

SUMMARY: The Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) and the California Department of Water Resources (CDWR) propose to prepare a Programmatic EIS/EIR to analyze the potential effects of the short-term phase of the Sacramento Valley Water Management Program (Short-term Program). The Short-term Program would include implementation of multiple short-term water management projects and other actions. The short-term projects would be implemented by Reclamation, CDWR, and Sacramento Valley water-users, and each project would operate for 10 years after implementation. The programmatic analysis in this EIS/EIR would include, but is not limited to, projects described in the "Sacramento Valley Water Management Agreement Short-term Workplan, October 2001" ("Short-term Workplan"). The purpose of implementing the Short-term Program is to promote better water management in the Sacramento Valley and develop additional water supplies through a cooperative water management partnership. The Short-term Program was developed to resolve water quality and water rights issues as an alternative to determining responsibility for flow-related water quality objectives of the 1995 Sacramento/San Joaquin Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan through a State Water Resources Control Board water rights hearing.

The environmental effects of some short-term projects would also be analyzed at a site-specific level of detail in the Programmatic EIS/EIR, and would constitute the final CEQA or NEPA document for those projects. As many short-term projects as possible would be analyzed at a site-specific level; however, the specific projects to be analyzed at that level are unknown at this time. Specific alternatives have not been identified at this time, and will be developed following scoping. Public scoping meetings regarding the preparation of the Programmatic EIS/EIR will be conducted as described below.

This notice is published in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act regulations

found in 40 CFR 1501.7. The purpose of this notice is to obtain suggestions and information from other agencies and the public on the scope of issues to be addressed in the Programmatic EIS/EIR. A similar notice is being published by the CDWR in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act. Comments and participation in this scoping process are encouraged.

DATES: Two public scoping meetings will be held:

- Wednesday, August 20, 2003, 3–5 p.m., Sacramento, CA
- Thursday, August 21, 2003, 3–5 p.m., Colusa, CA

ADDRESSES: Scoping meetings will be held at:

- Sacramento at the Expo Inn, 1413 Howe Avenue (just south of Arden Way), The Expo Room.
- Colusa at the Colusa Industrial Properties, 100 Sunrise Boulevard (off Highway 45/20), The Conference Room.

Written comments on the scope of the Short-term Program or issues to be addressed in the EIS/EIR should be sent to the California Department of Water Resources, Attention: John Fielden, Project Manager, P.O. Box 942836, Sacramento, CA 94236–0001 by September 5, 2003.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: John Fielden with CDWR via e-mail at jfielden@water.ca.gov or by calling (916) 651–7053 or Robert Eckart with Reclamation via e-mail at reckart@mp.usbr.gov or by calling (916) 978–5051. Additional information may also be found on the CDWR Web site at www.water.ca.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: As an alternative to participating in the State Water Resources Control Board's Phase 8 Bay-Delta Water Rights Hearings, Reclamation, CDWR, and numerous Sacramento Valley and export water interests entered into the "Short-term Agreement to Guide Implementation of the Short-term Water Management Actions to Meet Local Water Supply Needs and to Make Water Available to the SWP and CVP to Assist In Meeting the Requirements of the 1995 Water Quality Control Plan and to Resolve Phase 8 Issues" (the Short-term Settlement Agreement). The Short-term

Settlement Agreement established a process by which parties collaborate in the development and implementation of a variety of projects and actions to help meet flow-related water quality objectives established for the Sacramento/San Joaquin Bay-Delta, meet local water needs, and improve water supplies throughout the State.

Five categories of short-term projects and actions will be considered in the Short-term Program EIS/EIR:

- *Water Management*—includes groundwater substitution in lieu of surface water supplies, conjunctive use of groundwater and surface water, refurbish existing groundwater extraction wells, install groundwater monitoring stations, and install new groundwater extraction wells (some actions include construction of facilities)

- *Reservoir Re-operation*—includes changes in the operational diagrams and schedules for reservoirs in the Sacramento River watershed

- *System Improvement*—includes canal lining, tailwater recovery, and improved operations (some actions include construction of facilities)

- *Surface Water and Groundwater Planning*—includes studies, modeling, monitoring, and area wide inventory or assessment (actions could include minor construction of facilities for monitoring and testing purposes)

- *Other Actions*—includes potential water transfer actions and/or actions with substantial regulatory/institutional requirements (does not involve construction of facilities).

The effects of implementing the Short-term Program (short-term projects and actions) will be evaluated at the programmatic level. The known short-term projects proposed throughout the Sacramento Valley are presented in Table 1. In addition to the programmatic analysis, some proposed projects would also be analyzed at a site-specific level to allow for their immediate implementation. As many projects as possible would be analyzed at a site-specific level of review; however, the specific projects to be analyzed at that level are unknown at this time.

TABLE 1.—PROPOSED SHORT-TERM WATER MANAGEMENT PROJECTS TO BE ANALYZED IN THE PROGRAMMATIC EIS/EIR *

Project name (type)	Proponent	County	Description
Redding Sub-basin: Conjunctive Use Program (Water Management)	Anderson-Cottonwood Irrigation District.	Shasta County	Construct monitoring and extraction wells.