



Sites Reservoir awarded \$80 million in federal funds

January 4, 2023

Officials said Wednesday that the Sites Reservoir project, which could provide 1.5 million acre-feet of additional water storage capacity, was awarded \$80 million in federal funding from the Bureau of Reclamation via the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act.

This federal initiative provides grants for water supply infrastructure that promotes drought resilience for rural communities and agriculture, urban areas, public health and the environment.

The project, which has been in the works for more than 60 years, hopes to turn the Sites Valley, located 10 miles west of Maxwell where Colusa and Glenn counties meet, into a state-of-the-art off-stream water storage facility that captures and stores stormwater flows in the Sacramento River – after all other water rights and regulatory requirements are met – for release in dry and critical years for environmental use and for communities, farms and businesses statewide to utilize when needed, the Appeal previously reported.

“Thanks to the continued support of our federal elected officials and Commissioner (Camille) Touton, we are maintaining momentum on Sites Reservoir and advancing critical project milestones,” Fritz Durst, chairman of the Sites Project Authority, said in a statement on Wednesday. “Sites will help ensure California has a reliable water supply in the face of prolonged drought uncertainty.”

In the fall of 2022, Sites Reservoir was awarded \$30 million in funding from the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. With the money that has been awarded, the project now has received more than \$214 million in federal funding through the Bureau of Reclamation. Officials said the Sites Project Authority also was invited to apply for a

\$2.2 billion low-interest loan through the Environmental Protection Agency's Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) program earlier this year.

Along with increasing the state's water storage capacity, the Sites Reservoir project will be able to provide water during drought years by saving it when it's abundant from wet years and major storm events, officials said

"It's time we manage water differently in California. More of the same will not provide relief from severe drought – but Sites Reservoir is a new source of drought year water that will provide tangible benefits to California's environment, people and farms," Durst said.

The Sites Reservoir Project is locally led by the Sites Project Authority which is made up of Sacramento Valley water districts, cities, and counties.

"Sites is an off-stream reservoir proposed north of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, where it would provide unique water supply and environmental benefits during dry periods, especially during extended drought," officials said.

Additional information can be found at www.sitesproject.org or on social media.

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https://www.appeal-democrat.com/news/sites-reservoir-awarded-80-million-in-federal-funds/article_89d6b7ea-8c9a-11ed-8614-fbe150fd684f.html?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery