



**Mid-Pacific Region
Sacramento, CA**



**California Department of
Water Resources**

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San Joaquin River Restoration Program Interim Flows Environmental Document Available for Public Comment

The Bureau of Reclamation and the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) announce the release of an Environmental Assessment, Proposed Finding of No Significant Impact, Initial Study, and Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration (EA/FONSI/IS/MND) for the San Joaquin River Restoration Program's (SJRRP) Water Year 2010 (WY 2010) Interim Flows Project. The document was prepared in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The EA/FONSI/IS/MND is a joint document that describes the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the WY 2010 Interim Flows Project (Proposed Action) and the No-Action Alternative on the environment. Reclamation's Proposed Action is to temporarily change Friant Dam operations in WY 2010 (October 1, 2009, through September 30, 2010) as specified in the Stipulation of Settlement (Settlement) in *NRDC et al. v. Kirk Rodgers et al.* Interim Flows would be conveyed down the San Joaquin River channel and, potentially, down the Eastside and Mariposa bypasses to the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta (Delta). Under the Proposed Action, flows would be recaptured by existing water diversion facilities along the San Joaquin River and/or in the Delta for agricultural, municipal and industrial, or fish and wildlife uses, to the extent possible. Potential diversion locations for recapturing WY 2010 Interim Flow releases are Mendota Pool, Arroyo Canal, the Lone Tree Unit of the Merced National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), the East Bear Creek Unit of the San Luis NWR, and the Central Valley Project and State Water Project Delta export facilities.

The Proposed Action also includes the implementation of environmental commitments to avoid, reduce, or minimize impacts to special-status species, a vehicular traffic detour plan, a recreation outreach program, and the implementation of a groundwater seepage monitoring and management plan.

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to implement the provisions of the Settlement related to the release of Interim Flows for WY 2010. As described in the Settlement, the purpose of the Interim Flows is to collect relevant data concerning flows, temperatures, fish needs, seepage losses, recirculation, and recapture and reuse. The SJRRP Implementing Agencies, which include

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Reclamation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Marine Fisheries Service, DWR, and the California Department of Fish and Game, will conduct a variety of monitoring and study actions for the WY 2010 Interim Flow release period.

The EA/FONSI/IS/MND is available for public review and comment for 30 days. Written comments must be received at one of the following physical or e-mail addresses below no later than close of business (5 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time) Monday, July 6, 2009:

Mr. Jason Phillips
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Mr. Kevin Faulkenberry
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The EA/FONSI/IS/MND may be reviewed during normal business hours (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) at the addresses above and at Reclamation's South-Central California Area Office, 1243 N Street, Fresno. The EA/FONSI/IS/MND is also available on the SJRRP web site at www.restoresjr.net or Reclamation's web site at www.usbr.gov/mp/nepa/nepa_projdetails.cfm?Project_ID=3612. If you would like to request a compact disk containing the document, please contact Ms. Margaret Gidding at 916-978-5104 or mgidding@usbr.gov.

To learn more about the SJRRP, please visit www.restoresjr.net.

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Reclamation is the largest wholesale water supplier and the second largest producer of hydroelectric power in the United States, with operations and facilities in the 17 Western States. Its facilities also provide substantial flood control, recreation, and fish and wildlife benefits. Visit our website at <http://www.usbr.gov>.

The Department of Water Resources operates and maintains the State Water Project, provides dam safety and flood control and inspection services, assists local water districts in water management and water conservation planning, and plans for future statewide water needs. Visit our website at <http://www.water.ca.gov>