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Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement

Freeport Regional Water Project

being jointly pursued by the U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Reclamation,
and the Freeport Regional Water Authority

The U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) and the Freeport Regional Water Authority (FRWA) have prepared this joint environmental impact report/environmental impact statement (EIR/EIS) on the proposed Freeport Regional Water Project to construct and operate a water supply project to meet regional water supply needs. FRWA, a joint powers agency formed under state law by the Sacramento County Water Agency (SCWA) and the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD), is the state lead agency, and Reclamation is the federal lead agency for this EIR/EIS, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act and the National Environmental Policy Act, respectively.

FRWA's member agencies, SCWA and EBMUD, currently hold contracts with Reclamation allowing them to divert at the location identified as Freeport on the Sacramento River south of downtown Sacramento. FRWA's project objectives are to support acquisition of additional SCWA surface water entitlements to promote efficient conjunctive use of groundwater in its Zone 40 area, consistent with the Sacramento Area Water Forum Agreement and County of Sacramento General Plan policies; provide facilities through which SCWA can deliver existing and anticipated surface water entitlements to Zone 40 area; provide facilities through which EBMUD can take delivery of a supplemental supply of water that would substantially meet its need for water and reduce existing and future customer deficiencies during droughts; and improve EBMUD system reliability and operational flexibility during droughts, catastrophic events, and scheduled major maintenance at Pardee Dam or Reservoir. In addition to the No Action alternative, five primary alternatives are under consideration.

Alternatives 2-5 represent a water supply project with a design capacity of 185 MGD. These alternatives differ from one another in that the pipelines have different alignments under each alternative. Up to 85 MGD would be diverted under Sacramento County's existing Reclamation water service contract and other anticipated water entitlements and up to 100 MGD of water would be diverted under EBMUD's amended Reclamation water service contract. The primary components of Alternatives 2-5 are an intake facility on the Sacramento River near Freeport, the Zone 40 Surface Water Treatment Plant located in central Sacramento County, a terminal facility at the point of delivery to the Folsom South Canal, a canal pumping plant at the terminus of the Folsom South Canal, an aqueduct pumping plant and pretreatment facility near Camanche Reservoir, and a series of pipelines carrying water from the intake facility to the Zone 40 Surface Water Treatment Plant and to the Mokelumne Aqueducts. The existing Folsom South Canal is part of the water conveyance system.

Under Alternative 6, SCWA water needs would be met by conveying water from the Sacramento River, and EBMUD water needs would be met by enlarging its Pardee Reservoir water storage facility on the Mokelumne River. The primary components of Alternative 6 are the Freeport intake facility; the Zone 40 Surface Water Treatment Plant; and pipeline connecting the two; and an enlarged Pardee Reservoir, which includes replacement of the concrete dam and spillway, powerhouse, and saddle dams; modifications to the intake tower and Pardee Tunnel; a new pressure reduction facility; relocation of roads and bridges; removal of the Middle Bar Bridge and construction of fishing piers; relocation of utilities; and replacement of the Pardee Reservoir recreation areas.

This EIR/EIS describes the environmental effects of taking delivery of water under SCWA's and EBMUD's existing and anticipated contracts/entitlements from the Sacramento River near Freeport. Emphasis is directed toward potential effects related to Sacramento River fisheries, endangered species, CVP water users, pipeline construction, and biological resources. The EIR/EIS also fulfills the requirements of Executive Order 11988 (Floodplain Management), 11990 (Protection of Wetlands), and 12898 (Environmental Justice).

For further information on this EIR/EIS, contact Mr. Eric Mische, General Manager, FRWA, 1510 J Street, #140, Sacramento, CA 95814, telephone (916) 326-5480, or Mr. Rob Schroeder, Contract Specialist, U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Reclamation, Central California Area Office, 7794 Folsom Dam Road, Folsom, CA 95630, telephone (916) 989-7274.

Comments on the EIR/EIS must be provided by October 7, 2003.