

RECLAMATION

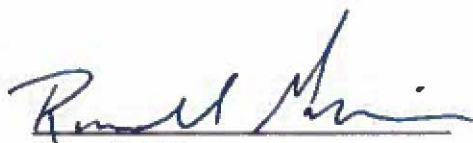
Managing Water in the West

Finding of No Significant Impact

River Garden Farms and Zone 7 Water Agency Water Transfer

FONSI 18-27-MP

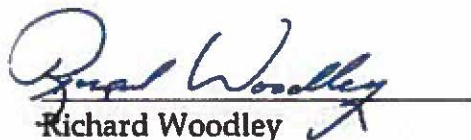
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Date: 6/25/18

Background

The State Water Project allocated 30 percent of “Table A” amounts to their contractors, including Zone 7 Water Agency. Under current allocations, Zone 7 Water Agency would not receive adequate supplies to meet water demand for this year and is considering water transfers to address this shortage. River Garden Farms (RGF) originally proposed to transfer up to 5,748 acre-feet of Base Supply, made available through a groundwater substitution action, to Zone 7 Water Agency. RGF’s Current proposal is to transfer 1,000 AF of base supply to Zone Z Water Agency. Reclamation will consider the approval of transferring this amount, and finds that the effects of transferring this quantity would be negligible.

Alternatives Including the Proposed Action

No Action

For the No Action Alternative, Reclamation would not approve a water transfer to Zone 7 Water Agency made available through a groundwater substitution action, from RGF. Zone 7 Water Agency, a municipal and industrial SWP contractor, could experience shortages in 2018. Zone 7 Water Agency may take alternative water supply actions in response to shortages, including increased conservation measures (reduction of landscape irrigation or water rationing), increased local groundwater pumping, reduced groundwater recharge, and/or recovery of additional water from groundwater banks in Kern County.

Proposed Action

The Proposed Action that was analyzed in the attached environmental assessment was for the transfer of 5,748 acre-feet of surface water in contract year 2018 from the seller, RGF, to the buyer, Zone 7 Water Agency made available through a groundwater substitution action. RGF now proposes to transfer 1,000 acre-feet of surface water, also made available through a groundwater substitution transfer.

Findings

Based on the attached environmental assessment, Reclamation finds that the Proposed Action is not a major Federal action that will significantly affect the quality of the human environment, and preparation of an environmental impact statement is not required. The environmental assessment was prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508), and Department of the Interior Regulations (43 CFR Part 46); the attached environmental assessment is hereby incorporated by reference. Following are the reasons why the impacts of the proposed action are not significant:

1. The proposed action will not significantly affect public health or safety (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(2)).
2. The proposed action will not adversely affect any districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(8)). Pursuant to 54 USC § 306108, commonly known as Section 106 of the

National Historic Preservation Act, and its implementing regulations at 36 CFR Part 800, Reclamation determined the undertaking had no potential to affect historic properties.

3. The proposed action will not affect any Indian Trust Assets (512 DM 2, Policy Memorandum dated December 15, 1993).
4. The proposed action will not limit access to, and ceremonial use of, Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (EO 13007 and 512 DM 3).
5. The proposed action will not significantly impact natural resources and unique geographical characteristics such as 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)).
6. 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)).
7. 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)).
8. There is no potential for the effects to be considered highly controversial (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(4)).
9. The proposed action will not have significant cumulative impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)).
10. The proposed action will not significantly affect listed or proposed threatened or endangered species (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(9)).
11. Implementing the proposed action will not disproportionately affect minorities or low-income populations and communities (EO 12898).

