: None.