



LOCAL NEWS

Sites Project Authority certifies Sites Reservoir's final environmental report

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SACRAMENTO - An important milestone was reached Friday for the construction of another reservoir in California. The Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for Sites Reservoir was certified and the Sites Reservoir Project was approved by the Sites Project Authority, the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act.

Next up for the Sites Project Authority is to move the project through the final planning stages. After getting through the final stages, crews will begin building the reservoir.

"Over the last six years, we conducted one of the most comprehensive environmental analyses ever done for a water supply project to design a project that can meet the needs of California's communities, farms, and environment," said Fritz Durst, Chair of the Sites Project Authority Board of Directors, in a statement.

The Sites Project says the final EIR evaluates the environmental impact and proposed mitigation measures that come with construction and operations.

It was updated to address public comments and updates to the project following a draft that was released in 2021.

Earlier this month, the [final plans were released](#) by the Bureau of Reclamation and Sites Project Authority.

When the final plans were released, there was opposition to the project as some questioned how much water would be left in the Sacramento River. Those in opposition commented Friday, saying the project would be harmful to the Delta, the climate crisis and the water future.

"Restoring the San Francisco Bay-Delta must include restoration of in-stream flows to support recovery of native fish and wildlife, and protect water quality for local communities," said Sierra Club Senior Policy Strategist Erin Wooley. "Sites Reservoir is an expensive and environmentally destructive proposal whose cost will be paid by

taxpayers, water users in Southern California and the species the project claims to benefit."

The Sites Project Authority said the reservoir would supply water throughout California while also storing water to support native wildlife during drought periods.

Sites Reservoir would store water from the Sacramento River and would increase Northern California's water storage capacity by up to 15%. It would also create 1.5 million acre-feet of off-stream storage.

The project is estimated to cost \$3.9 billion. According to the project's timeline, construction could begin in early 2025.

Sites Reservoir would be about 81 miles northwest of Sacramento, just west of Maxwell in Colusa County.

The final EIR can be found online by [clicking here](#).

[Brandon Downs](#): Brandon comes to CBS13 from Action News Now (KHSL/KNVN) in Chico where he spent two years as the Digital Content Manager.

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