INITIAL STUDY
AND PROPOSED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

FOR

WEST STANISLAUS IRRIGATION DISTRICT
WATER TRANSFER
TO SEMITROPIC WATER STORAGE DISTRICT

West Stanislaus Irrigation District
116 E Street
Westley, California 95387

August, 2018

WEST STANISLAUS IRRIGATION DISTRICT
PUBLIC NOTICE OF PROPOSED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

The West Stanislaus Irrigation District (WSID) prepares, makes, declares and publishes this proposed Negative Declaration for the **WATER TRANSFER TO SEMI TROPIC WATER SERVICE DISTRICT ("Project").**

Project Description: The Project will consist of a one (1) year agreement to transfer up to fifteen thousand (15,000) acre feet of water to Semi Tropic Water Storage District (SWSD). The water to be transferred will be comprised of water pursuant to WSID's contract with the United States for water supply from the Central Valley Project (Contract 14-06-200-1072-LTR1) ("**Contract**").

Project Location: The Project is located within the boundaries of WSID in Stanislaus County as shown on ***Figure 1***, and within the boundaries of SWSD, as show on ***Figure 2***.

Determination: WSID has reviewed the proposed project and has determined that the project, as identified in the attached Initial Study, will not have a significant effect on the environment. An Environmental Impact Report is not required pursuant to the Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (Division 13 of the Public Resources code of the State of California).

Public Review: This Initial Study/Negative Declaration has been prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and contains an environmental review of the potential impacts of the proposed project. This Initial Study/Negative Declaration is being circulated for 20 days from August 28, 2018 through September 18, 2018. Comments on the Initial Study/Negative Declaration can be sent by 12:00 noon on September 28, 2018 to:

West Stanislaus Irrigation District
P.O. Box 37
Westley, California 95387

Comments will be reviewed by WSID, and the Initial Study/Negative Declaration will be revised, as appropriate, prior to adoption of the proposed Negative Declaration by WSID, which is scheduled for October 9, 2018.

This environmental review process and Negative Declaration filing is pursuant to Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Article 6, Section 15070 of the California Administrative Code.

A copy of this document may be reviewed/obtained at the West Stanislaus Irrigation District office, 116 E Street, Westley, California 95387.

Robert Pierce, Manager

PROPOSED

WEST STANISLAUS IRRIGATION DISTRICT
NEGATIVE DECLARATION REGARDING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

1. NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the project described below has been reviewed pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (Public Resources Code Section 21100, et seq.) and a determination has been made that it will not have a significant effect upon the environment.

2. PROJECT NAME: Water Transfer To Semi Tropic Water Storage District

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT: The Project will consist of a one (1) year agreement to transfer of up to fifteen thousand (15,000) acre feet of water to Semi Tropic Water Storage District (SWSD). The water to be transferred will be comprised of water pursuant to WSID's contract with the United States for water supply from the Central Valley Project (Contract 14-06-200-1072-LTR1) ("Contract").

4. LOCATION OF PROJECT: The Project is located within the boundaries of WSID in Stanislaus County as shown on ***Figure 1***, and within the boundaries of SWSD, as show on ***Figure 2***.

5. NAME AND ADDRESS OF PROJECT PROPONENT: West Stanislaus Irrigation District, Post Office Box 37, 116 E Street, Westley, California 95387, (209) 895-3733.

6. MITIGATION MEASURES: None

7. A copy of the Initial Study regarding the environmental effect of this project is on file at the office of The West Stanislaus Irrigation District set forth above. This study was:

   - ☐ Adopted as presented.

   - ☐ Adopted with changes. Specific modifications supporting reasons are attached.

8. WEST STANISLAUS Irrigation District considered this Negative Declaration at a public meeting of its Board of Directors on September ___, 2018.

9. DETERMINATION: *(To be completed by the Lead Agency)*

   On the basis of this initial evaluation:

   ☐ I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the

environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

- ☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

- ☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

- ☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

- ☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

_____ _____

Signature Date

Figure 1. WSID Boundaries

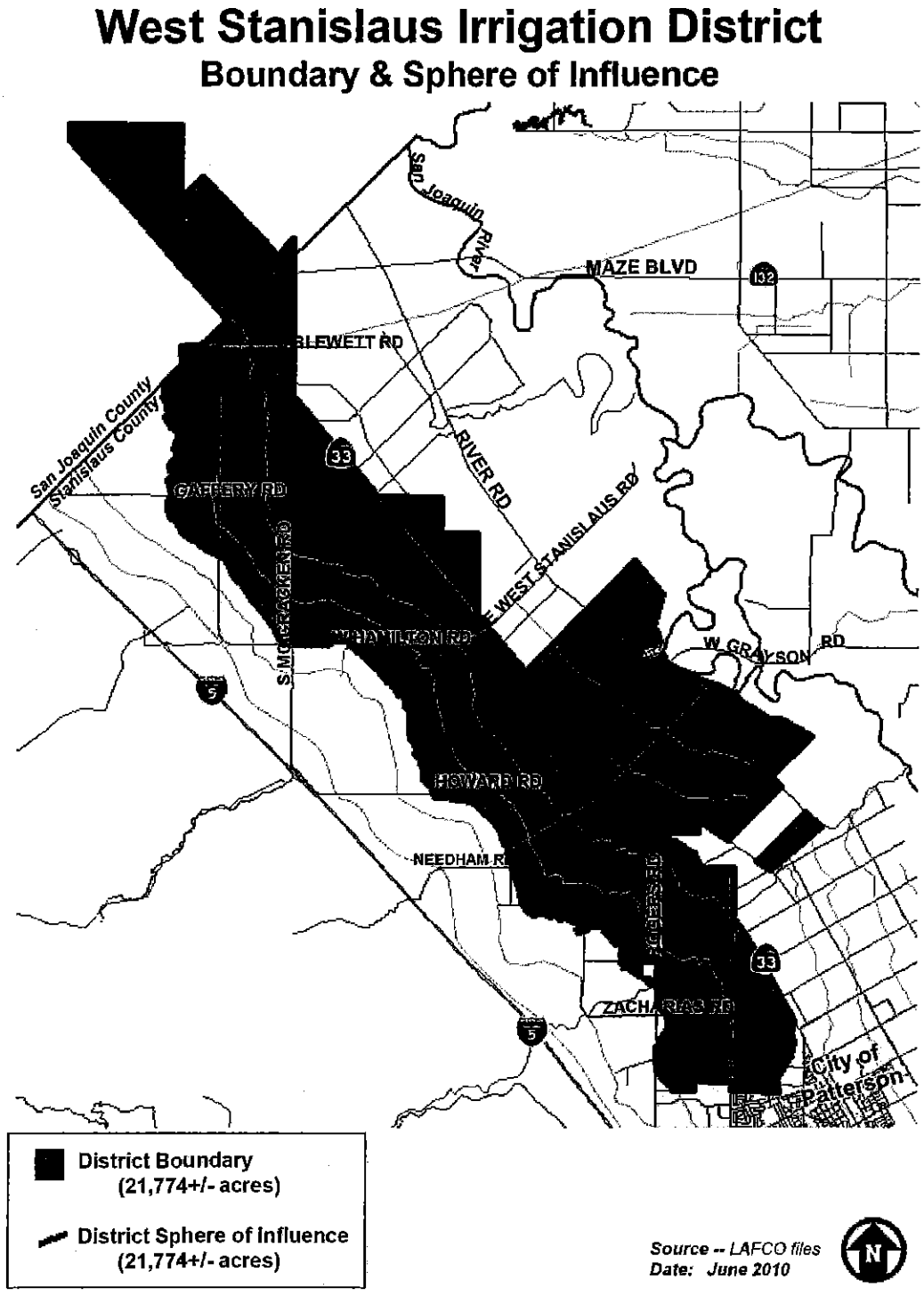
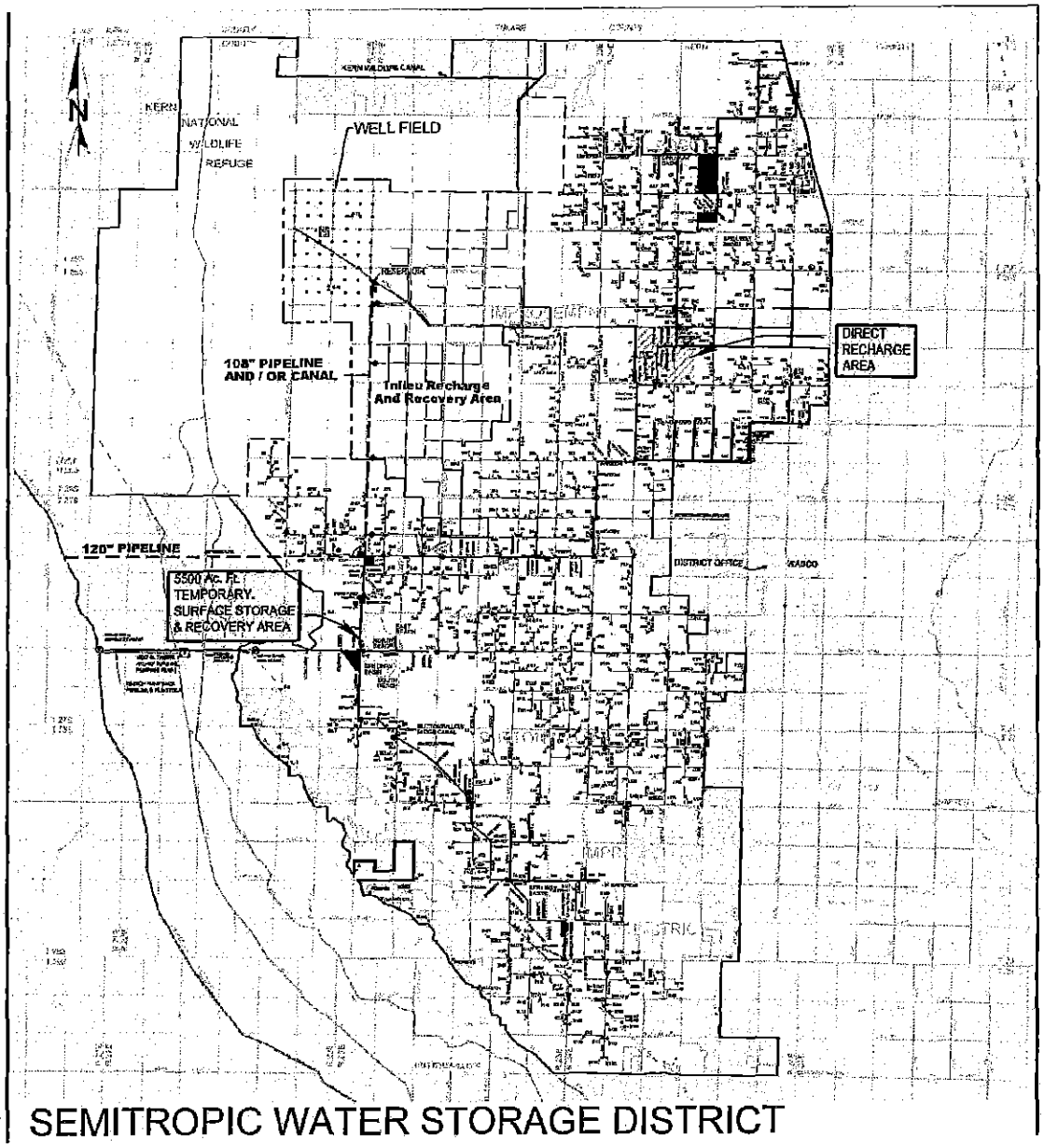


Figure 2. SWSD Boundaries



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SUMMARY

Project Title: Water Transfer to Semitropic Water Storage District

Project Location: Stanislaus and Kern Counties

Lead Agency: West Stanislaus Irrigation District

Agency Carrying Out Project: West Stanislaus Irrigation District

Contact Person:

Mr. Robert Pierce
West Stanislaus Irrigation District
Post Office Box 37
116 E Street
Westley, California 95387
Phone: (209) 895-3733

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

☐ Aesthetics	☐ Agriculture Resources	☐ Air Quality
☐ Biological Resources	☐ Cultural Resources	☐ Geology /Soils
☐ Hazards & Hazardous Materials	☐ Hydrology / Water Quality	☐ Land Use / Planning
☐ Mineral Resources	☐ Noise	☐ Population / Housing
☐ Public Services	☐ Recreation	☐ Transportation/Traffic
☐ Utilities / Service Systems	☐ Mandatory Findings of Significance	

2. INTRODUCTION

West Stanislaus Irrigation District (**WSID**) proposes a one (1) year transfer of up to fifteen thousand (15,000) acre feet to Semi Tropic Water Storage District (**SWSD**) (**Project**). The water to be transferred will be comprised of water pursuant to WSID's contract with the United States for water supply from the Central Valley Project (Contract 14-06-200-1072-LTR1) (Contract).

Because of aggressive conservation practices and use of reclaimed water, WSID has developed water supplies temporarily in excess of the demands within its service boundaries. As a result, there will be no increase over historical diversions from the San Joaquin River, and no increase in allocations or use of other surface or groundwater supplies. Because of reduced water supply allocation, SWSD has suffered shortages in past years and anticipates that this trend will continue. The proposed Project would not result in an increase in lands farmed within SWSD, but would act to replace supply reductions from other supplies historically available to SWSD or reduce groundwater pumping. No water will be transferred from WSID to lands within SWSD unless they have been historically cultivated. Consequently, there will be increase in water supply available to SWSD over historical amounts, and no change in land use in either district as a result of the Project. All water under this transfer will be used to offset groundwater pumping.

WSID holds licensed appropriative rights with a priority date of 1920 to surface water from the San Joaquin River under License 3957 (Application ID A001987) to appropriate approximately 262.15 cfs for irrigation purposes from the westerly bank of San Joaquin River in Stanislaus County, California (**License Water**).

WSID also obtains surface water pursuant to its water supply contract with the United States Bureau of Reclamation (**Reclamation**) through an agreement entitled "Contract between the United States and West Stanislaus Irrigation District Providing for Project Water Service", Contract No. 14-06-200-1072-LTR1 (**Contract**), pursuant to which WSID obtains project water from the CVP.

SWSD obtains water from the State Water Project (**SWP**) through its contracts with the Kern County Water Agency under the agency's master contract with the California Department of Water Resources (**DWR**) executed on November 15, 1963, which currently provides SWSD a

contract entitlement of 155,000 acre-feet which is considered to have approximately 55% reliability.

The WSID Board of Directors has found and determined that WSID will be able to make a portion of its water supply available to SWSD for the year that, because of conservation and reclamation improvements, is expected to be surplus to the needs of WSID's customers for that period. WSID is willing to modify the releases and diversions from its facilities and operations of its delivery systems in order to make a portion of its water supplies available for transfer to SWSD, subject to obtaining all necessary and/or additional approvals for said transfer from Reclamation.

No new conveyance facilities would be constructed for this Project. Water to be transferred pursuant to the Project will be transferred within the DMC and diverted from SWSD's existing pumping facilities from the DMC.

ORGANIZATION OF THE INITIAL STUDY

This Initial Study contains the following sections:

Chapter 1 – Summary. Provides information about the proposed project location, lead agency, and identification of environmental issues determined to be "Potentially Significant Impacts" as indicated by the Environmental Checklist contained in Section 4.

Chapter 2 – Introduction. Provides background information about the proposed project. This section also described the content of the Initial Study.

Chapter 3 – Project Description. Describes the project location, surrounding land uses, project objectives, and characteristics of the proposed project.

Chapter 4 – Environmental Checklist. Contains the Environmental Checklist presented in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. The checklist is used to describe the impacts of the proposed project. A discussion follows each environmental issue identified in the Checklist.

Chapter 5 – Consultation with Responsible Agencies Summarizes informal consultation with the United States Bureau of Reclamation

Chapter 6 - Determination. States the determination by the Lead Agency. In this case, West Stanislaus Irrigation District is proposing that a Negative Declaration be adopted for the proposed Project.

3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The Project will consist of a one (1) year transfer of up to Fifteen (15,000) thousand acre feet of water to Semitropic Water Storage District (SWSD). The water to be transferred will be comprised of water pursuant to WSID's Contract.

PROJECT AREA

WSID is located near the City of Patterson, in Stanislaus County, California along San Joaquin River, between the Merced and Tuolumne Rivers. West Stanislaus Irrigation District was formed on May 20, 1920, and has been in continuous operation since. Located in portions of both Stanislaus and San Joaquin Counties, the district overlies a portion of the San Joaquin Valley groundwater basin, in the northern portion of the Delta-Mendota Basin, and the southern portion of the Tracy Basin, which is drained by the San Joaquin River. The first water deliveries were made in 1929. The current size of the district is 24,800 acres, of which 19,762 acres are irrigated. *Figure 1* shows the current boundary for the district's service area. Irrigated lands served by WSID include a variety of orchard and row crops.

SWSD is one of eight water storage districts in California and is the largest in Kern County, located in north-central Kern County in the San Joaquin Valley, approximately 20 miles northwest of the City of Bakersfield. The total area of SWSD is 220,000 acres, with approximately 159,000 acres irrigated. There are no incorporated cities within Semitropic, which was organized in 1958 for supplying supplemental water within its service area boundaries. Its surface water delivery system for its service area is shown on *Figure 2*.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

WEST STANISLAUS IRRIGATION DISTRICT

Water Supply and Use

WSID's distribution system consists of a three (3) mile long, concrete-lined main canal and eighty-four (84) miles of laterals and sublaterals that are either canals or pipelines. Sixty-eight (68) of these 84 miles are either concrete-lined canals or concrete pipe. The main canal carries water supplied by six (6) pumping plants. The district receives water

from the DMC through two diversion points. WSID has a continuous monitoring system to accurately measure water diverted into the laterals. The water measurements are taken three times daily at the water user's turnouts. Control structures in the laterals control the level of water and regulate the flow.

In addition to its License Water, WSID receives surface water through a water service contract with the United States for Service from the DMC. On July 14, 1953, West Stanislaus Irrigation District signed a long-term contract (Contract 14-06-200-1072) with Reclamation for 20,000 acre-feet of CVP water. The contract amount was increased to 50,000 acre-feet in 1976. Contract water is diverted from the DMC at WSID's existing turn-out at Mile Post 31.31L.

WSID also uses five groundwater wells, drilled in 1977, as a supplemental water source during peak demands. However, use of these wells is limited because of high pumping costs and water quality concerns. Some landowners within West Stanislaus Irrigation District own private groundwater wells to service their properties.

In the last fifteen years, the primary crops have included apricots, beans, and alfalfa. However, there is a continued conversion from these row crops to higher valued permanent crops (almonds). Roughly 90 percent of irrigated acres utilize pressurized irrigation systems including sub surface drip, surface drip, solid state sprinklers, and micro-sprays.

Water Conservation and Reclamation Efforts

WSID has aggressively pursued an automation and modernization plan since 1997 that is expected to continue in the future. Modernization efforts include replacing less efficient pumps and motors and utilized sharp crested weirs, mag meter and accusonic meters for accurate flow measurement, and state-of- the-art pumping plant control systems and a Power Monitoring SCADA system at its five pumping plants on the Main Canal. WSID also participated in the California Energy Commission's (CEC) pump testing and pump retrofit/repair program. Through a funding program provided by Reclamation, WSID worked with the Irrigation Training and Research Center at California Polytechnic State University to develop a canal automation system including flowmeters and volumetric options for measuring flow rate. As they were implemented, these efforts increased the efficiency of the district's system.

WSID has a surface drainage system to collect tailwater. All of the surface drainage eventually finds its way to the San Joaquin River. The water that flows in the natural channels goes directly to the river and the other facilities discharge onto riparian land adjacent to the river, which enhances the riparian habitat.

WSID has also been losing irrigated acreage as a result of urban development in the vicinity of the City of Patterson. Over the past decade, WSID has lost irrigated acreage to rural development resulting from parcel splitting. As parcels are divided and sold homes are built, as well as driveways, outbuildings and yards, resulting in a permanent loss of irrigated acres. Preliminary analysis reveals that up to 5% of district acreage has likely been lost as a result of this process.

SEMITROPIC WATER STORAGE DISTRICT

Water Supply and Use

SWSD and its improvement districts are organized under the laws of the State of California under the Water Storage District Law (California Water Code, Section 39000 et seq.). SWSD supplies imported supplemental surface water to landowners and water users and has ongoing groundwater banking programs with other entities, including those located outside its service area boundary. SWSD obtains water from the State Water Project through its contracts with the Kern County Water Agency under the agency's master contract with the California Department of Water Resources executed on November 15, 1963, and currently provides for a total contract entitlement for SWSD of 155,000 acre-feet. Approximately 149,200 acres of land within Semitropic are irrigated, with a total annual demand of approximately 522,000 acre-feet based on current cropping patterns and irrigation practices. Semitropic has entered into contracts with individual landowners who own a combined 42,328 acres of land, which is designated as the Surface Water Service Area (SWSA). If available, Semitropic has commitments to deliver 145,240 acre-feet per year to the SWSA. Additional lands outside the SWSA, approximately 24,500 acres, have also been connected to Semitropic's distribution system so such lands may receive surface water when available. These additional lands are designated as the Temporary Water Service Area and may be referred to as the Non-Contract Service Area. Total landowner demand within the SWSA and

Temporary Water Service Area for surface water supplies is greater than water available under Semitropic's entitlement for State Water Project water and other surface-water supplies.

Description of Assignment

Volume of Water to be Assigned

WSID proposes to enter into a one (1) year agreement to transfer up to fifteen thousand (15,000) acre feet of water to SWSD. The water to be transferred will be comprised of water pursuant to WSID's contract with the United States for water supply from the Contract.

Existing Water Use

Currently WSID's License rights are used within and immediately adjacent to WSID for agricultural purposes. Historically WSID has used all of its surface and groundwater sources within its boundaries for irrigation demands. As WSID has constructed more facilities to recapture drain water and has implemented aggressive conservation, it has also transferred the water that has been made available.

For several years WSID has undertaken concerted efforts to conserve water. WSID provides agricultural water to 84 customers on about 24,800 acres, 19,762 of which is irrigated, and located in Stanislaus County. The estimated annual water delivery is 57,000 acre-feet out of which 64,000 acre-feet is diverted from the San Joaquin River. WSID receives water from the DMC under the Contract to supplement its License Water. Water supplies under the Contract include up to fifty thousand (50,000) acre-feet of water. In addition to its CVP and San Joaquin River supplies, WSID also pumps groundwater when necessary.

The West Stanislaus Irrigation District distribution system consists of a three-mile-long, concrete-lined main canal and 84 miles of laterals and sublaterals that are either canals or pipelines. Sixty-eight of these 84 miles are either concrete-lined canals or concrete pipe. The main canal carries water supplied by six pumping plants. The district receives water from the Delta-Mendota Canal through two diversion points. The district has a continuous monitoring system to accurately measure water diverted into the laterals. The water measurements are taken three times daily at the water user's turnouts. Control structures in the laterals control the level of water and regulate the flow.

WSID has aggressively pursued an automation and modernization plan since 1997 that is expected to continue in the future. Modernization efforts include replacing less efficient pumps and motors and utilized sharp crested weirs, mag meter and accusonic meters for accurate flow measurement, and state-of- the-art pumping plant control systems and a Power Monitoring SCADA system at its five pumping plants on the Main Canal. WSID also participated in the California Energy Commission's (CEC) pump testing and pump retrofit/repair program. Through a funding program provided by Reclamation, WSID worked with the Irrigation Training and Research Center at California Polytechnic State University to develop a canal automation system including flowmeters and volumetric options for measuring flow rate. These efforts have increased the efficiency of the district's system and reduced the return flow of waters high in salts to the San Joaquin River, and have conserved water.

WSID has also been losing irrigated acreage as a result of urban development in the vicinity of the City of Patterson. Over the past decade, WSID has lost irrigated acreage to rural development resulting from parcel splitting. As parcels are divided and sold homes are built, as well as driveways, outbuildings and yards, resulting in a permanent loss of irrigated acres. Preliminary analysis reveals that up to 5% of district acreage has likely been lost as a result of this process.

How Water is to be Made Available.

Water transferred from WSID will be made available to SWSD at the existing SWSD turnouts located in Kern County Reach 10(a) of the California Aqueduct. No construction that has not already been approved and subject to environmental review is required to transfer the water from WSID to SWSD. When CVP water was previously delivered to SWSD, the district advised the Bureau that there existed about 30,900 acres in 509 ownerships of parcels between 15 and 240 acres. The average application rate to these lands is about 3.4 acre-feet per acre. In addition, there are approximately 504 separate ownerships for a total of over 100,000 acres in excess of 240 acres each. Obviously cropping patterns and ownerships have changed some, but generally speaking, the ratios could be considered similar.

Facilities Required to Transfer Water

The water to be transferred will be water pursuant to the Contract. The water will remain in the DMC and flow past WSID's DMC turnout at milepost 31.31L and continue downstream in the DMC and pump at O'Neil Pump/Generating Plant make the CVP water available to DWR for conveyance in the California Aqueduct for delivery to SWSD in Reach 10(a) located in Kern

County. No new construction or change in operation is needed to accommodate transfer of CVP water. While no Warren Act Contract is required, Reclamation's permission is required to complete the transfer.

Project Characteristics

Because WSID currently receives CVP water supplies through the Delta Mendota Canal via its turnout at milepost 31.31L, water through this transfer would be delivered to SWSD through the same facilities, and diverted by SWSD at its existing turnouts located in Reach 10(a) of the California Aqueduct. No new water conveyance facilities would be needed to deliver the transferred water. Once in the District, water will be conveyed through SWSD's existing distribution system. Since this water needs to be delivered during the fall and winter seasons when irrigation demand is at a minimum, SWSD intends to use and/or store within its boundaries in an existing permitted groundwater storage facility, and some of which may be conveyed through an existing interconnection pipeline to Shafter Wasco Irrigation District (SWID), a federal Friant Unit District that is contiguous to SWSD, to assist landowners and water users in both districts to obtain safe and reliable supply to offset shortfalls in their surface water, thereby reducing groundwater pumping.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

The following checklist is the form presented in appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. The checklist form is used to describe the impacts of the proposed project. A discussion follows each environmental issue identified in the checklist. All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts. Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less then significant with mitigation, or less than significant. For this checklist the following designations are used:

Potentially Significant Impact: "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.

Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated: "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact."

Less-Than-Significant Impact: Any impact that would not be considered significant under CEQA relative to existing standards. If no significant impacts are identified, a Negative Declaration would be prepared.

No Impact: The project would not have an impact.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. AESTHETICS -- Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☐	X
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock	☐	☐	☐	X

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?				
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	☐	☐	☐	X
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☐	X

Discussion

a - e)The proposed project is the transfer of a portion of WSID's water rights through existing facilities with minor modifications. No unanticipated construction or land alterations are involved. Therefore, the project would have no impact.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
II. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES: In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. *Would the project*:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	X
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	X
c) Involve other changes in the existing environment that, due to their location or	☐	☐	☐	X

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?				

Discussion

a-c) The proposed project is the transfer of a portion of WSID's water rights through existing facilities. The transfer would involve only surplus conserved water, and would not reduce the supplies available to WSID's existing agricultural users. Similarly, no land conversion will take place in SWSD as the water transferred is intended to replace depleted supplies, not increase supplies. Water will not be provided to lands that have not been historically cultivated. No unanticipated construction or land alterations are involved. Therefore, the project would have no impact.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
III. AIR QUALITY -- *Would the project:*				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☐	X
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	☐	☐	☐	X
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions that exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	☐	☐	☐	X
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	☐	X
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☐	X

Discussion

a-e) The proposed project is the transfer of a portion of WSID's water rights through existing facilities. No unanticipated construction or land alterations are involved. Therefore, the project would have no impact.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES -- *Would the project:*				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☐	X
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☐	X
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☐	☐	X
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☐	☐	☐	X
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☐	X
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan?	☐	☐	☐	X

Discussion

a – f) The proposed project is the transfer of a portion of WSID's water rights through existing facilities. No unanticipated construction or land alterations are involved. While WSID does divert water from the San Joaquin River, no change is contemplated to the diversion facilities by the project, and no change is contemplated from the historical quantity or time of diversion. Therefore, the project would have no impact.

In addition, most of the habitat types required by species protected by the Endangered Species Act do not occur in the project area. The Project would not involve the conversion of any land fallowed and untilled for three or more years. Such actions would require subsequent environmental review. The Project also would not change the land use patterns of the cultivated or fallowed fields that do not have some value to listed species. Due to capacity limitations and water quality restrictions in the DMC, there would be no effects on listed fish species. No critical habitat occurs within the area affected by the Project, and so none of the primary constituent elements of any critical habitat would be affected. Any encountered biological resources are likely to be those associated with actively cultivated land. Since no increased natural stream course or additional surface water pumping would occur there would be no effects on listed fish species.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
V. CULTURAL RESOURCES -- *Would the project*:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?	☐	☐	☐	X
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☐	☐	X
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☐	☐	X
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	☐	☐	☐	X

Discussion

a-d) The proposed project is the transfer of a portion of WSID's water rights through existing facilities. No unanticipated construction or land alterations are involved. Therefore, the project would have no impact.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS – *Would the project*:				
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:	☐	☐	☐	X
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault?	☐	☐	☐	X
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☐	X
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☐	X
iv) Landslides?	☐	☐	☐	X
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	☐	X
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	☐	☐	☐	X
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☐	X
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	☐	☐	☐	X

Discussion

a-e) The proposed project is the transfer of a portion of WSID's water rights through existing facilities. No unanticipated construction or land alterations are involved. Therefore, the project would have no impact.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS -- *Would the project:*				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☐	X
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☐	☐	X
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☐	X
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	☐	☐	☐	X
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	X
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	X
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	X
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or	☐	☐	☐	X

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
where residences are intermixed with wildlands?				

Discussion

a-h) The proposed project is the transfer of a portion of WSID's water rights through existing facilities. No unanticipated construction or land alterations are involved. Therefore, the project would have no impact.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VIII. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY -- *Would the project*:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	☐	☐	☐	X
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level that would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	☐	☐	☐	X
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?	☐	☐	☐	X
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on- or off-site?	☐	☐	☐	X
e) Create or contribute runoff water which	☐	☐	☐	X

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?				
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	☐	☐	☐	X
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?	☐	☐	☐	X
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☐	X
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?	☐	☐	☐	X
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?	☐	☐	☐	X

Discussion

a-j) The proposed project is the transfer of a portion of WSID's water rights through existing facilities. No unanticipated construction or land alterations are involved. Therefore, the project would have no impact.

There will be less water applied in WSID as a result of conservation efforts, use of reclaimed water, and a pre-existing reduction in irrigated acres. There will be no increase in irrigation in SWSD, as water transferred pursuant to the Project is intended to make up for reduced supplies, not increase supplies over historic use within the district. Therefore, there will be no effect on surface water supplies or quality. Since water quantities and deliveries will not change there will not be a shift to groundwater due to the Project. Therefore, there also will be no effect on groundwater supplies or quality.

IX. LAND USE AND PLANNING - *Would the project:*				
a) Physically divide an established	☐	☐	☐	X

community?				
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☐	☐	X
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	X

Discussion

a-c) The proposed project is the transfer of a portion of WSID's water rights through existing facilities. No unanticipated construction or land alterations are involved. Therefore, the project would have no impact. The water transfer will not provide for additional water supplies that could act as an incentive for conversion of native habitat for increased acreage of agricultural production, municipal and industrial development, or other activities. Use of the water transferred will be limited to agricultural/irrigation use. The amount and types of crops planted will vary according to the annual water allocation and farming practices, but water supplies will be available only to lands historically cultivated within the district.

X. MINERAL RESOURCES -- *Would the project:*				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☐	X
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	☐	☐	☐	X

Discussion

a, b) The proposed project is the transfer of a portion of WSID's water rights through existing facilities. No unanticipated construction or land alterations are involved. Therefore, the project would have no impact.

Issues	**Potentially Significant Impact**	**Less Than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less Than Significant Impact**	**No Impact**
XI. NOISE –				

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project result in:				
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	☐	☐	☐	X
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	X
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	☐	☐	☐	X
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	☐	☐	☐	X
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	X
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would people in the area be exposed to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	X

Discussion

a-f) The proposed project is the transfer of a portion of WSID's water rights through existing facilities. No unanticipated construction or land alterations are involved. Therefore, the project would have no impact.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XII. POPULATION AND HOUSING -- *Would the project*:				
a) Induce substantial population growth in an	☐	☐	☐	X

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?				
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	X
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	X

Discussion

a-c) The proposed project is the transfer of a portion of WSID's water rights through existing facilities. No unanticipated construction or land alterations are involved. Therefore, the project would have no impact.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIII. PUBLIC SERVICES				
a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:	☐	☐	☐	X
Fire protection?	☐	☐	☐	X
Police protection?	☐	☐	☐	X
Schools?	☐	☐	☐	X
Parks?	☐	☐	☐	X
Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☐	X

Discussion

a) The proposed project is the transfer of a portion of WSID's water rights through existing facilities. No unanticipated construction or land alterations are involved. Therefore, the project would have no impact.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIV. RECREATION --				
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☐	X
b) Does the project include or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☐	X

Discussion

a, b) The proposed project is the transfer of a portion of WSID's water rights through existing facilities. No unanticipated construction or land alterations are involved. Therefore, the project would have no impact.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XV. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC -- *Would the project*:				
a) Cause an increase in traffic that is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?	☐	☐	☐	X
b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	☐	☐	☐	X

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?	☐	☐	☐	X
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☐	X
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☐	X
f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?	☐	☐	☐	X
g) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts)?	☐	☐	☐	X

Discussion

a-g) The proposed project is the transfer of a portion of WSID's water rights through existing facilities. No unanticipated construction or land alterations are involved. Therefore, the project would have no impact.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVI. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS -- *Would the project*:				
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	☐	☐	☐	X
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☐	X
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant	☐	☐	☐	X

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
environmental effects?				
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	☐	☐	☐	X
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	☐	☐	☐	X
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	☐	☐	☐	X
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☐	X

Discussion

a-g) The proposed project is the transfer of a portion of WSID's water rights through existing facilities. No unanticipated construction or land alterations are involved. Therefore, the project would have no impact. The water transfer will not provide for additional water supplies that could act as an incentive for conversion of native habitat for increased acreage of agricultural production, municipal and industrial development, or other activities. Use of the water transferred will be limited to agricultural/irrigation use. The amount and types of crops planted will vary according to the annual water allocation and farming practices, but water supplies will be available only to lands historically cultivated within the district. Therefore, both districts will have sufficient water supplies available from existing entitlements and resources, along with the water supplied by the Project.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE --				
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or	☐	☐	☐	X

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?				
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	☐	☐	☐	X
c) Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings?	☐	☐	☐	X

DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

Scope of the Project

Cumulative Impacts

WSID must find that the project may have a significant effect on the environment if the project's potential environmental impacts, although individually limited, are cumulative considerable. Public Resources Code §21083(b); 14 Cal Code Regs §15065(c). "Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effect of past projects, other current projects and probably future projects. WSID did not identify any other projects to be considered in its analysis. Therefore, WSID has determined that the incremental impacts of the project are not cumulatively considerable after evaluating them against the backdrop of the environmental effects of the other foreseeable projects described above.

5. CONSULTATION WITH RESPONSIBLE AGENCY

The USBR is a responsible agency under Public Resources Code §21080.3 and 14 California Code of Regulations §15381. CEQA requires that as soon as the lead agency has decided that an initial study is required, it must consult informally with all responsible agencies to obtain their recommendations on whether an EIR or a Negative Declaration should be prepared. Public Resources Code §21080.3; 14 Cal Code Regs §15063(g). WSID is in communication with Reclamation to discuss the transfer.

6. DETERMINATION

Based upon the information contained in the Initial Study, it is determined that the Negative Declaration should be adopted.