

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

Draft FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Reclamation Approvals Associated with Harris Farms' and Shows Family Farms' Multiyear Banking and Transfer Program

FONSI-18-004



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
South-Central California Area Office

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Mission Statements

The Department of the Interior protects and manages the Nation's natural resources and cultural heritage; provides scientific and other information about those resources; and honors its trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated island communities.

The mission of the Bureau of Reclamation is to manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public.

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
South-Central California Area Office, Fresno, California

FONSI-18-004

**Reclamation Approvals Associated with
Harris Farms' and Shows Family Farms'
Multiyear Banking and Transfer Program**

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Introduction

In accordance with section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, South-Central California Area Office of the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) has released this draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) which is supported by Reclamation's Environmental Assessment (EA)-18-004, *Reclamation Approvals Associated with Harris Farms' and Shows Family Farms' Multiyear Banking and Transfer Program*, hereby incorporated by reference, for public review. No final decision shall be made on the FONSI until public review has been completed and comments, if any, considered.

Background

Harris Farms, Inc. (Harris) and Show Family Farms, LP (Shows) farm lands in various water districts in the San Joaquin Valley, including the following districts within the Central Valley Project (CVP) place-of-use: San Luis Water District (San Luis), Semitropic Water Storage District (Semitropic), and Westlands Water District (Westlands) (Figure 1).

As both have long-term water banking agreements with Semitropic, they have requested multiyear approvals from Reclamation for transfers of available CVP water.

Alternatives Considered

No Action

Under the No Action Alternative, Reclamation would not approve a series of transfers of up to 15,000 acre-feet (AF) per year of available CVP water supplies over a 9-year period. Instead, Harris and Shows would need to request separate approvals from Reclamation as each water management action opportunity becomes available.

Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action, Reclamation would approve a series of transfers of up to 15,000 AF per year of available CVP water supplies over a 9-year period as described in Section 2.2 of EA-18-004. Transfers of CVP water would be from CVP contractors to Harris and Shows either for direct agricultural use on their lands located within Westlands, San Luis, and Semitropic or for banking in Semitropic and/or the Kern Water Bank for later use on their lands within those same districts.

Environmental Commitments

All participants in the Proposed Action shall implement the environmental protection measures included in Table 2 of EA-18-004 to avoid environmental consequences associated with the Proposed Action. Environmental consequences for resource areas assume the measures specified would be fully implemented.

Findings

In accordance with NEPA, Reclamation's South-Central California Area Office has determined that the approval of the Proposed Action is not a major federal action that will significantly affect the quality of the human environment; consequently, an environmental impact statement is not required.

The following reasons are why the impacts from the Proposed Action are not significant:

- The Proposed Action will not significantly affect public health or safety (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(2)).
- The Proposed Action will not significantly affect natural resources and unique geographical characteristics such as proximity to historic or cultural resources; parks, recreation, and refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order (EO) 11990); flood plains (EO 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(3) and 43 CFR 46.215(b)).
- There is no potential for the effects to be considered highly controversial (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(4)).
- The Proposed Action will not have possible effects on the human environment that are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(5)).
- The proposed action will neither establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects nor represent a decision in principle about a future consideration (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(6)).
- The Proposed Action will not have cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)).
- The Proposed Action will not significantly affect historic properties (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(8)).
- The Proposed Action will not significantly affect listed or proposed threatened or endangered species, or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(9)).
- The Proposed Action will not threaten a violation of Federal, State, tribal or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(10)).
- The Proposed Action will not affect any Indian Trust Assets (512 DM 2, Policy Memorandum dated December 15, 1993).
- Implementing the Proposed Action will not disproportionately affect minorities or low-income populations and communities (EO 12898).

- The Proposed Action will not limit access to, and ceremonial use of, Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (EO 13007 and 512 DM 3).