Tab 7

A1. Documentation, analytical methods and results that support, substantiate, and quantify all public and non-public claimed physical benefits, as further defined in section 6004, including measurable improvements to the Delta ecosystem or to the tributaries to the Delta. If a project is not within the watershed of the Delta, the applicant shall identify specific water rights or water contracts that would be created or amended to ensure public benefits to the Delta ecosystem and shall provide supporting documentation of the parties’ willingness to enter into such contracts or amendments including an explanation of how these changes would assure measurable improvements to the Delta ecosystem. Section 6003(a)(1)(L). (4,000 characters max)

Analyses of the public and non-public benefits of the Kern Fan Integrated Groundwater Storage Project (Project) were conducted that show measurable ecosystem benefits for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Delta), Sacramento River, and Feather River. The Project will be located in Kern County and operated to support the State Water Project (SWP). During wet years, the Project will recharge and store, using Project facilities, up to 100,000 acre-feet per year (AFY) of unallocated SWP Article 21 water into the Kern County groundwater basin. These deliveries would be made on behalf of Irvine Ranch Water District (IRWD) as a landowner in Dudley Ridge Water District (DRWD) and Rosedale-Rio Bravo Water Storage District (Rosedale) as a sub-unit of the Kern County Water agency. During dry years and critical dry years, IRWD as a land owner in DRWD, DRWD and Rosedale would rely on the stored flows to provide non-public water supply benefits that improve water supply reliability.

Approximately 25 percent of the stored water would be held as SWP system water that would be used for ecosystem benefits purposes. This 25 percent of the water would be made available for ecosystem benefits through 1-for-1 exchanges that would occur when the water is extracted from the ground. The 1-for-1 exchanges would result in Table A water, that is held in Lake Oroville, being reclassified as SWP system water and the SWP system water being extracted from the ground, being reclassified as Table A water. The Table A water would be used to meet DRWD and Rosedale SWP Table A demands either directly or through operational exchanges. The SWP system water left in Oroville Reservoir would then be used to provide short-term ecosystem pulse flows to generate ecosystem benefits by improving habitat for fish in the Feather and Sacramento Rivers and Delta. The 1-for-1 exchanges would result in the water extracted from the ground and used by DRWD and Rosedale being classified as Table A water and the water left in Oroville Reservoir for use in providing ecosystem benefits being classified as SWP system water.

The California Department of Water Resources State Water Project Analysis Office (SWPAO) and SWP operations staff have been consulted with respect to the proposed 1-for-1 exchanges that would make water available for the public ecosystem benefits that would be derived from the pulse flows. SWPAO has identified that uncertainties and contractual issues would need to be worked through with the project partners. This work would begin immediately should the CWC select the Project for funding. It is expected that these efforts would result in a Coordinated Operating Agreement that would be executed between the project partners and DWR. The Project would not require any changes in water rights or State Water Project Contracts. The storage and recovery of water stored in the Project as described above would not impact groundwater rights or entitlements.
As project proponents that are submitting this application for WSIP funding, IRWD and Rosedale are expressing their willingness to participate in the project as a funding partner and as a party to the Coordinated Operating Agreement. Attached with the application is a letter from DRWD expressing its support for the project and its willingness to consider terms for participating in the project as a party to the Coordinated Operating Agreement.