APPLICATION

WaterSMART

Drought Response Program: Drought Resiliency Projects for FY24

Notice of Funding Opportunity No. R24AS00007

City of San Buenaventura State Water Interconnection Project

City of San Buenaventura (Ventura Water)
501 Poli Street
Ventura, CA 93001

Jennifer Tribo
Water Resources Manager
jtribo@cityofventura.ca.gov
(805) 652-4563

Kennedy/Jenks Consultants

Proposal Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Section 1: Technical Proposal and Evaluation Criteria

1.1 Executive Summary

Applicant Name: City of San Buenaventura (City of Ventura)
City, County, State: City of Ventura, Ventura County, California

The City of Ventura is applying under **Funding Group III**, and is a **Category A Applicant**, a local authority with water delivery authority. The project falls under **Task A**: Increasing the Reliability of Water Supplies through Infrastructure Improvements.

The City of San Buenaventura (City of Ventura, City) is located in western Ventura County, California, approximately 50 miles northwest of Los Angeles. Over the last decade, the City has experienced multiple severe drought events, including a 3-year drought of "Exceptional" levels which severely impacted the City's water supply availability and reliability. At the height of the recent droughts, the City's surface water availability was reduced to less than one third of normal year supplies. The City is particularly vulnerable to droughts as it exclusively depends on local surface and groundwater supplies. The City is therefore proposing implementation of the City of San Buenaventura State Water Interconnection Project (Project) which will consist of the construction of an approximately 4.3-mile pipeline and related appurtenances to enable access to the City's existing State Water Project (SWP) allocation. The pipeline would extend from the eastern side of the City to a connection with the Calleguas Municipal Water District (Calleguas) system, in unincorporated Ventura County. Calleguas would wheel the supplies to the City via Metropolitan Water District of Southern California's (Metropolitan) and Calleguas' systems. The pipeline would enable access to the City's 10,000 acre-feet per year (AFY) SWP entitlement with an expected long-term average of 5,400 AFY. By building the infrastructure to deliver SWP supplies, this project will help diversify the City's water supply portfolio, improve water supply reliability and enhance long-term drought resiliency in the region. This Project is among the City's planned water supply projects identified as necessary to meet projected water demands and improve drought resiliency. The Project's water supply benefits are therefore accounted for in the City's 2020 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) reliability projections as well as the City's annual Comprehensive Water Resources Report. Calleguas and United Water Conservation District (UWCD) are project partners and have provided letters of support.

- Project construction is estimated to take approximately 30 months, starting in November 2024 and ending by May 2027.
- The Project will not be located within a Federal facility nor will it involve Federal lands.

The City of Ventura provides potable water supplies across a service area of about 40 square miles, encompassing a population of approximately 113,500 and 32,285 service connections. The City's water service area is comprised of all areas within City limits and portions of unincorporated areas within Ventura County.

The City currently meets it customer water demands exclusively with local water supplies, consisting primarily of surface water (approximately 45% of total supplies) from the Ventura River and Lake Casitas, and groundwater (approximately 54% of total supplies) from three local groundwater basins: Mound, Oxnard Plain and Santa Paula. The City also supplies a small portion of recycled water from the City-owned Ventura Water Reclamation Facility.

The Casitas Municipal Water District operates and maintains Lake Casitas. The City receives Lake Casitas supplies under a Water Services Agreement, last updated in 2017, which establishes that Casitas shall supply the City with sufficient water to meet its projected water demand. However, the City's allocation may be adjusted in accordance with the Casitas Water Efficiency and Allocation Program (WEAP) in the event of a water shortage. Water from the Ventura River is collected via surface diversion, subsurface collector, and shallow wells owned and operated by the City. The City owns and operates groundwater wells that produce groundwater from three local basins: Mound, Oxnard Plain and Santa Paula. The Mound Groundwater Basin has historically provided water for overlying beneficial uses and satisfies agricultural, municipal, and industrial demands. The Oxnard Plain Groundwater Basin is managed by the Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency (FCGMA) which determines the City's allocation from this basin. The management of the Santa Paula Basin was established under a court stipulated judgment originally entered in 1996. The City's groundwater allocations and extractions rights in this basin are determined by the Judgment.

The City's current supply capacity is 22,705 AFY. By 2030, in an unconstrained year (normal water year), the total amount of water available to the City is estimated to be 24,787 AFY, based on the City's 2023 Comprehensive Water Resources Report. This future estimate accounts for adjustments in local water supplies and the addition of planned water supply projects, including the proposed Project. The 10-year average annual water consumption since 2013 is 14,758 AFY.

1.2 Project Location

The City of San Buenaventura State Water Interconnection Project will be implemented in the City of Ventura, located in western Ventura County, California, approximately 50 miles northwest of Los Angeles. The proposed pipeline will run within the eastern side of the City and a portion of unincorporated County lands, where it will connect to the Calleguas portion of the interconnection. The approximate project midpoint is 34°15'56 and -119°8'39. See Figure 1.

1.3 Technical Project Description

Project Need and Background:

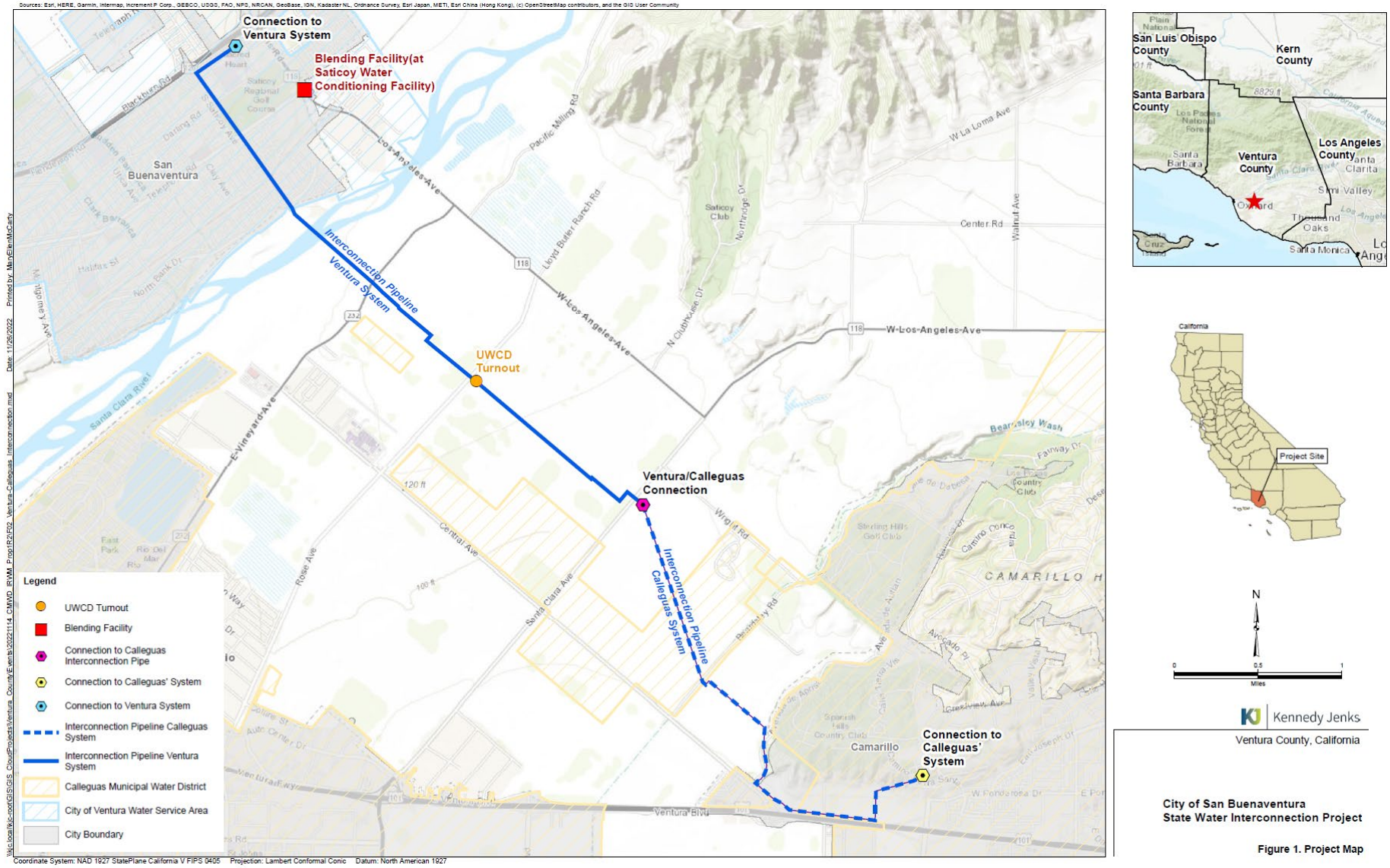
The City is particularly vulnerable to drought conditions due to its exclusive dependence on local water supplies. The recent droughts had major impacts on the City's water supply availability, resulting in significant reductions to surface water availability and declining groundwater levels. (Additional details on drought impacts are provided in subsequent sections.)

Since 1971, the City has had an entitlement of 10,000 AFY to the SWP. However, it cannot access this supply due to a lack of infrastructure to deliver the SWP water to the City's system.

Proposed Project and Objectives:

The City therefore proposes the construction of the City of San Buenaventura State Water Interconnection Project consisting of an approximately 4.3-mile pipeline which would extend from a connection point with the Calleguas system westward to a connection with the City's system. Calleguas delivers SWP water to retail partners throughout southeastern Ventura County and can wheel the City's SWP water to them via Metropolitan and Calleguas' systems. Therefore, the Project would enable the transport of water between Calleguas' and the City's distribution systems thereby allowing Ventura to receive its SWP allotment.

Figure 1 – Project Location



With growing drought risks under climate change and growing vulnerabilities to the City's water supply reliability, the City has been evaluating projects to expand its water supply portfolio and improve reliability and drought resilience. The proposed Project is a long-term water resiliency project with the main objectives to diversify the City's water supplies, increase drought resilience and enhance regional water supply reliability. In particular, it will enable the City to take advantage of the anticipated wetter wet years in the future to take SWP water when it is available and be better prepared for the anticipated longer, drier dry periods that are also expected. Additionally, with the higher quality SWP water the project would help improve water quality by supplementing lower quality groundwater supplies.

The following major project elements will be constructed:

- Approximately 20,000 linear feet of 30-inch diameter steel pipeline installed by open cut trench and related appurtenances;
- Approximately 500 linear feet of 30-inch diameter steel pipeline installed by jack and bore and related appurtenances;
- Approximately 2,500 linear feet of 24-inch or 28-inch diameter high-density polyethylene (HDPE) pipeline installed by horizontal directional drilling and related appurtenances;
- Approximately 2,600 linear feet of 16-inch polyvinyl chloride (PVC) pipeline installed by open trench and related appurtenances;
- Meter vault;
- Flow control and instrumentation facilities;
- Blow off outlet and associated energy dissipation structure;
- Blending station and associated pipelines.

Additional details on project implementation are provided in Section 1.5.5.

1.4 Performance Measures

Performance measures that will be used to quantify project benefits will include the following:

- Access to New Water Supply. The primary benefit of this Project is that it will provide access to the City's SWP entitlement of 10,000 AFY with an expected long-term average of 5,400 AFY. Actual deliveries will be measured with flow meters at the connection point between the Ventura and Calleguas systems.

- Increased Water Supply Reliability and Drought Resilience. The Project will enable the City to diversify its water supplies and provide enhanced opportunity for conjunctive use, with the result of increasing the City's water supply reliability and improving resilience to future drought conditions. The City will be able to assess these benefits when balancing its demands with its available supplies. The City prepares an annual Comprehensive Water Resources Report in which it updates the water supply portfolio and evaluates current water and projected water needs.

- Improved Water Quality. The Project will help improve water quality by supplementing lower quality groundwater supplies in the east end of the City with higher quality SWP water. Water in the Santa Paula Basin is highly mineralized and does not currently meet

secondary standards for total dissolved solids (TDS). Currently, TDS concentrations average around 1,300 mg/L. With the project, when SWP allocations are available, the City will be able to blend SWP water with groundwater from the Santa Paula Basin prior to delivery to customers to improve water quality and meet secondary water quality standards for TDS of 1,000 mg/L. The City regularly monitors its water quality and will be able to assess improvements with the Project by analyzing water samples collected in the distribution system.

1.5 Evaluation Criteria

1.5.1 Evaluation Criterion A – Project Benefits (Up to 30 pts)

1.5.1.1 Sub-criterion A1.a: Adds to Available Water Supplies

- *How will the project build long-term resilience to drought? How many years will the project continue to provide benefits?*

The City currently depends exclusively on local surface and groundwater supplies, including Lake Casitas, Ventura River and three local groundwater basins. This dependence on a limited portfolio increases the strain on individual supplies when specific supplies are limited and increases the City's vulnerability to droughts. This was experienced during the recent droughts when surface water supplies declined to approximately one third of maximum production and groundwater levels showed obvious declines.

The Project will provide the necessary infrastructure to access the City's SWP entitlement of 10,000 AFY, with a long-term average of 5,400 AFY. The Project will thereby expand the City's water supply portfolio with a new high quality water source which will provide the City more flexibility in managing its water supplies.

Importantly, the Project will also facilitate direct delivery of UWCD's SWP entitlement of 3,150 AFY. Delivery of its entitlement is currently limited by constraints on the local Piru Creek and Santa Clara River since it can only access this water via surface deliveries. As a result, the Project will have regional water supply reliability benefits. (Water supply benefits in subsequent sections will focus on the City's supply.)

During drought conditions, surface water supplies tend to be less available, and the City generally depends more heavily on groundwater supplies. However, those supplies cannot compensate for the reductions in surface water supplies during drought conditions. In fact, increased reliance on local groundwater sources during the recent drought events resulted in a clear downward trend in groundwater levels across Ventura County. The Project will help reduce pressures on, and improve the sustainability of, the groundwater supplies upon which the City highly depends. With the Project, the City can utilize SWP supplies when available to reduce reliance on local groundwater supplies during average hydrologic years and thereby improve conjunctive use of its supplies. This strategy will provide an improved groundwater supply buffer during drought conditions.

The Project would also help reduce pressures on local surface water supplies, including Lake Casitas and the Ventura River. These sources are particularly strained during drought conditions, and stresses on Ventura River resources are also the focus of pending studies and protective actions. The Project will enable the City to manage local surface water demands more flexibly based on hydrologic variations. With the new supplemental water supply, the City can reduce

impacts on local surface water supplies during dry conditions when those supplies are more stressed and flows are reduced, and prioritize the use of surface water supplies during wetter years.

The Project is therefore critical for improving the City's long-term drought resiliency and water security in the face of growing drought risks. The Project will help alleviate pressures on local surface and groundwater supplies that are already increasingly impacted by drought, environmental, regulatory, operational, and legal constraints, and will increase the City's resilience to future drought conditions.

Based on the estimated useful life of the Interconnection pipeline, the Project will continue to provide benefits for at least 100 years, assuming continued availability of SWP supplies.

- *What percentage of the total water supply does the additional water supply represent? How was this estimate calculated?*

The City's average annual water consumption over the last 10 years is 14,758 AFY. Based on a potential annual maximum of 10,000 AFY SWP supplies, the Project could make up nearly 68% of the City's actual volume supplied.

In a normal water year, by 2030, the City estimates that SWP supplies would make up 5% of its water supply portfolio. This estimate accounts for only 1,300 AFY of SWP supplies which the City estimates needing to blend with local groundwater supplies under normal hydrologic conditions. Under drought conditions, by 2030, the City estimates that SWP supplies could make up to nearly 16% of total supplies, when other local supplies are more limited.

- *What is the estimated quantity of additional supply the project will provide and how was this estimate calculated? Provide this quantity in acre-feet per year as the average annual benefit over ten years (e.g., if the project captures flood flows in wet years, state this and provide the average benefit over ten years or longer including dry years).*

Since 1971, the City has had an entitlement of 10,000 AFY to SWP water. This Project would finally provide the necessary infrastructure for the City to access those supplies. According to Department of Water Resources, Technical Addendum to the State Water Project Final Delivery Capability Report 2019 (August 26, 2020) Table B-32, the long-term average delivery of SWP is approximately 54% of the Table A Entitlement. Accordingly, the Project could provide on average over ten years up to 5,400 AFY for the City, or up to 10,000 AFY in a single year.

- *Provide a qualitative description of the degree/significance of the benefits associated with the additional water supplies.*

The water supply benefits of this Project are critical for the City to ensure reliable water supplies during future drought conditions. The City's water conservation efforts have been successful in significantly reducing water demands. Currently, customer demands are 25 percent below demands in 2013 despite population growth. However, the City anticipates facing water supply reliability issues during future droughts without the implementation of this Project. The City has witnessed significant impacts to its water supplies during the recent drought events, including historically low levels at Lake Casitas, significant reductions in Ventura River flows and clear trends of declining groundwater levels. And drought risks are projected to grow in the future, including becoming more severe, prolonged, and frequent. These drought risks are compounded by use restrictions intended to protect local water resources that the City depends on.

For example, heightened environmental requirements are impacting the availability of Ventura River water supplies to meet City customer demands. Drought-related reductions in Ventura streamflows pose threats to the riparian ecosystems, including critical habitat for anadromous fish in the Ventura River. The City of Ventura therefore entered into an interim agreement with the Santa Barbara Channelkeeper in 2019 to preserve river flows in an effort to protect habitat for steelhead trout and other wildlife by limiting water production from the Ventura River when flows reach threshold low levels. This matter is an on-going process but final decisions may negatively impact timing and amounts of Ventura River supplies available to the City in the future, especially during droughts. Since the City generally relies on the Ventura River for about 19% of its overall water supplies, potential restrictions on Ventura River supplies to maintain flows for fish can threaten water security, especially with ongoing drought conditions.

When available, the City may purchase water from Lake Casitas to make up for Ventura River production, however under the existing Water Services Agreement between the City and Casitas, Casitas could reduce the City's allocation by up to 50% during a critical water shortage. Recent drought conditions resulted in reductions to the City's Casitas allocation by 30%. Therefore, with increasing drought risks, both Ventura River supplies and Lake Casitas supplies are anticipated to become overall less reliable in the future.

At the same time, drought-related pumping restrictions and development of sustainability measures to protect local groundwater basins are projected to substantially restrict the availability of groundwater supplies that the City can utilize. Increased reliance on local groundwater sources during the recent drought resulted in a clear downward trend in groundwater levels across Ventura County, including the Mound Basin. Additionally, the Oxnard Plain Basin has been determined to be in a state of critical overdraft, resulting from historic pumping above sustainable levels in addition to drought impacts. In response to these basin conditions, groundwater supplies are becoming more restricted by requirements to maintain long-term production within sustainable yields. Based on recently established sustainable management goals for the Oxnard Plain Basin, the City's allocation from that basin is anticipated to be reduced by 44% by 2040. It is possible that allowable groundwater pumping from the Mound Basin may also be reduced in the future as a result of groundwater sustainability efforts.

The water supply available from the Project will help make up for losses in annual yield from existing supply sources, thereby helping to ensure that the City can reliably meet its customer water demands over the long-term, especially during drought conditions.

1.5.1.2 Sub-criterion A1.b: Water Better Managed

The Project will increase access to water supplies not currently available to the City. Therefore, benefits have been described under Sub-criterion A1.a.

- *Salt Water Barriers* – Not applicable
- *Wells* – Not applicable
- *New Water Marketing Tool or Program* – Not applicable
- *Metering/Water Measurement Projects* – Not applicable

1.5.1.3 Sub-criterion A2.a: Climate Change

- *In addition to drought resiliency measures, does the proposed project include other natural hazard risk reductions for hazards such as wildfires or floods?*

The Project's benefit of increasing the City's water supply reliability is intrinsically connected to improved wildfire protection. Starting in December 2017, the Thomas Fire burned nearly 282,000 acres across northwestern Ventura County and into Santa Barbara County. This became the largest wildfire in Ventura County and is still among the largest wildfires in California to date. Of the 1,063 buildings destroyed in the fire, half were in the City of Ventura. The majority of the City falls within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone and climatic trends, including higher temperatures and less precipitation, are contributing to increasing fire risks in the area and across California. As such, it is critical that the City have access to reliable water supplies for maintaining fire flows to fight future wildfires and reduce related risks. This Project will provide access to a new supply which will increase the City's water supply reliability, including for purposes of fighting wildfires.

- *Will the proposed project establish and use a renewable energy source?* Not applicable.

- *Will the proposed project reduce greenhouse gas emissions by sequestering carbon in soils, grasses, trees, and other vegetation?* Not applicable.

- *Does the proposed project include green or sustainable infrastructure to improve community climate resilience?* Not applicable.

- *Does the proposed project seek to reduce or mitigate climate pollutions such as air or water pollution?*

Local groundwater makes up over 50% of the City's water supplies, but in addition to quantity issues, these groundwater resources are also impacted by quality issues. The groundwater is impaired by elevated TDS levels of between 1,200 to 1,600 mg/L which exceed secondary water quality standards of 1,000 mg/L and elevated sulfate concentrations often exceeding the 500 mg/L standard. Due to these groundwater quality conditions, the City must blend its groundwater supplies with its higher quality water supplies to improve the quality of its delivered water supplies. However, this approach is becoming increasingly challenging as its water supplies are becoming increasingly constrained. By enabling the City to access high quality SWP water, the Project will provide a new source of blending water to improve the quality of the water served to its customers.

- *Does the proposed project have a conservation or management component that will promote healthy lands and soils or serve to protect water supplies and its associated uses?*

The Project would help reduce pressures on local surface water supplies, including the Ventura River which encompasses important riparian ecosystems. Drought-related reductions in streamflows pose particular threats to the riparian ecosystems in the Ventura River.

The Ventura River was identified as one of the five priority stream systems in the California Water Action Plan of 2014. As a result, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)

and the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) have been conducting instream flow studies to eventually enhance flows to support critical habitat for anadromous fish in the Ventura River watershed. Results of these studies may result in establishing flow thresholds for conservation, restoration, and protection of southern steelhead in the Ventura River watershed.

Additionally, the Santa Barbara Channelkeeper filed a lawsuit over concerns of impacts to habitat for steelhead trout and other wildlife due to the City's usage of Ventura River water. The City entered into an interim agreement with the Santa Barbara Channelkeeper in 2019 to preserve river flows to protect habitat for steelhead trout and other wildlife by limiting water production from the Ventura River when flows reach threshold low levels.

Results of the ongoing studies may impact the timing and amounts of Ventura River supplies the City may utilize in the future, especially during droughts. By providing access to SWP supplies, the Project will enable the City to manage surface water demands more flexibly based on hydrologic variations. With the new supplemental water supply, the City can reduce impacts on Ventura River water supplies during dry conditions when those supplies are more stressed and flows are reduced, and prioritize the use of local surface water supplies during wetter years. The Project will thereby help the City maintain critical flows in support of environmental beneficial uses while making up for a large portion of local surface water supply reductions.

- *Does the proposed project contribute to climate change resiliency in other ways not described above?* Not applicable.

1.5.1.4 Sub-criterion A2.b: Environmental Benefits

- *Does the project seek to improve ecological climate change resiliency of a wetland, river, or stream to benefit to wildlife, fisheries, or habitats? Do these benefits support an endangered or threatened species?*

By providing access to SWP supplies, the Project will help diversify the City's water supply portfolio and enable it to reduce impacts on Ventura River water supplies, especially during dry conditions when those supplies are more stressed. Reduced reliance on the Ventura River is imperative for being able to maintain critical flows in support of environmental beneficial uses.

The Ventura River is designated critical habitat and a high priority watershed for the recovery of the federally endangered southern California steelhead (Oncorhynchus mykiss). The population has been identified as a Core 1 Recovery Priority in the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Southern California Steelhead Recovery Plan. Additionally, the Ventura River was identified as one of the five priority stream systems in the California Water Action Plan of 2014. As noted above, the SWRCB and CDFW are currently working to develop flow criteria and identify important flow thresholds for conservation, restoration, and protection of southern steelhead in the Ventura River watershed.

The City has currently committed, under the interim agreement with Santa Barbara Channelkeeper, to cease operations on the Ventura River when flows are less than 4 cfs (cubic feet per second) in order to protect critical habitat for endangered Southern California Steelhead Trout. However, since the City generally relies on the Ventura River for about 19% of its overall water supplies, potential restrictions on Ventura River supplies to maintain flows for fish passage can threaten water security, especially with ongoing drought conditions. With the proposed Project, the City would more easily be able to make up for reductions in Ventura River supplies

with alternative supplies and would thereby be able to avoid a water supply shortage without further impeding the migration of steelhead or impairing their critical habitat in the Ventura River.

- *What are the types and quantities of environmental benefits provided, such as the types of species and the numbers benefited, acreage of habitat improved, restored, or protected, or the amount of additional stream flow added? How were these benefits calculated?*

As noted above, the Ventura River is designated critical habitat and a high priority watershed for the recovery of the federally endangered southern California steelhead. By providing access to SWP supplies, the Project will help the City limit production from the Ventura River during low flow conditions to better protect vulnerable riparian habitat, including critical steelhead habitat.

It is estimated that by reducing its production from the Ventura River, the City could improve flows by as much as 2 cfs. Based on a 2013 study, it was found that when the City is pumping at full capacity at its Foster Park wellfield along the Ventura River, there was a 2 cfs difference in flow upstream versus downstream of production facilities. Similarly, it found that if pumping was reduced by at least half, the difference in flow upstream and downstream of facilities was near zero. Therefore, as the Project will allow the City to reduce production from the Ventura River during times of low flow, the Project will help enhance Ventura River instream flows by as much as 2 cfs.

- *Will the proposed project reduce the likelihood of a species listing or otherwise improve the species status?*

Yes, as described above, the Project will help the City reduce its impacts on the Ventura River, especially during low-flow conditions, which is a critical step in the recovery of the federally endangered southern California steelhead. See additional details in responses above.

1.5.1.5 Sub-criterion A2.c: Other Benefits

- *Will the project assist States and water users in complying with interstate compacts?* Not applicable.
- *Will the project benefit multiple sectors and/or users (e.g., agriculture, municipal and industrial, environmental, recreation, or others)? Describe the associated sector benefits.*

Yes, the Project will benefit the City's various water customers as well as the beneficial uses of the Ventura River. The Project will increase the City's water supply reliability to the benefit of its customers, which include municipal users, including residential, commercial/institutional and industrial customers. All customers will equally benefit from the improved supply reliability.

As mentioned above, by providing access to SWP supplies, the Project will also help the City reduce its impacts on the Ventura River and its beneficial uses. In addition to municipal and industrial uses, according to the Los Angeles Basin Plan, the Ventura River Watershed also serves the following beneficial uses: agricultural supply; ground water recharge; Freshwater Replenishment; Warm Freshwater Habitat; Cold Freshwater Habitat; Wildlife Habitat; Rare, Threatened, or Endangered Species; Migration of Aquatic Organisms; Spawning, Reproduction, and/or Early Development; and Wetland Habitat.

- *Will the project benefit a larger initiative to address sustainability?*

The Project is an important initiative to diversify the City's water supply portfolio, to improve water supply reliability to meet customer water demands, and to improve the sustainability of the City's individual water sources. As has been noted above, recent drought conditions greatly impacted available local surface water sources, including Lake Casitas and the Ventura River. Additionally, local groundwater basins were showing declining water levels and in some cases are experiencing unsustainable conditions. By enhancing the City's water supply portfolio with a new source, the Project will enable the City to enhance its conjunctive use program and manage its supplies more flexibly based on hydrologic variations. This means, the City can reduce its dependence on local surface water supplies and rely more heavily on groundwater supplies during dry conditions, and prioritize the use of local surface water supplies and SWP supplies during wetter years. This approach reduces impacts and provides greater protection for each of the City's water supply sources, with the end result of improving long-term sustainability.

Importantly, the Project will not only provide access to SWP supplies for the City with the benefits described above, but will also enable direct deliveries of SWP supplies to UWCD. Currently, UWCD has a SWP entitlement of 3,150 AFY, but delivery is limited by constraints on the local Piru Creek and Santa Clara River since it can only access this water via surface deliveries. UWCD is a wholesale water supplier in Ventura County, which works to maximize water resources of the lower Santa Clara River Valley and Oxnard Plain, contributing to the water supplies for a total population of nearly 260,000 in Ventura County. The Project will augment UWCD's existing supplies and enable it to enhance groundwater recharge operations. UWCD's recharge operations are the cornerstone of sustainable groundwater management in the Region, contributing to local water supply reliability and self-reliance. The ability to recharge additional water when available is particularly important due to changing climate conditions, which forecast fewer but wetter wet periods with lengthier dry periods in between.

In addition, the Project will also enable delivery of water from the City's system into Calleguas' system, thereby providing a critical alternative water supply in the event of an imported supply disruption in the Calleguas system. As such, the Project is a collaborative effort among multiple agencies with the shared goal of enhancing regional water security and resource sustainability.

- *Will the project help to prevent a water-related crisis or conflict? Is there frequently tension or litigation over water in the basin?*

Yes, by providing the City with access to a new water supply, the Project will help augment and diversify the City's water supplies, thereby helping to prevent a water shortage. Additionally, as noted previously, the new SWP supply will help the City reduce impacts on the Ventura River which is the subject of several studies related to enhancing flows to the benefit of the riparian ecosystems, including critical steelhead habitat.

In September 2014, Santa Barbara Channelkeeper filed a lawsuit against the SWRCB and the City, alleging that the City had been over-pumping water from the Ventura River. In September 2018, the City filed an amended cross-complaint bringing into the litigation all water users in the Ventura River watershed to ensure that all parties are at the table and involved in developing solutions. In September 2019, the City entered into an interim settlement agreement with Santa Barbara Channelkeeper, which was amended in 2020 with the intent to preserve river flows to protect habitat for steelhead trout and other wildlife by limiting water production from the Ventura River when flows reach threshold low levels. The current agreement requires the City to

modify its pumping based on flows in the Ventura River, including turning off its Nye Wells 7 and 8 when the daily average flow rate in the River drops below 4 cfs.

The Project will help the City make up for reductions from its Ventura River production when the City reduces pumping during times of low flow. Therefore, the Project will help the City address this issue with a long-term solution.

1.5.2 Evaluation Criterion B – Planning and Preparedness

- *Explain how the applicable plan addresses drought. Proposals that reference plans clearly intended to address drought will receive the most points under this criterion.*

The proposed Project is a planned water supply included in the City's 2020 UWMP which is a long-range planning tool that helps guide the City's water management actions. The City's UWMP includes projections over the next 25 years, with special consideration of drought conditions in relation to both water supply and demand. The UWMP demand projections consider that, historically, when the weather is hot and dry such as under drought conditions, water usage tends to increase. While per capita water use is managed with conservation actions, including drought rates that the City has implemented during recent drought events, dry year demands are projected to be higher compared to normal, non-drought conditions.

For supply projections, the UWMP considers drought scenarios, including single-dry years that represent the driest year by supply source and five-year drought periods. For Casitas supplies, projections take into account potential enactment of Casitas' Water Efficiency and Allocation Program, which includes potential reductions to City supplies of up to 50% depending on water shortage levels. UWMP drought projections account for an up to 30% reduction in allocation for the planning period. For Ventura River water supplies, availability during multi-year droughts is assumed to be 30% of normal year supplies, based on historic supply from past years. These assumptions also take into account potential future regulatory and environmental requirements.

Groundwater supply projections take into account reductions in potential yields based on drought-related impacts and planned management responses, among other factors. Reductions are primarily assumed for the Oxnard Basin, for which the City expects its allocation to decrease by 44% by 2040.

Among the most important analyses of the UWMP is the water supply reliability analysis which compares total projected water use with expected water supply over the planning period in five-year increments, including during drought years. Based on projected demands and availability of existing supplies, the UWMP found that planned water supply projects are needed to reliably meet its customer demands, especially during future drought conditions. Among the planned water supply projects that are accounted for in UWMP projections is the proposed Project.

In addition, the UWMP includes a specific Drought Risk Assessment which included an evaluation of all water supplies anticipated to be available from 2021 to 2025, assuming drought conditions. This five-year Drought Risk Assessment is also incorporated into the Water Shortage Event Contingency Plan (WSEP) which is a component of the UWMP. The WSEP helps guide the City in identifying and implementing actions to address various stages of water shortage, including drought-triggered shortages.

    - *Does the drought plan contain drought-focused elements (e.g., a system for monitoring drought, drought projections that consider climate change,*

identification of drought mitigation projects, drought response actions, and an operational and administrative framework)?

As noted above, the UWMP includes water supply reliability analyses which take into account drought impacts on demands and supplies over the 25-year planning period. Projections take into account historic drought events and anticipated drought impacts. (See UWMP Section 3.1.2, highlights on page 3-2.) Anticipated drought impacts, in turn, take into account climate change projections which forecast increased risks, including more frequent, severe, and prolonged drought events in the future. The UWMP specifically references the 2019 report of *Projected Changes in Ventura County Climate* (Oakley et. al. 2019). (See UWMP Section 1.10.)

A section of the UWMP is the WSEP whose purpose, among others, is to guide annual monitoring of supplies and demands. The WSEP includes specific steps for conducting annual water supply and demand assessments which help the City prepare for near-term shortages, including due to droughts. In the assessment, the projected availability of each supply source is evaluated assuming the subsequent year will be a dry year. This approach is applied specifically to consider drought impacts and establish appropriate responses to meet demands. (See WSEP Table 2-1 [WSEP pages 2-2 and 2-3] and Table 2-2 [WSEP pages 2-5 to 2-7].)

Response actions identified to address potential drought-related water supply reductions or shortages include targeted public outreach, water use restrictions, and water shortage surcharge rates. Near-term supply augmentation options could include acquiring additional water for a fee and would also be evaluated, as needed. (See UWMP Page 8-1 and WSEP Section 4.1, page 4-2 to 4-4]) The proposed Interconnection Project is a planned project the City has identified in the UWMP that will help mitigate drought impacts and increase the City's drought resiliency over the long-term. (See highlights in Section 3.7 and UWMP Table 6-10 and 6-11, pages 6-7, 6-8.)

The UWMP and related WSEP provide a framework for long-term operational and administrative actions for managing the City's water resources and reliably meeting demands, with a strong focus on future droughts.

- *Describe how the drought plan includes consideration of climate change impacts to water resources or drought.*

The UWMP projections specifically consider drought conditions in order to better assess the City's water supply reliability over the 25-year planning horizon. Supply projections include five-year drought sequences to estimate the availability of each supply source in such scenarios. (See highlights on UWMP page 3-2.).

As noted above, for Casitas supplies, projections take into account potential enactment of Casitas' Water Efficiency and Allocation Program, which includes potential reductions to City supplies of up to 50% depending on water shortage levels. For Ventura River water supplies, availability during the five-year drought scenario is assumed to be 30% of normal year supplies, based on historic supply from past drought years. Groundwater supply projections take into account reductions in potential yields which take into account drought-related impacts and planned management responses, among other factors. Drought conditions are also factored into planned supply estimates, including the proposed Project which results in average long-term amounts that are lower than maximum potential amounts. (Details on these considerations are captured in UWMP Section 3, see highlights on page 3-4, 3-5, 3-9.)

The City's 2020 UWMP Section 1.10 also summarizes the "Potential Effects of Climate Change" which could impact the City's water resources. Among the studies referenced is the 2019 report of *Projected Changes in Ventura County Climate* (Oakley et. al. 2019). This report identifies increased drought risks, among other probable impacts due to changes in temperature, precipitation and other variables. (See UWMP Section 1.10.)

- *When was the plan developed and how often is it updated?*

The City's 2020 UWMP was finalized in 2021. The UWMP, and associated WSEP, are required to be updated at least every five years.

- *Was the drought plan developed through a collaborative process?*

Yes, the UWMP was developed through a collaborative process. The stakeholder involvement process is described in the UWMP and additional details are provided below. (See highlighted sections on UWMP pages 1-4 to 1-9, and UWMP Appendix D excerpts.)

    - *Describe who was involved in preparing the plan and whether then plan was prepared with input from stakeholders with diverse interests (e.g., water, land, or forest management interests; and agricultural, municipal, Tribal, environmental, and recreation uses)? Describe the process used for interested stakeholders to provide input during the development of the plan.*

The UWMP was prepared in coordination with multiple stakeholders, including water suppliers that share a common source, water management agencies, relevant public agencies, as well as the general public. The following agencies were notified of the UWMP update with methods by which they could provide input to the plan: City of San Buenaventura Community Development Department, City of Oxnard Public Water Works Division, United Water Conservation District, Ventura County Resource Management Agency, Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency, Santa Paula Basin Technical Advisory Committee, Upper Ventura River Groundwater Agency, Mound Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency, Ojai Valley Sanitary District, Ventura County Local Agency Formation Commission, and Casitas Municipal Water District. These agencies encompass diverse interests, including land use planning and development, water resource and wastewater management, municipal, agriculture and environmental interests.

Of these agencies, the City of San Buenaventura Community Development Department, Calleguas, and Casitas participated in the UWMP development with the provision of data inputs, and Casitas also commented on the draft plan.

Information on the UWMP development and anticipated schedule was presented to the City Water Commission in 2020. Subsequently, UWMP drafts were presented to the City Water Commission and made available for public review throughout the draft process in early 2021. A public hearing was also conducted on June 14, 2021 by the City to receive public comment and input, prior to final adoption by the City Council.

    - *If the plan was prepared by an entity other than the applicant describe whether and how the applicant was involved in the development of the plan. If the applicant was not involved in the development, explain why.*

The plan was prepared by the City's consultant, Kennedy/Jenks Consultants, with oversight, review, and input from the City throughout the entire process. Additionally, the UWMP was presented to the City Water Commission and City Council, which adopted the 2020 UWMP on June 14, 2021.

- *Describe how your proposed drought resiliency project is supported by an existing drought plan.*

The proposed Project is included in the UWMP as a planned water supply project and accounted for in water supply reliability projections. (See highlighted text in UWMP Section 3.7, page 3-12 to 3-14 and Table 3-8 [page 3-19], Section 6 Tables 6-10 and 6-11 [pages 6-7, 6-8].)

  - *Does the drought plan identify the proposed project as a potential mitigation or response action? How is the proposed project prioritized in the drought plan?*

The Project is one of two planned water supply projects identified in the UWMP for near-term implementation in response to the need to improve the City's water supply reliability, especially during future droughts. As stated in the UWMP, "with planned supplies [including the proposed Project] Ventura Water has adequate supplies to meet demands during average, single-dry, and multiple-dry years." (See UWMP page 6-3.)

Based on reliability analyses, the projected water supply from this Project will be critical for helping to meet future demands, and for preventing shortages during future droughts. As described in the UWMP the Project will help with "making up for losses in annual yield from existing supply sources (Laske Casitas, Ventura River, and groundwater)" which as previously described are vulnerable to droughts and may become less available in the future. Based on the UWMP's five-year drought risk assessment (a short-term five-year consecutive drought analysis), the City could experience a supply shortfall by the fifth year of the drought without the Project. This highlights the criticality of this Project to mitigate drought impacts on the City's water system and ensure supply reliability. (See highlighted text in UWMP Section 3.7, page 3-12, 3-13, 3-14 and Tables 6-10 and 6-11 [pages 6-7, 6-8].)

  - *Does the proposed project implement a goal or need identified in the drought plan? Is the supported goal or need prioritized within the plan?*

As described in the UWMP and noted above, the City has identified the need for new supply projects to ensure future water supply reliability, particularly during future drought years when existing supplies become less available. The Project is critical for helping to prevent water supply shortages during future droughts. The UWMP specifically states that "*The analysis in this Plan documents that it is necessary for the City to implement planned water supply projects in order to meet normal and dry-year demands. In the near term (2020-2026) until such time as planned supplies come on-line,* ***anticipated supplies in a multiple-dry year are insufficient*** *and the City would have to call on existing customers to undertake extraordinary conservation. After planned water supplies are available the potential for a water supply shortage is lessened*."

The Project addresses the need for new water supplies to ensure water supply reliability which is the City's highest priority. As documented in the UWMP, "*It is the stated goal of the City to deliver a reliable and high-quality water supply for customers, even during dry periods*." (See highlighted section on UWMP page 1-2.) Additionally, the City states that "*Developing and maintaining a healthy water supply portfolio to serve its customers has always been an ongoing*

Ventura Water priority, and Ventura Water wants to be prepared for drought and water shortages." (See highlighted section on WSEP page 2-1.)

- *Attach relevant sections of the plan that are referenced in the application, as an appendix to your application. These pages will be included in the total 125-page count for the application.*

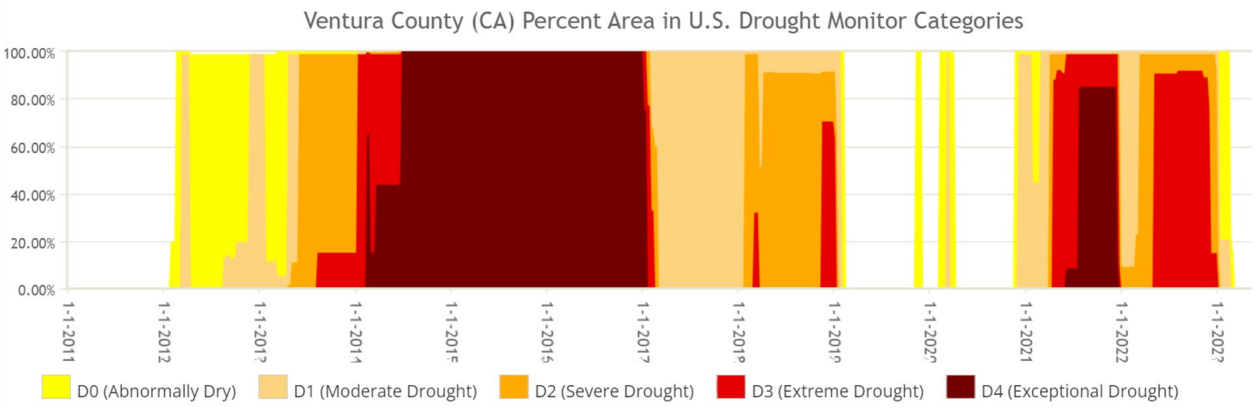
See Appendix A.

1.5.3 Evaluation Criterion C – Severity of Actual or Potential Drought or Water Scarcity Impacts to be Addressed by the Project

- *Describe recent, existing, or potential drought or water scarcity conditions in the project area.* See description below.
    - *Is the project in an area that is currently suffering from drought, or which has recently suffered from drought or water scarcity? Please describe existing conditions, including when and the period of time that the area has experienced drought or water scarcity conditions. Include information to describe the frequency, duration, and severity of current or recent conditions. You may also provide information relating to historical conditions. Please provide supporting documentation.*

The Project is located in Ventura County, which has been experiencing among the most severe drought conditions across the State and Nation over the last 11 years. Drought conditions persisted across the entire County during the 7-year period between 2012 and 2018 and again between 2021 to 2023. Conditions were particularly severe between 2014 and end of 2016 when 100% of the County was under exceptional drought conditions. Conditions improved to moderate in 2017 and deteriorated again during 2018 when nearly the entire County experienced either severe or extreme drought conditions. After a brief period of normal hydrologic conditions, drought conditions persisted across the County again between 2021 to early 2023, dominated by extreme to exceptional conditions. The figure below documents these drought impacts in Ventura County.

Figure 2: Ventura County Drought Time Series (2012-2023)



Source: https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/DmData/TimeSeries.aspx

These extreme drought conditions and historically low rainfall amounts resulted in significant declines in available surface water supplies, triggering local shortage conditions.

By January 2019, Lake Casitas, which is fed solely by local runoff, had reached a historic low of 30% of its capacity. These conditions triggered a Stage 3 Water Shortage Emergency by Casitas Municipal Water District, which in turn resulted in a 30% reduction of the City's Casitas allocation in accordance with the existing Water Service Agreement. The City's allocation was anticipated to be reduced to 40% by Spring 2023 if dry conditions had continued. Fortunately, a Stage 1 condition was declared by April 2023. Additionally, the Ventura River flows showed significant declines as early as 2013 and by the height of the recent droughts, supply availability from the Ventura River was down to less than one third of normal year availability.

As a result of these conditions, the City declared a Stage 3 Water Shortage Event from 2015 to 2020, which required 20% mandatory conservation. Between 2020 and 2021, the City was in a Stage 2 Water Shortage Event, requiring 10% mandatory conservation.

The combination of the imposed demand-side conservation measures and relying more heavily on groundwater supplies allowed the City to temporarily address the scarcity in its surface water supplies to avoid a system-side shortage.

- *Describe any projected increases to the severity or duration of drought or water scarcity in the project area resulting from changes to water supply availability and climate change. Provide support for your response (e.g., reference a recent climate informed analysis, if available)*

Based on climate change projections for the region, droughts are expected to impact the project area with increasing risk and severity in the future, which is expected to exacerbate current water supply imbalances and increase the risk of water shortages in the future. The anticipated climate stressors and related vulnerabilities in the region have been assessed in the 2019 report of Projected Changes in Ventura County Climate by the Desert Research Institute (https://wrcc.dri.edu/Docs/VenturaClimate2019_lores.pdf). The primary climate stressors projected by global climate models to impact the region include changes in air temperature, changes in precipitation patterns, increased evapotranspiration and drought risk, and sea level rise. Drought risks are anticipated to create the greatest vulnerabilities to water supplies and demands, including reduction in groundwater recharge, reduced runoff and surface water flows, which in turn could lead to reduced local water supply reliability.

The growing climate change risks will also be compounded by other factors that will likely limit supply availability in the future. Projected development in the City will continue to increase overall water demand. At the same time, use restrictions on surface water and groundwater supplies intended to protect local water resources will further limit the availability of supplies needed to reliably meet community demands. As a result, the potential for a water supply shortage would increase in the future without planned supplies, including the proposed Project, as described in UWMP Section 3.7.

- *What are the ongoing or potential drought or water scarcity impacts to specific sectors in the project area if no action is taken (e.g., impacts to agriculture, environment, hydropower, recreation, tourism, forestry, etc.) and how severe are those impacts? Impacts should be quantified and documented to the extent possible. See NOFO for example impacts.*

Until planned supplies, including supplies from this Project, come on-line, potential shortages of drinking water supplies are possible as identified in the City's water supply reliability analyses. As described in the City's 2020 UWMP, during near-term drought scenarios existing supplies are insufficient and without planned supplies the City could have to call on customers to undertake extraordinary conservation to avoid supply shortages. As noted above, conservation of up to 20% was mandated in the City's service area during recent drought events. The City's WSEP includes actions to reduce demands up to 50% percent in the event of a critical shortage event. In the City's 2020 UWMP, a worst-case scenario drought risk assessment was conducted, which estimated a supply surplus of barely 872 AFY by the fifth year of the drought sequence. This estimate accounted for the proposed Project, assuming up to 1,100 AFY of SWP supplies in that year of drought. That means, without the project, demands would have exceeded supplies and resulted in a shortage by at least 228 AFY, based on this analysis. In such as case, the City would enact contingency measures including conservation mandates, as needed, to ensure minimum supplies to meet public health needs across the City's water service area.

In addition to potential drinking water supply challenges, drought-related reductions in streamflows are also impacting riparian ecosystems. In the case of a water supply emergency e.g., an imminent water supply shortage resulting from severe drought conditions, if alternative supplies are not available, the City could pump from its Ventura River water supplies in order to meet its demands despite potential impacts to habitat impacts. These operations could exacerbate drought impacts low flow conditions along the Ventura River with the potential to impair critical habitat and/or impeded steelhead restoration. However, the potential impacts to environmental uses due to drought impacts if no action is taken are not fully quantifiable. Studies are still ongoing to quantify necessary threshold flows to protect for federally endangered steelhead.

1.5.4 Evaluation Criterion D – Presidential and DOI Priorities

1.5.4.1 Disadvantaged or Underserved Communities

- *If applicable, describe how the proposed project will serve or benefit a disadvantaged or underserved community, identified using the [Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool].*

As can be seen from the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (see Appendix B), there are multiple census tracts that are categorized as disadvantaged within the Ventura water service area. The Project provides the benefit of improved water supply reliability equally across the City's water service area and will therefore also benefit disadvantaged communities included therein.

1.5.4.2 Tribal Benefits

The Project does not directly serve or benefit a Tribe.

1.5.5 Evaluation Criterion E – Readiness to Proceed and Project Implementation

- *Describe the implementation plan for the proposed project.*

The following tasks will be implemented to accomplish the proposed Project.

Task 1. Project Management

Project management will be provided by City staff to ensure successful project implementation. Activities will include project administrative oversight, managing contractors and consultants, and ensuring the project advances according to schedule.

The City will also perform grant administration activities to ensure compliance with final grant requirements, prepare and submit necessary supporting grant documents and coordinate with the Reclamation grant manager, as needed. Grant-related activities will begin immediately upon notification of award, whereas the majority of project management activities and grant reporting will begin upon executing the financial assistance agreement.

These activities will be conducted in-house by City staff and related costs are not included in the proposed budget.

Task 2. Project Design and Agreements

Design activities are currently focused on preparation of plans and specifications for the 90% level and will then proceed with 100% and final design completion levels. Geotechnical investigations will also be completed as needed for design. Design costs are not included in the proposed budget as the majority of work will have occurred prior to the NOFO posting/pre-award cutoff date.

Several agency agreements are required prior to operation of the Project and are being prepared concurrently with design activities. See additional details below.

Task 3 – Environmental Compliance and Permitting

An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was filed for this project with the State Clearinghouse (State Clearinghouse No. 2018031010) and the County of Ventura in August of 2019 to fulfill compliance requirements with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

An Environmental Assessment and findings under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) were prepared in 2023 and have been submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for review.

Task 4 –Permitting

The City will coordinate with the contractor to obtain all required permits. Previously acquired and anticipated permits are detailed below.

Task 5 – Land Acquisition

The City will acquire temporary and permanent easements, as needed for construction and operation. See additional details below.

Task 6 – Construction Bidding

Upon completion of final design, the City will secure a contractor, award the contract, and issue the Notice to Proceed. Award will be made to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder in accordance with the Public Contract Code.

Task 7 – Construction

The project will be constructed in accordance with final bid documents. The following major project elements will be constructed:

- Approximately 20,000 linear feet of 30-inch diameter steel pipeline installed by open cut trench and related appurtenances;
- Approximately 500 linear feet of 30-inch diameter steel pipeline installed by jack and bore and related appurtenances;
- Approximately 2,500 linear feet of 24-inch or 28-inch diameter HDPE pipeline installed by horizontal directional drilling and related appurtenances;
- Approximately 2,600 linear feet of 16-inch PVC pipeline installed by open trench and related appurtenances;
- Meter vault;
- Flow control and instrumentation facilities;
- Blow off outlet and associated energy dissipation structure;
- Blending station and associated pipelines.

The proposed pipeline will connect to a new interconnection pipeline extending from the Calleguas distribution system, which is being constructed in parallel by Calleguas (not part of this grant).

Under this task, the City will also ensure compliance with necessary environmental mitigation measures during construction activities.

Construction administration will occur in parallel with construction activities, but is not part of the scope proposed herein and is not included in the proposed budget. Construction administration is proposed to be covered with funding under EPA's Congressionally Directed Spending Projects, as described in more detail in Section 4.1.

The table below summarizes the estimated project schedule, including major tasks and anticipated timelines.

Table 1 Proposed Project Schedule

Milestone/Task/Activity	Planned Start Date	Planned Finish Date
Task 1 Project Management	January 2017	October 2027
Task 2 Project Design	January 2017	June 2024
Task 3 Environmental Compliance	February 2018	August 2024
Task 4 Permitting	June 2020	May 2027
Task 5 Land Acquisition	February 2022	January 2024
Task 6 Bidding	July 2024	November 2024
Task 7 Construction	November 2024	May 2027

- *Describe any permits or approvals that will be required (e.g., water rights, water quality, stormwater, or other regulatory clearances). Include information on permits or approvals already obtained. For those permits and approvals that need to be obtained, describe the process, including estimated timelines for obtaining such permits and approvals.*

The following permits were acquired in order to complete geotechnical field work needed for project design:

- Ventura County Watershed Protection District (VCWPD) Encroachment and Watercourse Permit
- US Army Corps of Engineers Clean Water Act (Section 404) Nationwide Permit - Nationwide Permit 6 for Survey
- Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) Clean Water Act (Section 401) Water Quality Certification
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Streambed Alteration Agreement (Section 1602)
- VCWPD Well Permit (Section 4813)
- City of Ventura Road Encroachment Permit
- County of Ventura Road Encroachment Permit

Currently, the following permits are still anticipated to be required:

- State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) coverage under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction General Permit for Stormwater Discharges
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Clean Water Act (Section 404) Nationwide Permit
- CDFW Streambed Alteration Agreement (Section 1602)
- RWQCB Clean Water Act (Section 401) Water Quality Certification
- VCWPD Well Permit (Section 4813)
- VCWPD Encroachment and Watercourse Permit
- City of Ventura Road Encroachment Permit
- Caltrans Road Encroachment Permit
- County of Ventura Road Encroachment Permit
- County of Ventura Property Encroachment Permit
- Ventura County Transportation Commission Rail Encroachment Permit
- City of Ventura Building Permit (California Building Code)
- Ventura County Environmental Health Division Land Use Approval (This permit has been acquired)

Additionally, a SWRCB Division of Drinking Water (DDW) Amendment to Domestic Water Supply Permit will be acquired for project operation.

Permits are being coordinated with the 90% design process. As necessary, the City will coordinate with the selected contractor to obtain required permits and approvals prior to construction.

- *Identify and describe any engineering or design work performed specifically in support of the proposed project.*

The *State Water Interconnection Alignment Study* was completed in 2018 which evaluated the entire alignment from a connection to the City's system to Calleguas' system and identified a preferred alignment for implementation. Subsequently, in 2023, a Preliminary Design Report for the State Water Interconnection and Blending Station was prepared by the City's design consultant. To date, plans and specifications have been completed to the 60% completion level and design activities are currently focused on 90% design.

- *Describe any land purchases that must occur before the project can be implemented.*

The City anticipates acquiring approximately 8.5 acres of permanent easements for the pipeline, associated isolation valve vaults, and other appurtenances. The City may also acquire approximately 14 acres of temporary construction easements, which will be used during construction of the facilities.

- *Describe any new policies or administrative actions required to implement the project.*

Several agency agreements are required prior to operation of the Project and are being prepared concurrently with design activities. Agency agreements include: (1) Construction/Operations Interagency Agreement among the City, Calleguas Municipal Water District, and United Water Conservation District (this has been completed); (2) SWP Water Wheeling Agreement between Metropolitan Water District, Calleguas Municipal Water District, United Water Conservation District, Casitas Municipal Water District and the City; and (3) SWP Water Wheeling Agreement between Calleguas Municipal Water District and the City.

1.5.6 Evaluation Criterion F – Nexus to Reclamation

Describe the nexus between the proposed project and a Reclamation project or Reclamation activity.

The Project will benefit a Reclamation area and activity based on the Project's direct tie to Reclamation's Ventura River Project and Casitas Dam. The Ventura River Project, authorized March 1, 1956, is one of three large-scale federal water projects undertaken by Reclamation in the Southwest California region. The Ventura River and its tributaries are the main water sources for the project. Casitas Dam, which forms Lake Casitas, is a key part of the Ventura River Project, located about two miles above the junction of Coyote Creek and the Ventura River. The dam was constructed between 1956 and 1959. Lake Casitas stores water for irrigation and municipal uses for customers within the Casitas Municipal Water District including a portion of the City of Ventura. Lake Casitas stores runoff collected from the lake's surrounding watershed and diverted from the Ventura River. The reservoir is carefully managed to maintain supplies but as described above, drought conditions significantly impacted Casitas Lake levels, reducing its capacity down to a historic low of 30 percent during the drought.

By providing access to SWP supplies to expand the City's water supply portfolio, the Project will help reduce stresses on the Ventura River and will help reduce the strain on the limited Lake Casitas supplies by careful management of the City's available supplies.

1.5.7 Evaluation Criterion G – Stakeholder Support for Proposed Project

- *Describe the level of stakeholder support for the proposed project. Are letters of support from stakeholders provided? Are any stakeholders providing support for the project through cost-share contributions or through other types of contributions to the project?*

To date, the Project has received widespread support by multiple stakeholders thanks to its multiple and far-reaching benefits. Recent letters of support are included in Appendix C from the following entities:

- Calleguas Municipal Water District, October 25, 2023
- Casitas Municipal Water District, October 16, 2023
- Ventura County Supervisor, District 1, Matt LaVere, October 16, 2023
- United Water Conservation District, November 2023

Additional support has been previously expressed, as documented by the following (also included in Appendix C):

- Calleguas Municipal Water District – Letter to Congressman Salud Carbajal (CA-24) dated March 13, 2023
- Casitas Municipal Water District – Letter to Congressman Salud Carbajal (CA-24) dated March 13, 2023
- United Water Conservation District – Letter to Congressman Salud Carbajal (CA-24) dated March 13, 2023
- City of Ventura Mayor Joe Schroeder – Letter to Congressman Salud Carbajal (CA-24) dated March 8, 2023
- County of Ventura Board of Supervisors Chair Matt LaVere – Letter to Congressman Salud Carbajal dated March 7, 2023
- VC Star Opinion Editorial by Former Mayor Ventura Sandy Smith published March 6, 2021
- VC Star Opinion Editorial by Former Water Commissioner Suzanne McCombs published February 13, 2021
- Ventura River Water District General Manager Bert Rapp Letter dated April 5, 2019

The full State Water Interconnection pipeline consists of two main segments, extending from the City's water system to Calleguas' system, connecting at a connection point approximately mid-way. Calleguas is financially responsible for the segment from the connection point to the Calleguas system, however Calleguas is not providing financial contributions to the proposed Ventura portion.

- *Explain whether the project is supported by a diverse set of stakeholders, as appropriate, given the types of interested stakeholders within the project area and the scale, type, and complexity of the proposed project. For example, is the project supported by entities representing agricultural, municipal, Tribal, environmental, or recreation uses?*

As noted above, the project receives significant support from a diverse set of stakeholders and will benefit multiple water users throughout the region, such as Calleguas and UWCD. Calleguas serves as a wholesale water supplier, providing supplemental water supplies to 19 retail water purveyors in southeast Ventura County. These purveyors serve roughly three quarters of Ventura County's population and encompass various uses, including agricultural, municipal, industrial, and commercial uses, among others. Similarly, UWCD provides supplemental water supply to agricultural, municipal and industrial users, among others, across a service area encompassing approximately 400,000 people in Ventura County. These agencies recognize the Project's critical contribution to regional supply reliability. Additional stakeholder support is described in the response above and documented with letters of support.

Section 2: Project Budget

The proposed budget detail and narrative are provided separately in Grants.gov using the Budget Detail Attachment Form.

The following tables summarize total costs and funding sources for the proposed Project. The total Project budget is $39,260,000 and the requested Reclamation funding with this application is $5,000,000. Non-federal funding sources for the Project will come from City of Ventura Capital Improvement Program funds and from the California Department of Water Resources Proposition 1 Integrated Regional Water Management Program Round 2 Implementation Grant, as summarized below.

Additional details on other project-related funding is provided in Section 4.1.

Table 2. Summary of Non-Federal and Federal Funding Sources

FUNDING SOURCES	AMOUNT
Non-Federal Entities	
1. City of Ventura	$31,744,092
2. California Department of Water Resources	$2,515,908
3.	
Non-Federal Subtotal	**$34,260,000**
REQUESTED RECLAMATION FUNDING	**$5,000,000**

Table 3. Budget Summary

6. Budget Object Category	Total Cost	Federal Estimated Amount	Non-Federal Estimated Amount
a. Personnel	$0		
b. Fringe Benefits	$0		
c. Travel	$0		
d. Equipment	$0		
e. Supplies	$0		
f. Contractual	$380,000		
g. Construction	$38,880,000		
h. Other Direct Costs	$0		
i. Total Direct Costs	$39,260,000		
i. Indirect Charges	$0		
Total Costs	$39,260,000	$5,000,000	$34,260,000
	Cost Share Percentage	13%	87%

Section 3: Environmental and Cultural Resources Compliance

- *Will the proposed project impact the surrounding environment (e.g., soil [dust], air, water [quality and quantity], animal habitat)? Please briefly describe all earth-disturbing work and any work that will affect the air, water, or animal habitat in the project area. Please also explain the impacts of such work on the surrounding environment and any steps that could be taken to minimize the impacts.*

In general, the Project may result in temporary potential impacts to the surrounding area due to construction activities, however the 2019 EIR found that impacts to soil, air, water and animal habitat are either no impact, less than significant, or can be reduced to less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures.

Construction includes the installation of approximately 25,600 linear feet of pipeline. The majority of the proposed pipeline will be installed using open cut construction methods. Approximately 20,000 linear feet of 30-inch diameter steel pipeline and approximately 2,600 linear feet of 16-inch polyvinyl chloride (PVC) pipeline will be installed by open cut trench. The ground surface will be restored to its pre-project conditions upon installation. Trenchless construction methods will also be applied. Approximately 500 linear feet of 30-inch diameter steel pipeline will be installed by jack and bore methods. Approximately 2,500 linear feet of 24-inch or 28-inch diameter high-density polyethylene (HDPE) pipeline will be installed by horizontal directional drilling. The pipeline will transect various land use types, primarily open space and agricultural lands and some residential areas.

In addition, facilities and appurtenances will be installed. A blending station and associated piping will be installed near the western end of the interconnection pipeline. A metering vault will be installed that will likely consist of a below grade concrete vault at the City turnout. A blow off outlet and associated energy dissipation structure will be installed. Flow control and instrumentation facilities will also be installed.

Major earth-disturbing activities will include grading clearing, trenching and backfilling, and dewatering.

Construction activities have the potential to impact air quality, given the use of heavy equipment and exposure of soil during construction activities. It is anticipated that construction of new facilities would generate air pollutant emissions, including exhaust emissions and fugitive dust. However, the Project EIR found that impacts would overall be less than significant. Nevertheless, measures, as suggested by the Air Pollution Control District, would be implemented to control fugitive dust and emissions.

Excavation and grading activities generally have the potential to expose topsoil and contribute to soil erosion. Additionally, the disturbance and exposure of soils during construction activities creates the potential for sediments and other construction-related pollutants to mobilize from the project site and enter receiving waters where it can result in water quality degradation.

Excavated soils would be stockpiled and stabilized during construction, and excavated areas would be returned to pre-project conditions. Importantly, a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) would be prepared prior to construction which would specify Best Management Practices (BMPs) to be implemented in order to minimize the discharge of polluted stormwater runoff to local surface waters and erosion from construction activities. BMPs would include

structural stormwater, erosion, and sediment controls; measures to protect receiving waters; and hazardous materials management and disposal practices.

For sections of the pipeline that cross under waterways, including the Santa Clara River, trenchless construction methods will be implemented, including Horizontal Directional Drilling. These construction methods along with other appropriate BMPs, such as potential stream stabilization measures, will help reduce impacts to adjacent surface waters.

No impacts are anticipated on groundwater or surface water resources, with respect to water quantity.

With respect to animal habitat, mitigation measures would reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level. The proposed pipeline is mostly located within roadway rights-of-way and agricultural areas (primarily row crops). Native vegetation and wildlife habitat along the pipeline alignment is mostly limited to patches of mulefat scrub within the Santa Clara River. The blending station would be located within or immediately adjacent to the existing Saticoy Conditioning Facility, which is a paved site that does not support vegetation or wildlife habitat. Vegetation removal, noise, dust, and heavy equipment activity associated with pipeline installation may result in direct impacts to some special-status wildlife. Mitigation measures will be implemented that would reduce potential impacts to biological resources to a less than significant level, including Least Bell's Vireo surveys and breeding migratory bird avoidance measures.

- *Are you aware of any species listed or proposed to be listed as a Federal threatened or endangered species, or designated critical habitat in the project area? If so, would they be affected by any activities associated with the proposed project?*

As described in the 2019 Draft EIR, special-status plant species are not anticipated to occur within areas affected by construction or operation of the Project. Special-status wildlife species have been reported within 5 miles of the proposed pipeline alignment and blending station site. Special-status wildlife species with a moderate to high potential to occur in proximity to the proposed project are those associated with habitat along the Santa Clara River, including least Bell's vireo, Cooper's hawk, yellow-breasted chat, Costa's hummingbird, and loggerhead shrike. In addition, special-status fish species could be present at the proposed pipeline crossing for brief periods when adequate surface water is available.

The installation of the proposed Santa Clara River pipeline crossing would occur adjacent to two least Bell's vireo breeding territories and may result in take of the take of this endangered species. Vegetation removal, noise, dust, and heavy equipment activity associated with pipeline installation may result in direct impacts (loss of nests during vegetation removal) and indirect impacts (nest abandonment, alteration of breeding behavior) to breeding birds. Noise, dust, and heavy equipment activity associated with the HDD pipeline installation may adversely affect foraging of Cooper's hawk, yellow-breasted chat, Costa's hummingbird, and loggerhead shrike in the Santa Clara River and adjacent areas. However, pipeline installation activities would not be located in close proximity to suitable breeding habitat such that impacts are considered less than significant.

Mitigation measures will be implemented that would reduce potential impacts to biological resources to a less than significant level, including Least Bell's Vireo surveys and breeding migratory bird avoidance measures.

- *Are there wetlands or other surface waters inside the project boundaries that potentially fall under CWA jurisdiction as "Waters of the United States?" If so, please describe and estimate any impacts the proposed project may have.*

The Project would cross beneath the Santa Clara River (Reach 2), which falls under CWA jurisdiction. Significant impacts are not expected to this surface water feature and relevant permits will be obtained to comply with all applicable laws and regulations. Overall, the Project is not anticipated to impact the river. Horizontal Directional Drilling, a trenchless construction method, would be used to cross the Santa Clara River in order to minimize potential impacts to this major surface water. The alignment would cross within the 100-year floodplain boundary, where it crosses under the Santa Clara River. However, the actual construction activities related to installing the pipeline underneath the river would be located outside of the 100-year flood zone, and either within the 500-year floodplain boundary or outside of flood zones. Additionally, Best Management Practices would be implemented, as needed to minimize potential for impacts such as erosion or project-related runoff that could impact the river.

Wetlands do not occur within areas affected by construction or operation of the Project.

- *When was the water delivery system constructed?*

The City of Ventura was incorporated in 1866, at which time water franchise were granted to Santa Ana Water Co and Ventura County Light and Power Company. In 1923, the City of Ventura took over ownership and operation of the Ventura Water System. The City constructed the Avenue Treatment Plant in 1939 which was then decommissioned in 2007. Subsequently, the City constructed the Avenue Treatment Membrane Plant (2007), Saticoy Water Conditioning Facility (1991), and Bailey Water Conditioning Facility (1997). The existing water system consists of over 380 miles of pipeline, 21 booster pump stations, a total storage of approximately 52 million gallons in 32 tanks and storage reservoirs, and 10 active groundwater wells.

- *Will the proposed project result in any modification of or effects to, individual features of an irrigation system (e.g., headgates, canals, or flumes)? If so, state when those features were constructed and describe the nature and timing of any extensive alterations or modifications to those features completed previously.*

The project will not result in any modifications or effects to individual features of an irrigation system.

- *Are any buildings, structures, or features in the irrigation district listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places?.*

Cultural resources record searches identified a feature which may be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, in the vicinity of Segment 2 of the pipeline. Segment 2 is situated between Henderson Road and Vineyard Avenue (State Route 232), primarily within City boundaries. The northern portion of Segment 2 extends through developed residential and commercial areas along Henderson Road and Saticoy Avenue. Within this portion, records indicate presence of site P-56-152759, which is a historic district consisting of several commercial buildings constructed between 1917 and 1940. The Walnut Growers Association Warehouse is among those buildings and is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

- *Are there any known archeological sites in the proposed project area?*

As part of the EIR, a Cultural Record Search was received from the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) on June 28, 2017. The records search revealed that 93 cultural resources studies have been completed within a 0.25-mile radius of the proposed pipeline and/or alternative pipeline alignments. Of these, 29 previous cultural resources studies have been completed in areas which include the proposed pipeline alignment. The records search identified two previously recorded cultural resources traversed by the proposed pipeline alignment and 9 other previously recorded cultural resources within a 0.25-mile radius of the proposed pipeline alignment. The following table, taken from the 2019 Draft EIR, lists and describes these resources. The proposed blending station is captured within Segment 2 in the list.

Table 4 Cultural Resources in the Project Area

Nearest Pipeline Segment	Site Number	Description
Segment 2	CA-VEN-31	Prehistoric Chumash village site of Sa'aqtik'oy, situated on a slope above the Santa Clara River.
Segment 2	CA-VEN-32	Prehistoric cemetery situated on a slope above the Santa Clara River. No longer extant.
Segment 2	CA-VEN-33	Multicomponent site consisting of lithic debitage and groundstone fragments and historic debris
Segment 2	CA-VEN-34	Concentration of prehistoric groundstone artifacts.
Segment 2	P-56-152759	Historic district consisting of several commercial buildings constructed between 1917 and 1940. The Walnut Growers Association Warehouse is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).
Segment 18	**CA-VEN-223**	**Large prehistoric village site. Shell midden with lithics and tools and potential for human remains.**
Segment 18	CA-VEN-224	Prehistoric shell scatter or possible paleontological deposit.
Segment 18	CA-VEN-1205	Prehistoric lithic scatter.
Segment 18	P-56-100030	Isolated prehistoric artifact.
Segment 19	P-56-100104	Two isolated prehistoric artifacts.
Segment 19	**P-56-150001**	**Historic ranch complex associated with Springville town site.**

Note: Resources that are bolded occur within the proposed pipeline alignment
Source: SCCIC 2017

- *Will the proposed project have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations?*

The Project will not have a disproportionately high or adverse effect on low income or minority populations. The Project would equally benefit all City water customers with improved water supply reliability and drought resilience.

- *Will the proposed project limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites or result in other impacts on Tribal lands?*

No, the Project will not limit access to or ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites and is not expected to result in other impacts on tribal lands. Various mitigation measures will be implemented to reduce potential impacts to less than significant including retaining a Qualified Archaeologist to carry out all mitigation measures related to archaeological resources, cultural resources sensitivity training for construction personnel, records search, and archaeological monitoring.

- *Will the proposed project contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area?*]

The Project is not anticipated to contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of, noxious weeds or non-native invasive species.

Section 4: Other

4.1 Overlap or Duplication of Effort Statement

Applicants should provide a statement that addresses if there is any overlap between the proposed project and any other active or anticipated proposals or projects in terms of activities, costs, or commitment of key personnel. If any overlap exists, applicants must provide a description of the overlap in their application for review.

Applicants should also state if the proposal submitted for consideration under this program does or does not in any way duplicate any proposal or project that has been or will be submitted for funding consideration to any other potential funding source—whether it be Federal or non-Federal. If such a circumstance exists, applicants must detail when the other duplicative proposal(s) were submitted, to whom (Agency name and Financial Assistance program), and when funding decisions are expected to be announced. If at any time a proposal is awarded funds that would be duplicative of the funding requested from Reclamation, applicants must notify the NOFO point of contact immediately.

The City has applied for funding for the City of San Buenaventura State Water Interconnection Project under two other funding programs:

1) In 2022, the Project was included in a funding application under the California Department of Water Resources Proposition 1 Integrated Regional Water Management Program Round 2 Implementation Grant. The official award notification letter was issued on May 18, 2023. The final grant agreement is still pending. Total funding awarded to the City for the Project under this grant is $2,515,908. The grant is a non-Federal funding source and related funds will be accounted for as non-Federal cost share to WaterSMART funding, if awarded. The grantee is Calleguas Municipal Water District who will manage the grant on behalf of the City of Ventura and other subgrantees.

2) In February 2023, the City applied for EPA grant funding for the State Water Interconnection Project, under the Fiscal Year 2022 Consolidated Appropriations Act - Congressionally Directed Spending Community Projects. The requested EPA cost share with that application was $2,840,000 for construction-related activities. The City would like to use those funds towards construction administration which is not currently included in the scope nor accounted for in the budget proposed in this WaterSMART application. Final approval of the EPA funding application is still pending, as of the date of this application.

4.2 Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement

Applicants should state in the application if any actual or potential conflict of interest exists at the time of submission. Submission of a conflict-of-interest disclosure or certification statement is mandatory prior to issue of an award.

There are no actual or potential conflicts of interests at the time of submission.

4.3 Uniform Audit Reporting Statement

All U.S. states, local governments, federally recognized Indian Tribal governments, and non-profit organizations expending $750,000 USD or more in Federal award funds in the applicant's fiscal year must submit a Single Audit report for that year through the Federal Audit Clearinghouse's Internet Data Entry System . U.S. state, local government, federally recognized Indian Tribal governments, and non-profit applicants must state if your organization was or was not required to submit a Single Audit report for the most recently closed fiscal year. If your organization was required to submit a Single Audit report for the most recently closed fiscal year, provide the Employer Identification Number (EIN) associated with that report and state if it is available through the Federal Audit Clearinghouse website.

The City of Ventura was required to submit a Single Audit Report for fiscal year 2021-2022 in accordance with 2 CFR §200 subpart F. Western's Employer Identification Number (EIN) is 95-6000807. The report is available through the Federal Audit Clearinghouse website.

Appendix C – Letters of Support

web site: www.calleguas.com

2100 OLSEN ROAD • THOUSAND OAKS, CALIFORNIA 91360-6800 805/526-9323 • FAX: 805/522-5730

October 25, 2023

Attn: Karen Shubert
Bureau of Reclamation
Upper Colorado Regional Office
125 South State Street, Room 8100
Salt Lake City, Utah 84138-1147

Re: Support for the City of San Buenaventura's Application for WaterSMART Drought Response Program - Drought Resiliency Projects Grant

Dear Karen Shubert,

As General Manager of Calleguas Municipal Water District (Calleguas), I am writing in support of the City of San Buenaventura's (City's) application for funding under the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART Drought Response Program: Drought Resiliency Projects for Fiscal Year 2024 (R24AS00007) to implement the Ventura State Water Interconnection Project.

Calleguas is a regional wholesale water supplier that purchases water from Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and supplies water to approximately 75% of Ventura County. The infrastructure that supplies water to Calleguas is vulnerable to failures and Calleguas has limited local sources available in the event of an imported supply outage. The Ventura State Water Interconnection Project supports Calleguas's and the City's abilities to serve their customers during outages, allowing beneficial water exchanges between both distribution systems. The new 4.3-mile pipeline will enable the City to utilize their historic State Water Project (SWP) entitlement. The connection will facilitate direct delivery of United Water Conservation District's SWP allocation, of 3,150 AFY. The project will thereby enable access to up to 13,150 AFY SWP supplies, or on average up to 6,500 AFY. This project will diversify the City's water resource portfolio, increasing water supply reliability in Ventura County.

Calleguas's mission is to provide its service area with a reliable supplemental water supply of regional and locally developed water in an environmentally and economically responsible manner. Providing interconnections between neighboring agencies aligns with the mission to help provide water service to its customers during an outage of imported supplies and help other agencies during water shortage emergencies. The project will improve water supply reliability throughout Ventura County and enable both agencies to take advantage of wetter years and prepare for drought periods, both of which are anticipated to increase due to climate change and "weather whiplash." Overall, this project will significantly improve water supply reliability in the region, allow for additional conjunctive use opportunities for both agencies, and enhance long-term drought resiliency.

For the reasons above, Calleguas strongly supports the City's WaterSMART grant application for the Ventura State Water Interconnection Project and encourages the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's award of funding to support project implementation. If you should have any questions or concerns, please contact me at (805) 579-7138 or Tgoff@calleguas.com.

Sincerely,

Anthony Goff
General Manager

October 16, 2023

Attn: Karen Shubert
Bureau of Reclamation
Upper Colorado Regional Office
125 South State Street, Room 8100
Salt Lake City, Utah 84138-1147

Re: Support for the City of Ventura's Application for WaterSMART Drought Response Program: Drought Resiliency Projects Grant

Dear Karen Shubert,

On behalf of Casitas Municipal Water District, please accept this letter of support for the City of San Buenaventura's (City of Ventura or City) application for U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART Drought Response Program: Drought Resiliency Projects for Fiscal Year 2024 (R24AS00007) to implement the Ventura State Water Interconnection Project.

The City of Ventura provides water to a service area of about 40 square miles, encompassing a population of approximately 113,500. The City currently depends entirely on local surface and groundwater supplies, making it particularly vulnerable to droughts. The City of Ventura has had a State Water Project (SWP) entitlement of 10,000 acre-feet per year (AFY) since 1971 but is not able to access this water supply due to a lack of infrastructure to deliver the SWP water.

The Calleguas Municipal Water District (Calleguas) is a regional wholesaler that delivers SWP water to retail partners throughout southeastern Ventura County and could wheel the City's SWP water to them via Metropolitan Water District of Southern California's (Metropolitan) and Calleguas' systems. The Ventura State Water Interconnection Project consists of construction of an approximately 4.3-mile pipeline from a connection with Calleguas' system that will enable delivery of the City's SWP allocation. In addition, the connection will facilitate direct delivery of United Water Conservation District's SWP allocation, of 3,150 AFY. The Project will thereby enable access to up to 13,150 AFY SWP supplies, or on average up to 6,500 AFY.

By building the infrastructure to deliver SWP supplies, this project will help diversify the City's water supply portfolio and enhance conjunctive use opportunities for both agencies. The project will enable the agencies to take advantage of the anticipated wetter wet years in the future to take SWP water when it is available and be better prepared for the anticipated longer, drier dry periods that may impact local supplies. Overall, this project will significantly improve water supply reliability in the region and enhance long-term drought resiliency. As such, the project also fully aligns with the WaterSMART Drought Response Program objectives to proactively increase water supply resilience to prepare for and address drought impacts.

Casitas Municipal Water District supports the City's WaterSMART grant application for the Ventura State Water Interconnection Project and encourages the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's award of funding to support project implementation.

Sincerely,

Michael Flood
General Manager
Casitas Municipal Water District

COUNTY OF VENTURA
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

SUPERVISOR
MATT LaVERE
First District

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD
MATT LaVERE, CHAIR
JEFF GORELL
KELLY LONG
JANICE S. PARVIN
VIANEY LOPEZ

Attn: Karen Shubert
Bureau of Reclamation
Upper Colorado Regional Office
125 South State Street, Room 8100
Salt Lake City, Utah 84138-1147

Re: Support for the City of Ventura's Application for WaterSMART Drought Response Program: Drought Resiliency Projects Grant

Dear Karen Shubert,

Please accept this letter of support for the City of San Buenaventura's (City of Ventura or City) application for U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART Drought Response Program: Drought Resiliency Projects for Fiscal Year 2024 (R24AS00007) to implement the Ventura State Water Interconnection Project.

The City of Ventura provides water to a service area of about 40 square miles, encompassing a population of approximately 113,500. The City currently depends entirely on local surface and groundwater supplies, making it particularly vulnerable to droughts. The City of Ventura has had a State Water Project (SWP) entitlement of 10,000 acre-feet per year (AFY) since 1971 but is not able to access this water supply due to a lack of infrastructure to deliver the SWP water.

The Calleguas Municipal Water District (Calleguas) is a regional wholesaler that delivers SWP water to retail partners throughout southeastern Ventura County and could wheel the City's SWP water to them via Metropolitan Water District of Southern California's (Metropolitan) and Calleguas' systems. The Ventura State Water Interconnection Project consists of construction of an approximately 4.3-mile pipeline from a connection with Calleguas' system that will enable delivery of the City's SWP allocation. In addition, the connection will facilitate direct delivery of United Water Conservation District's SWP allocation, of 3,150 AFY. The Project will thereby enable access to up to 13,150 AFY SWP supplies, or on average up to 6,500 AFY.

By building the infrastructure to deliver SWP supplies, this project will help diversify the City's water supply portfolio and enhance conjunctive use opportunities for both agencies. The project will enable the agencies to take advantage of the anticipated wetter wet years in the future to take SWP water when it is available and be better prepared for the anticipated longer, drier dry periods that may impact local supplies. Overall, this project will significantly improve water supply reliability in the region and enhance long-term drought resiliency. As such, the project also fully aligns with the WaterSMART Drought Response Program objectives to proactively increase water supply resilience to prepare for and address drought impacts.

I support the City's WaterSMART grant application for the Ventura State Water Interconnection Project and encourages the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's award of funding to support project implementation.

Sincerely,

Matt LaVere
Supervisor, District 1, County of Ventura

United Water
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

October 31, 2023

Attn: Karen Shubert
Bureau of Reclamation
Upper Colorado Regional Office
125 South State Street, Room 8100
Salt Lake City, Utah 84138-1147

RE: Support for the City of Ventura's Application for WaterSMART Drought Response Program: Drought Resiliency Projects Grant

Dear Ms. Shubert,

On behalf of the United Water Conservation District, please accept this letter of support for the City of San Buenaventura's (City of Ventura or City) application for U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART Drought Response Program: Drought Resiliency Projects for Fiscal Year 2024 (R24AS00007) to implement the Ventura State Water Interconnection Project.

The City of Ventura provides water to a service area of about 40 square miles, encompassing a population of approximately 113,500. The City currently depends entirely on local surface and groundwater supplies, making it particularly vulnerable to droughts. The City of Ventura has had a State Water Project (SWP) entitlement of 10,000 acre-feet per year (AFY) since 1971 but is not able to access this water supply due to a lack of infrastructure to deliver the SWP water.

The Calleguas Municipal Water District (Calleguas) is a regional wholesaler that delivers SWP water to retail partners throughout southeastern Ventura County and could wheel the City's SWP water to them via Metropolitan Water District of Southern California's (Metropolitan) and Calleguas' systems. The Ventura State Water Interconnection Project consists of construction of an approximately 4.3-mile pipeline from a connection with Calleguas' system that will enable delivery of the City's SWP allocation. In addition, the connection will facilitate direct delivery of United Water Conservation District's SWP allocation, of 3,150 AFY. The Project will thereby enable access to up to 13,150 AFY SWP supplies, or on average up to 6,500 AFY.

By building the infrastructure to deliver SWP supplies, this project will help diversify the City's water supply portfolio and enhance conjunctive use opportunities for both agencies. The project will enable the agencies to take advantage of the anticipated wetter wet years in the future to take SWP water when it is available and be better prepared for the anticipated longer, drier dry periods that may impact local supplies. Overall, this project will significantly improve water supply reliability in the region and enhance long-term drought resiliency. As such, the project also fully aligns with the WaterSMART Drought Response Program objectives to proactively increase water supply resilience to prepare for and address drought impacts.

United Water Conservation District supports the City's WaterSMART grant application for the Ventura State Water Interconnection Project and encourages the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's award of funding to support project implementation.

Sincerely,

Mauricio E. Guardado, Jr.
General Manager

web site: www.calleguas.com

2100 OLSEN ROAD • THOUSAND OAKS, CALIFORNIA 91360-6800 805/526-9323 • FAX: 805/522-5730

March 13, 2023

The Honorable Congressman Salud Carbajal
U.S. House of Representatives
2331 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Subject: Letter of Support for the City of Ventura's State Water Interconnection Project

Dear Congressman Carbajal:

As General Manager of Calleguas Municipal Water District (Calleguas), a regional wholesale water supplier in Ventura County, I am writing in support of the City of Ventura's (City) application for federal assistance through the Fiscal Year 2024 Congressionally Directed Spending Requests for the State Water Interconnection Project.

This project will connect and convey water between the City and Calleguas' distribution systems. The pipeline is designed to allow beneficial water exchanges between the City and Calleguas. Calleguas purchases water from Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and supplies water to approximately 75% of the Ventura County population. However, the infrastructure that supplies water to Calleguas is vulnerable to failures and Calleguas has limited local sources available in the event of an outage of imported supplies.

Calleguas' mission is to provide the service area with a reliable supplemental water supply of regional and locally developed water in an environmentally and economically responsible manner. Thus, providing interconnections between neighboring agencies aligns with our mission to help provide water service to our customers during an outage of imported supplies and help other agencies during water shortage emergencies.

This project will enhance regional water supply reliability in times of outages and/or shortages, and improve drought resiliency for the region. I support the City's pursuit of federal funding to support this important regional project.

Sincerely,

Tony Goff
General Manager
Calleguas Municipal Water District

CASITAS
Municipal Water District

March 13, 2023

The Honorable Congressman Salud Carbajal
U.S. House of Representatives
2331 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Carbajal:

As General Manager of Casitas Municipal Water District, a water district in Ventura County whose service area includes a portion of the City of Ventura, I am writing in support of the City of Ventura's application for federal assistance through the Fiscal Year 2024 Congressionally Directed Spending Requests for the State Water Interconnection Project.

Both Casitas Municipal Water District and the City of Ventura rely exclusively on local water supplies to serve our customers. Adding a non-local supply will increase supply reliability by adding a source that is not reliant on the climatic conditions of our area. This latest drought has reinforced the need to develop a water supply portfolio that is diverse and allows for drought and disaster relief.

This project will diversify the City's water supply portfolio, enhance regional water supply reliability in times of outages and/or shortages, and improve drought resiliency for the region. I support the City's pursuit of federal funding to support this important regional project.

Sincerely,

Michael Flood
General Manager
Casitas Municipal Water District

United Water
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

March 15, 2023

The Honorable Salud Carbajal
U.S. House of Representatives – CA 24
2331 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Carbajal:

As General Manager of United Water Conservation District (United), a groundwater management agency and a regional wholesale water supplier in Ventura County, I am writing in support of the City of Ventura's application for federal assistance through the Fiscal Year 2024 Congressionally Directed Spending Requests for the State Water Interconnection Project.

This pipeline will allow United an alternate means of accessing our State Water allocation. Although United has access to our State Water entitlement, we have environmental restrictions on the timing and quantity of deliveries. This project will allow United to take direct deliveries of State Water Project water supplies in order to enhance groundwater recharge options, as well as provide an emergency connection.

This project will enhance regional water supply reliability in times of outages and/or shortages and improve drought resiliency for the region. I support the City's pursuit of federal funding to support this important regional project.

Sincerely,

Mauricio Guardado
General Manager

CITY OF VENTURA

March 8, 2023

The Honorable Congressman Salud Carbajal
U.S. House of Representatives
2331 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Carbajal:

The City of San Buenaventura (Ventura) is pleased to submit its Community Project request for Fiscal Year 2024. As Mayor of the City of Ventura, I enthusiastically seek your support of this request that will help deliver a resilient critical water supply for our citizens. Our request follows the success in providing Ventura with important assistance in 2021 to help advance the design and future construction of a State Water Project Interconnection. The project enjoys regional support to help drought proof our communities that have no independent source of water. It will ensure a safe, reliable, and affordable drinking water for citizens. The City of Ventura is seeking $5 million under the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund Account (STAG).

The City has a 10,000 acre-foot per year entitlement from the California State Water Project (SWP). To date, the City has not constructed the improvements necessary to receive delivery of its allocation. The State Water Interconnection Project will enable delivery of SWP water by wheeling through Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and Calleguas Municipal Water District to the City. The connection will also facilitate direct delivery of SWP water to United Water Conservation District and direct or in-lieu delivery of SWP water to Casitas Municipal Water District. In addition, the interconnection will allow the City to deliver water to Calleguas Municipal Water District during an outage of its imported water supplies. Currently, the City is completing, following the successful adoption of environmental documentation, design of the pipeline and blending stations that will allow actual construction to begin. The project will provide multiple federal benefits that include delivering affordable and reliable water to underserved communities within our region, a top priority for the City, and consistent with the Administration's goal of ensuring federal infrastructure assistance is committed to such communities, developing resilient water infrastructure, and reducing adverse impacts to federal and state listed endangered species. This project is a collaborative effort among multiple public agencies with the shared goal of enhancing regional water security.

I wholeheartedly support the requested assistance that is detailed in our formal online submission. I look forward to your support. If you or your staff require additional information, please contact Betsy Cooper, Assistant General Manager, Ventura Water Department, at 805-654-7848.

Joe Schroeder

Joe Schroeder
Mayor, City of Ventura

COUNTY OF VENTURA
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

SUPERVISOR
MATT LaVERE
First District

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD
MATT LaVERE, CHAIR
JEFF GORELL
KELLY LONG
JANICE S. PARVIN
VIANEY LOPEZ

March 7, 2023

The Honorable Congressman Salud Carbajal
U.S. House of Representatives
2331 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Carbajal:

As a representative on the Ventura County Board of Supervisors for District 1, which includes the proposed project's site, I am writing in support of the City of Ventura's application for federal assistance through the Fiscal Year 2024 Congressionally Directed Spending Requests for the State Water Interconnection Project.

The City is one of the largest cities in Southern California to rely exclusively on local water supplies and provides potable water to an estimated 113,500 residents. The City of Ventura is requesting funding for the State Water Interconnection Project, which consists of a seven-mile pipeline that will enable delivery of a non-local water supply from the State Water Project by wheeling through neighboring agencies. This project will diversify the City's water supply portfolio, improve local water quality, enhance regional water supply reliability in times of outages and/or shortages, and improve drought resiliency for the region.

The project is a collaborative effort among multiple agencies in Ventura County including Calleguas Municipal Water District and United Water Conservation District. Both agencies contribute to the water supplies in Ventura County, benefiting several communities in District 1 and additional Districts. The City has completed the preliminary design and State environmental review documents and is currently in the process of acquiring easements, obtaining permits, preparing Federal environmental review documents, and completing the final design.

The City of Ventura was selected for federal assistance during past solicitations, and I strongly support the City's continued pursuit of federal funding to support this important regional project. I look forward to learning of the decision on the proposed project's request for assistance.

Sincerely,

Matt LaVere, Chair
Ventura County Board of Supervisors

VENTURA RIVER
WATER DISTRICT

409 Old Baldwin Road
Ojai, CA 93023
Phone (805)646-3403
E-Mail:
Bert@VenturaRiverWD.com
www.VenturaRiverWD.com

April 5, 2019

City of Ventura, Ventura Water
Betsy Cooper
501 Poli Street
Ventura, CA 93002-0099

Subject: State Water Interconnection Project EIR

Dear Betsy:

The Ventura River Water District strongly supports the State Water Interconnection Project. It is essential with our changing climate to have as diversified water supply as possible.

California has experienced 50 year droughts in the past 1,000 years but Lake Casitas was only designed for a 20 year drought. The State Water Interconnection Project will provide another level of redundancy should a prolonged drought occur.

The most important characteristic of a reliable water system is diversification. Diversification is what the State Water Interconnection Project will provide for the City of Ventura and all of the Ojai Valley.

Very Truly Yours
VENTURA RIVER WATER DISTRICT

Bert J. Rapp, P.E.
General Manager