SAN JOAQUIN RIVER RESTORATION PROGRAM

Long-term Recapture and Recirculation Environmental Impact Statement/ Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) FACTSHEET

The SJRRP is a comprehensive, long-term effort involving releases of water from Friant Dam to the confluence of the Merced River and a combination of channel and structural improvements along the San Joaquin River below Friant Dam to restore a self-sustaining Chinook salmon fishery in the river while reducing or avoiding adverse water supply impacts from restoration flows. The SJRRP was established in late 2006 to implement the Stipulation of Settlement (Settlement) in Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), et al., v. Kirk Rodgers, et al. Federal authorization for implementing the Settlement is provided in the San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement Act (Public Law 111-11).

San Joaquin River Restoration Program Goals:

Restoration Goal – To restore and maintain fish populations in "good condition" in the main stem of the San Joaquin River below Friant Dam to the confluence of the Merced River, including naturally reproducing and self-sustaining populations of salmon and other fish.

Water Management Goal – To reduce or avoid adverse water supply impacts to all of the Friant Division long-term contractors that may result from the Interim and Restoration flows provided for in the Settlement .

Introduction

The U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), as the Federal lead agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Friant Water Authority as the lead State agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), are preparing an Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) for the Long-term Recapture and Recirculation of Restoration Flows (Recapture and Recirculation). This activity is a component of the overall San Joaquin River Restoration Program (SJRRP).

Paragraph 16(a) of the Settlement directs Reclamation to develop a plan for recirculation, recapture, reuse, exchange, or transfer of Restoration Flows (Recapture and Recirculation Plan) to reduce or avoid adverse water supply impacts to all of the Friant Division long-term contractors that may result from the Restoration Flows provided for in the Settlement. The Recapture and Recirculation EIS/EIR will evaluate five alternatives (see page 3); each one designed with a combination of recapture and recirculation options that would help achieve the Water Management Goal and available for inclusion in the Long-term Recapture and Recirculation Plan.

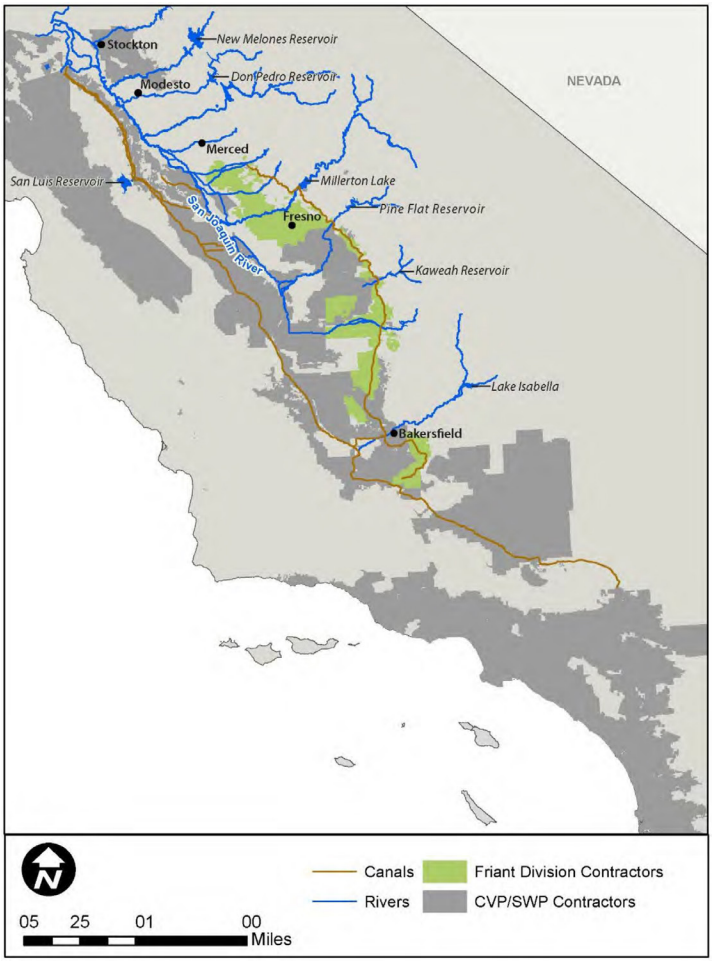
The purpose of the Recapture and Recirculation EIS/EIR is to analyze and disclose the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of each alternative consistent with NEPA and CEQA, and to serve as an informational document for decision makers, public agencies nongovernmental organizations, and the general public. The Recapture and Recirculation EIS/EIR analysis builds on the 2012 SJRRP Program EIS/Environmental Impact Report (PEIS/R) which evaluated approaches to achieve the two program goals, including the recapture, recirculation, reuse, exchange, and transfer of restoration flows.

The Recapture and Recirculation EIS/EIR will provide the required environmental compliance actions to support the program's goals, and to identify and evaluate the most effective options for reducing water supply impacts and mitigating for environmental impacts.

Background photo:
San Joaquin River Chowchilla Bypass and surrounding agricultural land.

SAN JOAQUIN RIVER
RESTORATION PROGRAM

Study Area



The Study Area for recapture and recirculation activities includes water district service areas, their associated infrastructure, and other areas that may be affected directly or indirectly by implementing recapture, recirculation, and storage actions. The Study Area also includes Central Valley Project (CVP) and State Water Project (SWP) service areas that may be affected by the transfer or exchange of Recirculated Water from Friant Division Contractors to south-of-Delta CVP or SWP Contractors.

Recapture and Recirculation

Restoration Flows released from Friant Dam are available for recapture currently at Mendota Pool, along the lower San Joaquin River, and in the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta (Delta). Recaptured Restoration Flows are then recirculated from south-of-delta facilities (by way of exchange, transfer, or direct delivery) to avoid or reduce adverse impact to the Friant Division long-term contractors as a result of Settlement implementation. These actions can be implemented now on a temporary basis because the environmental review has been completed in the following environmental documents:

SJRRP PEIS/R and Record of Decision - 2012: This document analyzed the recapture of Restoration Flows at a project level within the Restoration Area (Mendota Pool and Bear Creek Wildlife Refuge) and at existing CVP and SWP facilities in the Delta. Recapture at these locations are included in the No-Action Alternative because no further environmental review is required.

Recirculation of Recaptured Water Year 2013-2017 San Joaquin River Restoration Program Flows Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)- April 2013: This EA allows for the annual delivery, transfer, and exchange of up to 260,000 acre-feet of recaptured Restoration Flows stored at San Luis Reservoir to Friant and non-Friant Contractors through existing CVP, SWP, and local facilities to recirculate Restoration Flows. For recirculation of Restoration Flows to continue beyond 2017, additional environmental review is required.

Final Environmental Assessment for the One-Year Recapture of San Joaquin River Restoration Flows at Patterson Irrigation District and/or Banta Carbona - 2016: This EA evaluates only the recapture of Restoration Flows at the specified locations along the lower San Joaquin River. Additional environmental review is required to extend this action beyond 2016.

Alternatives

1 NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

The No Action Alternative reflects a condition if no further Federal action is taken to expand recapture opportunities and continue long-term recirculation, reuse, exchange, or transfer opportunities. Recapture would occur within the Restoration Area (Mendota Pool and Bear Creek Wildlife Refuge) and at existing CVP and SWP facilities in the Delta. Recirculation would only occur through 2017.

2 CONTINUE EXISTING RECIRCULATION ACTIVITIES

This alternative continues existing recapture as described in Alternative 1 and recirculates the water the same as analyzed in the Recirculation of Recaptured Water Year 2013-2017 Restoration Flows EA. Alternative 2 is the same as Alternative 1, but with recirculation options extended beyond 2017.

3 MAXIMIZE USE OF EXISTING FACILITIES

This alternative focuses on increasing the volume of water recaptured and recirculated by including additional recapture locations along the lower San Joaquin River by way of long-term use of existing facilities operated by the Patterson, Banta Carbona and West Stanislaus irrigation districts.

4 EXPAND EXISTING FACILITIES

This alternative expands existing local facilities to increase their ability to recapture or recirculate water. Expanding local diversion facilities operated by Patterson, Banta Carbona and West Stanislaus irrigation districts allows additional Restoration Flows to be recaptured and conveyed to the Delta-Mendota Canal. The SJRRP would continue recirculation of water as described in Alternatives 2 and 3. In addition, Alternative 4 would include exchanges that require new facilities or more complex agreements, such as expansions to Shafter Wasco Irrigation District and Arvin-Edison Water Storage District exchanges, and exchanges with entities that hold rights along the Fresno River.

5 CONSTRUCT NEW FACILITIES

This alternative maximizes the available volume of recaptured Restoration Flows by constructing a new recapture facility along the lower San Joaquin River just south of Patterson and includes maximizing the use of existing facilities described in Alternative 3.

In accordance with NEPA, Reclamation will analyze in the EIS/EIR the potential direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental effects that may result from implementation of the proposed action and alternatives.

Environmental effects may include, but are not limited to, the following areas of potential impact:

- *Air quality*
- *Biological resources, including fish, wildlife, and plant species*
- *Cultural resources*
- *Environmental justice*
- *Flood control*
- *Geology, soils, and mineral resources*
- *Global climate change/greenhouse gas emissions*
- *Hazards and hazardous materials*
- *Hydrology/water quality*
- *Indian trust assets*
- *Land use, including agricultural resources*
- *Noise*
- *Population and housing*
- *Power/energy and natural resources*
- *Public services and utilities*
- *Recreation*
- *Socioeconomics*
- *Transportation*
- *Water resources, including groundwater*

Public Participation

The SJRRP recognizes the importance of stakeholder involvement during preparation of the Recapture and Recirculation EIS and is committed to providing opportunities for all interested stakeholders to become involved in the process and to provide input on key issues that need to be considered. Public involvement and communication efforts include:

- Participation in Water Management Technical Feedback Meetings
- Review of the Draft Recapture and Recirculation EIS
- Review of the Public Final Recapture and Recirculation EIS

For more information on the Recapture and Recirculation EIS, please visit http://www.restoresjr.net/water-management-goal/recapture-and-recirculation/

Or contact Kellye Kennedy, Project Manager by e-mail at kkennedy@usbr.gov, by phone at 916.978-4640, or by mail to Ms. Kellye Kennedy, Bureau of Reclamation (MP-170), 2800 Cottage Way, Sacramento, CA 95825

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