

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

MP-17-069

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For Immediate Release: April 18, 2017

San Joaquin River Restoration Program Releases Draft Environmental Assessment for New Groundwater Banking Project

SACRAMENTO, Calif. - The San Joaquin River Restoration Program has released for public review a Draft Environmental Assessment/Initial Study for a new groundwater recharge banking project in Tulare County.

The proposed project includes constructing an 800-acre groundwater recharge basin, installing a 4.5 mile pipeline connecting the new recharge basin to the Friant-Kern Canal and installing 16 groundwater recovery wells within the Pixley Irrigation District. These actions would allow the Pixley and Delano-Earlimart Irrigation districts to expand groundwater recharge efforts and improve groundwater levels. The proposed project also would contribute to the San Joaquin River Restoration Program goal of reducing or avoiding adverse water supply impacts to Friant Division long-term contractors. The Bureau of Reclamation would provide partial funding for construction of the proposed project, under Public Law 111-11, which authorizes Reclamation to provide financial assistance to local agencies within its Central Valley Project for planning, designing and constructing local facilities to bank water underground or recharge groundwater.

This is the second opportunity for the public to review and comment on the draft. In March 2016, Reclamation and the South Valley Water Banking Authority circulated the Pixley Groundwater Banking Project Draft EA/IS for public review and comment. Upon consideration of comments received, the Authority determined certain modifications to the project could be made that would be responsive to concerns raised and beneficial toward reducing potential impacts identified in the Draft EA/IS.

The revised Draft EA/IS was prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act and the California Environmental Quality Act. Reclamation is the lead agency in accordance with NEPA, and the Authority is the lead agency in accordance with CEQA. The document may be viewed at https://www.usbr.gov/mp/nepa/nepa_projdetails.cfm?Project_ID=25157. If you encounter problems accessing the document online, please call 916-978-5100 (TTY 800-877-8339) or email mppublicaffairs@usbr.gov.



Written comments are due by close of business May 16, 2017, to Becky Victorine, Bureau of Reclamation, 2800 Cottage Way, MP-170, Sacramento, CA 95825. Comments may also be faxed to 916-978-5469 or emailed to rvictorine@usbr.gov. For additional information, please contact Victorine at 916-978-4624.

For information on the San Joaquin River Restoration Program, please visit www.restoresjr.net.

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