

Project Information Sheet

Upper San Joaquin River Basin Storage Investigation

Project Name: Upper San Joaquin River Basin Storage Investigation

Project Lead: Reclamation

Relationship with Tribes The Bureau of Reclamation is a federal agency under the U.S. Department of Interior. As an Executive Branch agency, Reclamation acknowledges and affirms the special relationship between the United States and Federally recognized Indian tribes; Reclamation also has a trust responsibility to such tribes to evaluate the potential impacts of its undertakings on Indian trust assets and to consult with federally recognized tribes when such evaluations reveal impacts that may occur to those assets.

Location: The upper San Joaquin River basin includes the San Joaquin River and tributary lands upstream of its confluence with the Merced River. The area of focus for the feasibility study includes the Eastern portion of the San Joaquin and Tulare Lake hydrologic regions, from the Merced River into the southern limit of the valley.

Purpose: Develop additional storage in the upper San Joaquin watershed through the enlargement of Millerton Lake at Friant Dam or a functionally equivalent storage program in the region.

Benefits: Contribute to ecosystem restoration and improve water quality in the San Joaquin River, increase water supply reliability in the CALFED solution area, and increase flood protection downstream of Friant Dam.

Features to be Constructed: Several options still under consideration.

How It Works: In general terms, San Joaquin River water could be stored either in surface water reservoirs or in groundwater and a variety of approaches are available for either of these two methods. For example, San Joaquin River water could be directly stored in reservoirs on the San Joaquin River, as would be accomplished by raising Friant Dam, in potential off-stream reservoirs in the San Joaquin River basin, or in potential off-canal reservoirs served by the Madera or Friant-Kern canals.

Storage of San Joaquin River water could also be achieved through exchanges with stored water from other watersheds. In this case, water from another watershed could be captured and held so that water from Millerton Lake could be released earlier for delivery to areas otherwise served by other watersheds, thereby lowering storage levels and allowing the capture of more San Joaquin River water. The water captured in the other watersheds would then be used for later delivery.

Groundwater storage could be accomplished by several methods: increasing deliveries to existing water users in the Friant Division in lieu of groundwater pumping; increasing the rate of groundwater recharge; and developing groundwater banks that would accept water during wet years and make it available during dry years.

Interested Federally Recognized Tribes:

Big Sandy Rancheria of Mono Indians
Picayune Rancheria of Chukchansi Indians
Table Mountain Rancheria
Northfork Rancheria of Mono Indians
Cold Springs Rancheria of Mono Indians
Santa Rosa Indian Community of the Santa Rosa Rancheria

Opportunities for Tribal Participation:

1. All tribes can request from the lead agency to be placed on mailing lists to receive notices of public meetings, public workshops and public hearings about CALFED projects.
2. All tribes can provide comment at public meetings, public workshops and give testimony at public hearings about CALFED projects.
3. All tribes can obtain copies of Environmental Impact Statements/Environmental Impact Reports to review and provide written comments about their contents.
4. All tribes can review CALFED lead agency internet sites on CALFED projects and provide input by email.
5. All tribes can contact the CALFED lead agency, project contact, identified on this sheet for project information updates.
6. All tribes can participate in compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as an interested party, relating tribal concerns about possible adverse effects to historic and Traditional Cultural Properties.
7. Federally recognized tribal governments can be engaged in the planning and development of specific CALFED projects in their areas by CALFED lead agencies.
8. CALFED Agencies can and will consult with federally recognized tribal governments on a government-to-government basis, to the extent permitted by law, prior to taking actions that affect such tribal governments.

9. Upon request, federally recognized tribes can enter into Memorandums of Understanding with CALFED Agencies to specify how the federal, state and tribal governments will work together, on a government-to-government basis, in developing CALFED projects.

10. Lead federal agencies encourage federally recognized tribal governments to seek Cooperating Agency status, via agreement, when there is potential that the proposed CALFED project may have a direct effect on trust resources. Such status provides for the tribe opportunity to bring their expertise and knowledge to the development of environmental compliance documents, as they relate to trust resources.

Use of Information : Information about specific CALFED projects provided by CALFED project lead agencies is intended to be used by tribes to formulate their own opinions about (1) the social, economic and environmental worthiness of the specific undertaking, (2) the potential impact such an undertaking may have on the character, use or nature of trust assets, and (3) to convey the tribe's opinions to the lead agency for analysis.

Schedule:

1. Public Scoping Meetings, March 15-18, 2004;
2. Alternatives Report, August 2004;
3. Plan Formulation Report, August 2006;
4. Draft Feasibility Study and EIS/EIR, December 2007;
5. Final Feasibility Study and EIS/EIR, December 2008

Project Website: www.usbr.gov/mp/sccao/storage

Project Contact: Bureau of Reclamation, Mr. Jason Phillips, 916\ 978-5070, jphillips@mp.usbr.gov