

**Mid-Pacific Region
Sacramento, Calif.**

MP-16-205

Media Contact: Louis Moore, 916-978-5100, wmoore@usbr.gov

For Release: Oct. 31, 2016

Record of Decision for San Joaquin River Restoration Program's Mendota Pool Bypass and Reach 2B Improvements Project

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – The Bureau of Reclamation signed a Record of Decision Oct. 31, 2016, for the San Joaquin River Restoration Program's Mendota Pool Bypass and Reach 2B Improvements Project located in Madera and Fresno counties.

Completion of the Mendota Pool Bypass will allow for fish passage around Mendota Dam, the largest fish passage impediment in the SJRRP area. While providing fish passage, the project will also separate reintroduced spring-run Chinook salmon from critical water supply infrastructure in Mendota Pool. It's the first of the Phase 1 projects identified in the Stipulation of Settlement of Natural Resources Defense Council vs. Rodgers to reach the construction phase.

"The time and effort put in by the local affected community to reach a widely supported alternative on this project has been tremendous, and I thank them for helping make this a better project," said David Murillo, director of Reclamation's Mid-Pacific Region. "Signing the Record of Decision is a huge milestone towards implementing the 2006 settlement to restore the San Joaquin River, and we're looking forward to starting construction next year."

Construction of the approximately \$420 million project is expected to begin in late 2017 and take about 10 years to complete.

Signing the ROD is the final step in the Environmental Impact Statement process as outlined in the National Environmental Policy Act and allows for the official start of the project. The selected alternative, Alternative B, was identified through a consensus-based process with the local affected community and was included in the Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report for public comment.

The project footprint extends from around 0.3 miles above the Chowchilla Bypass Bifurcation Structure to one mile below the Mendota Dam near the town of Mendota. Planned activities include:

- Building setback levees capable of conveying flows up to 4,500 cubic feet per second and removing portions of the existing levees to allow flow onto the floodplain.
- Restoring floodplain habitat to provide benefit to salmonids and other native fishes.
- Constructing a channel and structures capable of conveying up to 4,500 cfs of Restoration Flows around the Mendota Pool.
- Constructing structures capable of conveying up to 2,500 cfs from Reach 2B to Mendota Pool.
- Providing upstream and downstream fish passage for adult salmonids and other native fishes and downstream fish passage for juvenile salmonids between Reach 2A and Reach 3.

The ROD and EIS/EIR were developed pursuant to NEPA and are available at http://www.usbr.gov/mp/nepa/nepa_projdetails.cfm?Project_ID=4032. If you encounter problems accessing the documents online or would like to review a paper copy, please call 916-978-4624 (TTY 800-877-8339) or email rvictorine@usbr.gov.

For information on the SJRRP, please visit www.restoresjr.net.

###

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>. Follow us on Twitter [@USBR](https://twitter.com/USBR) and [@ReclamationCVP](https://twitter.com/ReclamationCVP).