



Water Storage Investment Program

Regional Surface Water Supply Project
Eligibility and Feasibility Determination

California
WATER COMMISSION

December 2021

Screening Process Background

- **December 2020:** The Commission directed staff to open screening process for new potential projects that can meet January 1, 2022 requirements
- **Screening opened in 2021:** Staff developed screening form and held workshop for prospective screening applicants. The Regional Surface Water Supply Project (Regional Project) is one of the two projects that filed a screening form and submitted documents per Water Code section 79757
- **Today:** Commission decides whether to make determinations for the project and add the Regional Project to a potential pool of eligible projects if a second solicitation occurs

Screening Process Considerations

- Intent of screening was to receive only statutorily required information and not burden potential applicants with full requirements of WSIP when a second solicitation was not guaranteed
- Screening projects not required to perform all analyses outlined in regulations
- Information may be limited and staff evaluations show where projects may not currently meet the WSIP Technical Reference requirements
- If the Commission chooses to move forward with a second solicitation, an additional set of regulations will be required and any eligible projects would need to submit full applications before receiving an MCED or funding

WSIP Background and Screening

Minimally, screening projects must meet Water Code section 79757 requirements:

By January 1, 2022

- Feasibility studies are complete
- Draft environmental documentation is available for public review
- Commission makes a finding project is feasible
- Commission makes a finding that the project will advance the long-term objectives of restoring ecological health and improving water management for beneficial uses of the Delta
- Director of DWR receives commitments for not less than 75% of non-public benefit cost share of the project

Regional Surface Water Supply Project

Stanislaus Regional Water Authority (SRWA)

- **Type of project: Conjunctive Use**
- **Location: Stanislaus County - near Hughson, south-east of Modesto**
- **Currently under construction**
- **Scheduled to be operational in Summer 2023**



Regional Surface Water Supply Project

Project Description:

- **Water pumped from Tuolumne River at new raw water pump station, treated and delivered to Ceres and Turlock**
- **Potential public benefits: Ecosystem, Emergency Response**
- **Allows for Turlock Groundwater subbasin in-lieu recharge and conjunctive management of surface and groundwater**

Regional Project Feasibility

Documentation received and reviewed:

- **Screening form including description of potential public benefits and how project provides improvements to Delta ecosystem and beneficial uses of the Delta**
- **2018 Draft and Final EIR**
- **Feasibility Study**
- **Letter of Commitment**

Statutory Requirements

- **Complete Feasibility Study**
 - Study submitted and broadly addressed feasibility components
- **Draft Environmental Documentation Available for Public Review**
 - Draft and Final EIR released in 2018
- **Director Receives 75% Commitments**
 - Director of DWR received letter of commitment from Stanislaus Regional Water Authority November 19, 2021

Regulatory Feasibility Review

- **WSIP Feasibility categories:**
 - **Technical Feasibility and Constructability**
 - **Environmental Feasibility**
 - **Economic and Financial Feasibility**
- **Feasibility study prepared that broadly addressed the feasibility categories**

Regional Project Feasibility Review

- **Areas where feasibility study does not meet WSIP regulatory requirements, which was the benchmark for reviewer comments in staff report**
 - Modeling analysis of both with and without project in the context of a larger water system (geographic scope) as well as climate scenarios. Difficult to understand all benefits and costs of project without this information.
 - Benefits and costs of the project would be fully evaluated in a full application process before the Commission would make any funding decision.

Regional Project Delta Beneficial Uses

- **Stanislaus Regional Water Authority provided information in screening form:**
 - **Potential public benefits include steelhead in Tuolumne River, emergency response during drought or infrastructure failures**
 - **Would address fish and wildlife beneficial uses identified in Bay-Delta Plan**

Project Eligibility

Commission Discretion: Statute requires that all feasibility studies are complete. The WSIP Technical Reference, incorporated into regulations, further defined what would be required for completed feasibility studies which included documentation required for full applications. The Commission has discretion to find the project feasible based on statutory language alone.

Screening projects would still need to submit a full application with all of the required components (modeling, benefits analysis) at a later date if Commission moves forward with a second solicitation.

Project Eligibility

Staff Recommendation: Documentation submitted meets minimum statutory requirements although staff cannot make a feasibility recommendation based on WSIP regulations.

Commission Decision:

- **Decide if the project is feasible**
- **Decide if the project will advance long-term objectives of restoring ecological health and improving water management for beneficial uses of the Delta**
- **If Commission makes both findings, project could apply to the WSIP in the future; would need to complete full application**
- **If Commission does not make findings, project would not be able to apply under WSIP if second solicitation occurs**



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