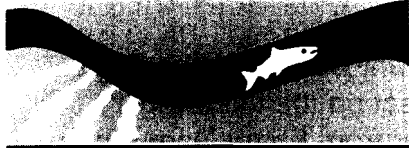


SAN JOAQUIN RIVER  
RESTORATION PROGRAM



✓ BOARD OF SUPERVISORS Bureau of Reclamation  
2800 Cottage Way, MP-170  
Sacramento, Calif. 95825-1898

Department of Water Resources  
3374 E. Shields Avenue  
Fresno, Calif. 93726-6911

JUN 8 2009

**Public Circulation of the Draft Environmental Assessment/Proposed Finding of No Significant Impact Under NEPA and Notice of Availability and Intent to Adopt an Initial Study/Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration Under CEQA for the Water Year 2010 Interim Flows Project**

**June 3, 2009**

**To:** All Responsible and Trustee Agencies, Interested Parties, and Organizations

The U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation and the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) announce the release of an Environmental Assessment, Proposed Finding of No Significant Impact, Initial Study, and Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration (EA/FONSI/IS/MND) for the San Joaquin River Restoration Program's (SJRRP) Water Year 2010 (WY 2010) Interim Flows Project. The document was prepared in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The EA/FONSI/IS/MND is a joint document that describes the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, the WY 2010 Interim Flows Project, and the No-Action Alternative on the environment.

**Proposed Action/Proposed Project Description:** Reclamation is proposing to temporarily change Friant Dam operations in WY 2010 (October 1, 2009, through September 30, 2010) as specified in the Stipulation of Settlement (Settlement) in *NRDC et al. v. Kirk Rodgers et al.* The Interim Flows would be conveyed down the San Joaquin River channel and, potentially, down the Eastside and Mariposa bypasses to the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta (Delta). Under the Proposed Action, flows would be recaptured by existing water diversion facilities along the San Joaquin River and/or in the Delta for agricultural, municipal and industrial, or fish and wildlife uses, to the extent possible. Potential diversion locations for recapturing WY 2010 Interim Flow releases are Mendota Pool, Arroyo Canal, the Lone Tree Unit of the Merced National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), the East Bear Creek Unit of the San Luis NWR, and Central Valley Project and State Water Project Delta export facilities. The Proposed Action also includes the implementation of environmental commitments to avoid, reduce, or minimize impacts to special-status species, a vehicular traffic detour plan, a recreation outreach program, and the implementation of a groundwater seepage monitoring and management plan.

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to implement the provisions of the Settlement related to the release of Interim Flows for WY 2010. As described in the Settlement, the purpose of the Interim Flows is to collect relevant data concerning flows, temperatures, fish needs, seepage losses, recirculation, and recapture and reuse. The SJRRP Implementing Agencies, which include Reclamation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Marine Fisheries Service, DWR, and the California Department of Fish and Game, will conduct a variety of monitoring and study actions for the WY 2010 Interim Flow release period.

**Project Location:** WY 2010 Interim Flows would be released from Friant Dam near the City of Fresno in Fresno County, California. The project would have an effect on the following areas: Millerton Lake upstream from Friant Dam, the San Joaquin River from Friant Dam to the Merced River confluence including the Eastside and Mariposa bypasses, the San Joaquin River from the Merced River confluence to the Delta, the Delta, and Central Valley Project/State Water Project facilities and water service areas.

**Listed Hazardous Sites:** No sites listed under Section 65962.5 of the Government Code are located within or in the immediate adjacent to the project location.

**Intent to Adopt:** Pursuant to the provisions of Title 14, Section 15072 of the California Code of Regulations, DWR gives notice of its intent to adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration for the WY 2010 Interim Flows Project. The Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration finds that the Proposed Action/Proposed Project will not have a significant effect on the environment with mitigation incorporated and that preparation of an environmental impact report is not required.

**Copies of the Document, Public Review Period, and Submitting Comments:** The EA/FONSI/IS/MND is available for public review and comment for 30 days. Written comments must be received at one of the following physical or e-mail addresses below no later than close of business (5 p.m., Pacific Daylight Time) Monday, July 6, 2009:

Mr. Jason Phillips  
SJRRP Program Manager  
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation  
2800 Cottage Way, MP-170  
Sacramento, CA 95825-1898  
[InterimFlows@restoresjr.net](mailto:InterimFlows@restoresjr.net)

OR

Mr. Kevin Faulkenberry  
DWR SJRRP Program Manager  
Department of Water Resources  
3374 E. Shields Avenue  
Fresno, CA 93726  
[faulkenb@water.ca.gov](mailto:faulkenb@water.ca.gov)

The EA/FONSI/IS/MND may be reviewed during normal business hours (from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) at the addresses above and at Reclamation's South-Central California Area Office at 1243 N Street, Fresno, California. The EA/FONSI/IS/MND is also available on the SJRRP web site at [www.restoresjr.net](http://www.restoresjr.net) or Reclamation's web site at [www.usbr.gov/mp/nepa/nepa\\_projdetails.cfm?Project\\_ID=3612](http://www.usbr.gov/mp/nepa/nepa_projdetails.cfm?Project_ID=3612). If you would like to request a compact disk containing the document, please contact Ms. Margaret Gidding at 916-978-5104 or [mgidding@usbr.gov](mailto:mgidding@usbr.gov).

**To learn more about the SJRRP and the WY 2010 Interim Flows Project visit [www.restoresjr.net](http://www.restoresjr.net).**