

THIS JUST IN ... Reclamation and Sites Project Authority finalize plans to create new water storage in Northern California

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Sites Reservoir would increase California’s existing water supply by providing 1.5 million acre-feet of additional storage capacity to the state during times of drought

Today, the Bureau of Reclamation and Sites Project Authority released final plans to create new off-stream water storage in the Sacramento Valley. The proposed reservoir—Sites—would be the second largest off-stream reservoir in the nation and would increase Northern California’s water storage capacity by up to 15 percent.

“Investing in Western water infrastructure is a top priority for Reclamation and the Biden Administration as witnessed by the commitment of funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law,” said **Commissioner Camille Calimlim Touton**. “We are proud to support projects that will provide operational flexibility and more reliable water delivery to benefit farms, communities, and the environment. We stand in partnership with the State of California and the JPA with projects like Sites Reservoir.”

“This is a really big step forward for the Sites project and another example of how state and federal agencies are working together to build our water resilience amidst climate change,” said **California Natural Resources Secretary Wade Crowfoot**. “Sites Reservoir promises to help us adjust to intensifying floods and droughts by storing water in big, wet winters like we just had for use during the dry years that we know will return. The environmental review that has just been completed for the project will guide how this project can operate in alignment with existing water and environmental management, as well as other water infrastructure. We have no time to waste to put these climate solutions into place.”

President Biden’s Investing in America agenda represents the largest investment in climate resilience in the nation’s history and is providing much-needed resources to enhance Western communities’ resilience to drought and climate change. Through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, Reclamation is investing a total of \$8.3 billion over five years for water infrastructure projects, including water storage and conveyance, dam safety, water purification and reuse, and desalination.

A \$30 million investment to the project under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law was announced in October 2022 and an additional \$30 million in July 2023. The project was also authorized \$173.7 million from the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act, for a total of \$233.7 million in federal contributions to date.

Located 81 miles northwest of Sacramento, Sites Reservoir would store water diverted from the Sacramento River, after all other water rights and regulatory requirements are met. Water will be released to beneficiaries throughout the state primarily during drier periods when it is needed. The proposed project includes an off-stream reservoir located north of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta where the majority of California’s rainfall occurs.

“We are pleased to partner with Sites Project Authority on this unique off-stream storage project to create operational flexibility and additional water storage in California,” said **Regional Director Ernest Conant**. “The multi-beneficial Sites Reservoir provides water supply and flood protection, plus environmental and recreation benefits for generations to come.”

“Sites Reservoir is a new way of managing water that will adapt to our changing climate and provide a more reliable water supply for California’s communities, farms, and environment,” said **Fritz Durst, Chair of the Sites Project Authority**. “We are grateful for the ongoing support of the Bureau of Reclamation, which exemplifies the spirit of collaboration that’s been a hallmark of Sites Reservoir.”

View the combined final environmental impact report/environmental impact statement online at https://www.usbr.gov/mp/nepa/nepa_project_details.php?Project_ID=29024 or <https://sitesproject.org/environmental-review/>. To learn more about the project, visit <https://sitesproject.org>.

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