Appendix A
Notice of Preparation

EL DORADO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS • EL DORADO COUNTY WATER AGENCY • EL DORADO IRRIGATION DISTRICT

EL DORADO
WATER & POWER
AUTHORITY

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Placerville, CA 95667
Tel 530.621.5392 Fax 530.672.6721
https://www.edcgov.us/waterandpower/index.html

December 22, 2017

Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the **El Dorado Water Reliability Project**

To Whom It May Concern:

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the El Dorado Water & Power Authority (EDWPA) has released a Notice of Preparation (NOP) for a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the El Dorado Water Reliability Project (Project). The Project is a component of EDWPA's effort to meet the projected long-term water needs of the "West Slope" of El Dorado County (County)—that is, the area west of the Lake Tahoe Region—as established in the County's General Plan. The Project consists of acquiring rights to allow for the direct diversion, and diversion to storage with subsequent rediversion, for use of up to 40,000 acre-feet/year (afy) of water from the Middle Fork American River and the South Fork American River. The Project would partially assign State-filed water rights for in-County beneficial use supporting water supply to meet anticipated future demand and to enhance drought period reliability.

EDWPA, as Lead Agency for the environmental review of the Project under CEQA, has provided this Notice of Preparation (NOP) to responsible and trustee agencies, other involved federal agencies in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, and interested stakeholders. As part of the environmental review process, EDWPA would like to know the views of you and/or your agency as to the scope and content of the proposed EIR, as relevant to your interests or your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the Project. The NOP, including a project description and a preliminary review of potential environmental impact issues to be addressed, can be downloaded at http://www.edcgov.us/waterandpower/index.html.

You are invited to provide comment on scope of the EIR. The public comment period extends through February 5, 2018. EDWPA also encourages your participation at one of two public scoping meetings to be held:

Scoping Meeting #1
Lower American River Basin

Date: January 29, 2018

Time: 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm

Location: Regional Water Authority
Conference Room
5620 Birdcage Street, Suite 180
Citrus Heights, CA 95610

Scoping Meeting #2
El Dorado County

Date: January 30, 2018

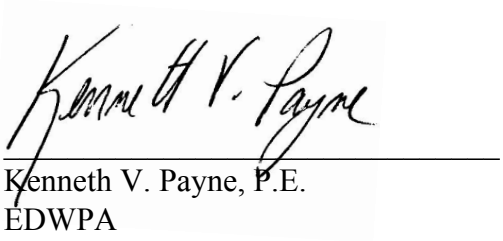
Time: 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm

Location: El Dorado County Government
Planning Commission Hearing Room
2850 Fairlane Court
Placerville, CA 95667

EDWPA is also requesting written comments on scope, content, alternatives, and environmental issues to be addressed in the EIR. Due to time limits mandated by state law, **your written comments must be postmarked or received by 4:00 pm on February 5, 2018**. Please submit written comments to:

Julianne van Leeuween, Board Clerk
El Dorado Water & Power Authority
4330 Golden Center Drive, Suite C
Placerville, CA 95667
julianne.vanleeuwen@edcgov.us

Please make sure that you provide your name, the name of the agency you are representing, title, as well as your address, phone number, and email so that we can contact you and keep you informed throughout the EIR process. For additional information or questions please contact Ken Payne, Executive Director at (530) 621-5403, ken.payne@edcgov.us.



Kenneth V. Payne, P.E.
EDWPA

EL DORADO WATER RELIABILITY PROJECT

Notice of Preparation

Prepared for
El Dorado Water &
Power Authority

December 2017

ESA

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INTRODUCTION

The El Dorado Water & Power Authority (EDWPA) proposes to implement the El Dorado Water Reliability Project, which is a component of EDWPA's effort to meet the projected long-term water needs of the "West Slope" of El Dorado County (County)—that is, the area west of the Lake Tahoe region—as established in the current El Dorado County General Plan (County, 2004). The Project, as described below, will meet approximately two-thirds of the additional—presently unmet—water supply demands at build-out for the West Slope of the County. The project is the first of a series of projects, each with independent utility, through which EDWPA is seeking to ensure a reliable water supply for the County, even in drought years like 2014 and 2015.

EDWPA is a joint powers authority formed in 2004, which is presently composed of the County, the El Dorado County Water Agency (EDCWA), and the El Dorado Irrigation District (EID), (the "El Dorado Parties").[1] In September 2005, the El Dorado Parties and the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) entered into an agreement that provides the terms and conditions for the delivery of water from, and the storage of water in, the Upper American River Project (UARP) for EDWPA, as the "designated representative" of the El Dorado Parties (the El Dorado-SMUD Cooperation Agreement; County, 2005).[2]

The project consists of acquiring water rights to allow for the total withdrawal of up to 40,000 acre-feet per year (afy) from the Middle Fork American River and the South Fork American River, storing that water in the UARP, and then delivering the water to EDWPA for its use. EDWPA is the Lead Agency for the environmental review of the project pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). EDWPA will be preparing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Project. The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) will be the Responsible Agency under CEQA, using this EIR in its own decision process to consider approval of EDWPA's water rights application.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The County is located about 30 miles northeast of the City of Sacramento in Northern California. The western portion of the County, referred to as the West Slope, covers the area west of the continental divide along the Sierra Nevada. Placerville is the only incorporated city in the West Slope. Interstate Highway 50 is the major transportation corridor crossing the West Slope, connecting many urban and rural communities, and providing public access to recreational opportunities and economic activities in the County and nearby areas. The area east of Placerville is largely in the jurisdiction of the Eldorado National Forest. The western end of the County includes areas of more concentrated urban development, connecting to the greater Sacramento metropolitan area. The remaining rural areas continue to maintain high levels of agricultural production and in

[1] Georgetown Divide Public Utility District was originally a member agency of EDWPA but has since withdrawn.
[2] El Dorado-SMUD Cooperation Agreement as filed on December 2, 2005 with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Office of the Secretary, p. 3.

recent years have diversified into agritourism. The County's General Plan anticipates that agriculture will continue to be an important aspect of the County's diversified economy.

Public retail water purveyors in the West Slope include EID, Georgetown Divide Public Utility District (GDPUD), and Grizzly Flats Community Services District (GFCSD). Placerville purchases water supply from EID to provide retail services within the city limit.[3] EDCWA also represents the water users and their needs in the remaining unincorporated area in the West Slope.

Major water storage and conveyance facilities located on the West Slope, which may be used to make water available from the Project, belong to SMUD and EID. SMUD owns and operates the UARP to divert, store, and release water within the watersheds of the South Fork and Middle Fork American Rivers on West Slope for the purpose of generating electricity. SMUD uses this electricity to meet customer demands in its service area, which includes the County of Sacramento and small portions of Placer and Yolo counties. A portion of the water made available under the project would be delivered at the Folsom Lake Intake and Pump Station, which is owned and operated by EID. Water would also be delivered, through an exchange with an upstream purveyor, at the American River Pump Station on the North Fork American River near the old Auburn cofferdam.

Water Supply Reliability

EDWPA recognizes that, as established in the current (2004) General Plan, demand for water on the West Slope will increase as the County moves towards buildout. Accordingly, by the Project, EDWPA seeks to ensure water supply reliability by obtaining new water rights sufficient to largely meet the increases in demands for the areas identified in the currently adopted General Plan. Under long-term planning assumptions applicable to the County, new supplies are needed for all West Slope purveyors at buildout of the 2004 General Plan, with approximately 69,000 AFY[4] of additional water supply needed for the West Slope.[5] Based on the El Dorado Parties' experience during the 2014-2015 drought, supplies of all post-1914 appropriative rights can be curtailed during an extended drought. The El Dorado Parties' water portfolio can be diversified and strengthened to improve supply reliability by EDWPA's use of existing storage in the UARP, consistent with the Cooperation Agreement, for the benefit of the West Slope of El Dorado County[6] to meet drought conditions.

Projected Water Supply Deficiency at Buildout

In 2014, the EDCWA completed the *West Slope Update* to its 2007 *Water Resources Development and Management Plan* (WRDMP) to re-evaluate the water supply demands for

[3] Placerville has adopted its first General Plan in 1990, and revised elements as needed, to guide the development within the city's Sphere of Influence.
[4] Water Resources Development and Management Plan, 2014 West Slope Update, pp. 119-123, Tables 7-1 and 7-2.
[5] This estimate includes GDPUD's estimated buildout demand. GDPUD has formally withdrawn its participation in the Project; water supply analyses in the Draft and Final EIR will consider scenarios where GDPUD only receives additional water from non-Project sources and scenarios where GDPUD receives additional water from the Project in order to provide a comprehensive discussion of water supply reliability on the West Slope.
[6] El Dorado - SMUD Cooperation Agreement, 2004, Section 5 et seq, Water Deliveries by SMUD, pp. 9-13.

urban and agricultural uses in the West Slope. The demand estimate was based on the County's approved 2004 General Plan and in light of existing and planned recycled water use, state-mandated and best-management-practice conservation, and demand perturbation under climate change conditions based on referenced case studies in the country. The resulting estimated total buildout[7] demand for the West Slope is about 148,590 afy with up to a total of approximately 69,000 afy of potential water supply shortage in the Western Slope area. Depending on the rate of water use development, water purveyors in the West Slope may experience water supply shortage as early as 2028. EDCWA is currently updating demand projections for the West Slope area. The revised demand projections will be documented and incorporated in the analysis for the Draft EIR.

Drought Resiliency

Water purveyors in the West Slope rely primarily on surface water sources to meet their needs, as there are no recognized groundwater basins in this area, according to California Department of Water Resources Bulletin 118. Further, because urban development in the County is concentrated in the lower-elevation western portion of the County, available recycled water is also limited and/or cost-prohibitive to meet broader needs in the County at higher elevations. The current projected demands have already factored industrial standards, state mandates, and best management practices for water use efficiency in urban and agricultural uses.

California's historic drought from 2013 through 2016 forced water managers throughout the state to examine their water supply vulnerability from a new perspective. The drought demonstrated the plausible scenario where post-1914 appropriative rights would be curtailed, and where agricultural water users would receive zero allocations for deliveries from water service contracts through the Central Valley Project (CVP), owned and operated by U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation). Under Reclamation's current policies, municipal and industrial purveyors like EID will always receive at least 25 percent of their contract quantities. However, the extended drought demonstrated that it is possible that most water supplies available to the El Dorado Parties could be cut off during the summer months of a drought year. Moreover, climate change projections for California generally predict increasing summer temperatures over time, which could increase water demand despite improved water use efficiency measures. A climate-induced increase in the proportion of precipitation falling as rain combined with an earlier snowmelt could cause reservoirs to fill earlier. Under such a scenario, excess runoff could be released to provide flood management capacity. By reducing the quantity of water available for use during the summer months, such flood operations have the potential of substantially reducing the reliable yield of water supply reservoirs, thereby placing additional stress on available water supplies. Thus, EDWPA believes that the projected water supply deficiency is expected to worsen as climate change progresses, although the rate and degree of worsening are difficult to predict.

[7] The buildout condition is the maximum level of development permitted in the General Plan of a city or county, based on planning tools like land carrying capacity analysis or cumulative impact assessment.

Options for Water Supply Augmentation

EDCWA and EID, member agencies of the EDWPA, have evaluated a broad range of options for water supply augmentation, including new and expanded surface water storage, increased conservation, water reuse, water transfers, and water right acquisitions. As documented in EID's 2013 *Integrated Water Resources Master Plan* and EDCWA's 2014 *West Slope Update to 2007 WRDMP*, the County's challenging foothill terrain, significant elevation changes (roughly 900 to 10,000 feet above mean sea level), physical and hydrologic limitations, and varying permit requirements require a portfolio approach to meet projected urban and agricultural demands. Past studies have identified three categories of water supply augmentation projects applicable to the County:

- Aggressive Water Conservation. To estimate demand at build-out in light of conservation, EDWPA has used the State Water Resources Control Board's residential gallons per capita/day (RGPCD) targets from 2015 as a reasonable measure of current levels of water use efficiency during a drought (the "new normal").

- Alternative Sources of Additional Water. These include potential for increased use of recycled water, and the generation of new water by better management of the national forests at the headwaters of the American River system. EID is already proceeding with the construction of a 6 million gallon/day recycled water plant and it is likely that one or two other such plants could be constructed during the period between the present and build-out. However, given the County's relatively low population density, the construction of a large recycled water plant is likely not to be cost-effective. For example, production of 10,000 to 15,000 afy of recycled water at a cost greater than $1,200/af is not feasible for the residents of El Dorado County. With respect to forest management, studies have shown that improved management of the Eldorado National Forest could yield up to another 10,000 afy of enhanced runoff in the American River system. But such improvements in forest management are entirely within the control of the United States Forest Service and so are independent of the Project.

- Direct Water Augmentation. Past studies that have evaluated the possibility of direct water augmentation projects using new and/or existing storage facilities have concluded that utilizing SMUD's UARP facilities to develop and deliver water is the most feasible way to meet supplemental water supply needs of West Slope purveyors.

Regional Drought Resiliency and Adaptation Strategies for Climate Change

California's recent, historic drought from 2013 through 2016 resulted in devastating effects on water supply in the American River basin. The image of a dry Folsom Reservoir served as the iconic symbol for the devastation. The drought resulted in even more severe water supply impacts to the County due to its lack of access to groundwater as a supplemental water source. This underscores the County's high vulnerability to anticipated climate change conditions, wherein reduced snowpack and increased variability of extreme events are expected to greatly impact the reliability of surface water supplies that the County is dependent on. Therefore, the project will serve as a cornerstone for mitigating such climate-change–related vulnerability, while providing

for regional collaboration. At the same time, challenging water management conditions in American River basin during the historic drought also underscored the critical role of Reclamation in regional water supply reliability and preservation of the lower American River through its operation of Folsom Reservoir.

EDWPA developed the project to be consistent with the 2000 Water Forum Agreement (WFA) and its implementation, including regional, watershed-scale conjunctive use projects. EDWPA and its member agencies support the WFA developed by regional business, water purveyors, cities and counties, and interested parties as a regional solution for both long-term water supply reliability in Sacramento, Placer, and El Dorado counties, and the preservation of the lower American River. EDCWA signed a procedural agreement in May 2000 on behalf of EID and GDPUD to participate in the WFA in the future and committed to develop a purveyor-specific agreement after completing the County's General Plan.

The region is still seeking to implement drought resiliency projects as an outcome of the WFA. Thus, EDWPA, through the EDCWA, is moving forward with the American River Basin Study (ARBS). The ARBS partners include Reclamation; PCWA, the Cities of Folsom, Roseville and Sacramento; and the Regional Water Authority. This work is a follow-up to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Basin Study (SSJBS) that analyzed water supplies and demands in each major river basin to determine potential impacts of climate change, to propose adaptive strategies to mitigate climate change impacts and its potential impact on future water demand, and to identify concept-level options and strategies to promote long-term water supply sustainability. The SSJBS was completed through a partnership between Reclamation, California Department of Water Resources, California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley, Stockton East Water District, El Dorado County Water Agency, and the Madera County Resources Management Agency. The ARBS is intended to develop detailed hydrologic analysis and models for the basin, which will include consideration of the impacts of climate change and will assist in identifying mitigation or adaptation strategies to address negative impacts of climate change. In addition, the ARBS focuses on the alignment of adaptation strategies that create mutual benefits to the region and to Reclamation. The adaptation strategies are to accomplish regional goals in long-term water supply reliability and ecological system preservation, and provide additional flexibility to Reclamation in operating the Folsom Reservoir to meet all authorized CVP purposes.

EDCWA is working collaboratively with Reclamation, the other regional water purveyors, and interested parties to revise the regional drought mitigation and climate change adaptation strategies. Organized by the Regional Water Authority (RWA), water purveyors (with input and participation by EDCWA and EID) in the greater American River basin region have recently engaged many regional planning efforts to advance collective objectives. The region has completed a 2017 *Regional Drought Contingency Plan*, focusing on drought mitigation actions for CVP contractors and other water purveyors in their wholesale service areas. A Regional Water Reliability Plan is currently under preparation to explore the refined implementation of and impediments to a sustainable regional conjunctive use. EDWPA will continue to participate and collaborate with the RWA efforts for drought contingency planning.

Past Project CEQA Processes and Refinements

EDWPA first petitioned the State Water Board in October 2008 under the "Supplemental Water Rights Project" for partial assignment of state-filed Applications 5644 and 5645 on the tributaries to Middle Fork and South Fork American Rivers for direct diversion and diversion to storage to allow up to 40,000 afy of water. The state filed these applications to reserve water rights for future uses within El Dorado County in 1927.

The State Water Board noticed the applications as complete in May 2009. A number of agencies and environmental interests filed protested to the application. EDWPA prepared a draft EIR (SCH# 2008102090) in support of the water rights applications, that was circulated for public review in July 2010. Subsequently, in evaluating the comments received during the circulation period, EDWPA deferred the project to increase the level of regional collaboration. In March 2014, EDWPA circulated a revised NOP with a revised project but decided to defer the preparation of an EIR due to the changed conditions and growing emergency caused by California's historic drought from 2013 through 2016.

PROPOSED PROJECT

The following provides a summary of the proposed project for environmental scoping purposes.

Project Objectives

EDWPA has identified the following project objective.

- Secure 40,000 afy of additional water supplies from the American River basin to improve water supply reliability and drought resiliency to support planned growth and the economic vitality of the West Slope of El Dorado County.

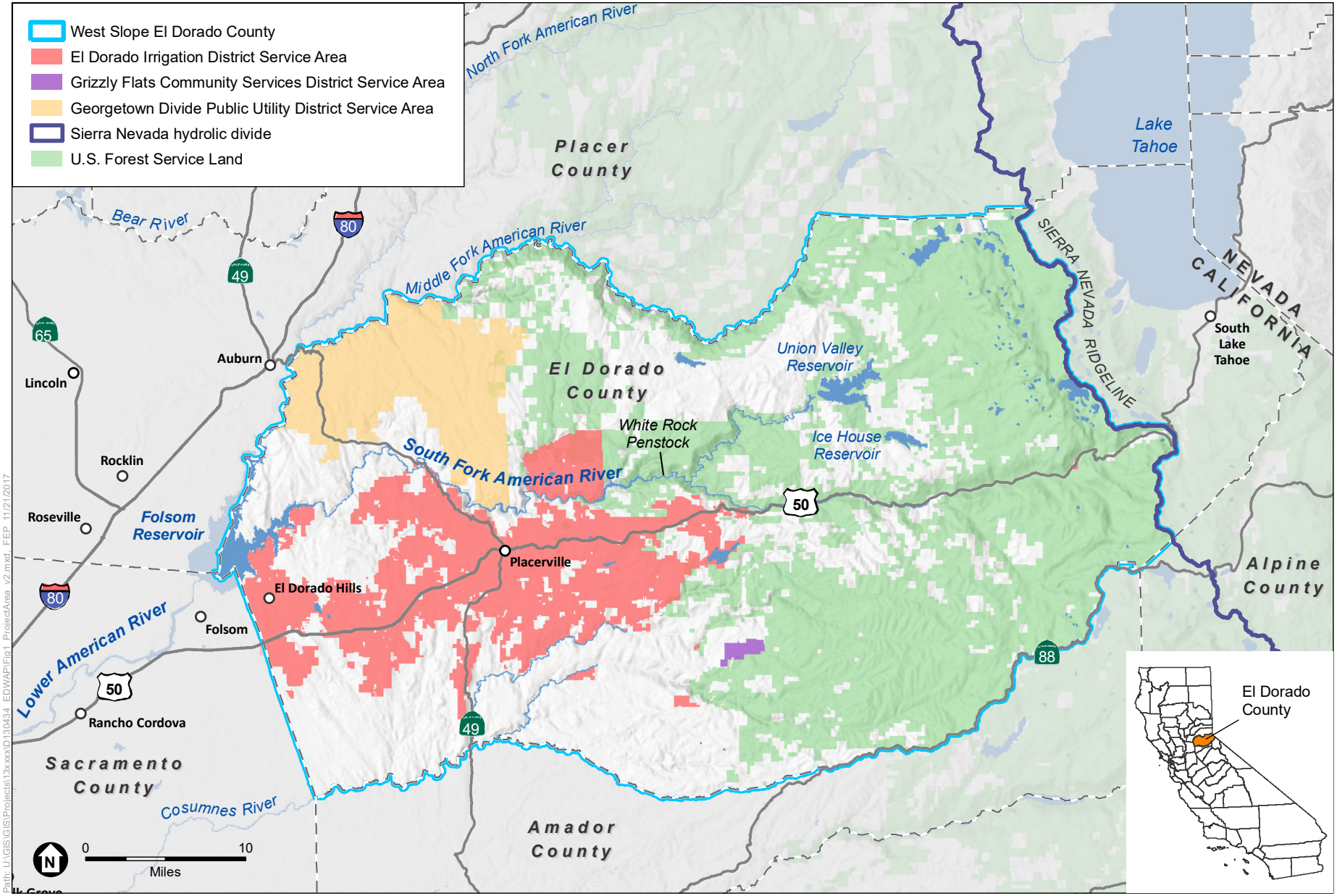
The project objective will be further developed and refined during the EIR process.

Project Area

Figure 1 shows the project location with major existing facilities and water purveyors' service areas.

Project Overview

The proposed project would partially assign state-filed water rights for in-County beneficial use, supporting water supply to meet anticipated future demand and to enhance drought-period reliability, as discussed previously. When in-County demands do not yet require full allocation of project water supplies, EDWPA may elect to allocate interim water uses to regional conjunctive use partners, or to transfer partners. The project would achieve these objectives using only existing diversion and storage facilities.



SOURCE: Esri, 2016; DWR, 2003; El Dorado County, 2017; ESA, 2017

El Dorado Water Reliability Project

Figure 1
Project Area

ESA

Partial Assignments of State-Filed Water Rights for in-County Beneficial Uses

To secure supplemental water to meet a portion of its projected water needs in the manner consistent with the Cooperation Agreement, EDWPA requests the State Water Board to approve the following:

- Partial assignment of Applications 5644 and 5645 filed by the state pursuant to California Water Code section 10500 *et seq*. The partial reassignment will be for direct diversions and storage in a combined amount allowing for the delivery of up to 40,000 afy for domestic, municipal, industrial, and irrigation uses on the West Slope (excluding the Eldorado Forest Service lands) as shown in Figure 1.

- Changes in the points of diversion, rediversions, and storage of the assigned portion of these two state-filed applications to be consistent with the existing authorized points of diversion, rediversions, and storage of SMUD's water rights for the UARP.

EDWPA's partial assignment petition is consistent with provisions in the Cooperation Agreement and the collaboration with the City of Sacramento, which also use SMUD facilities in diverting, rediverting, and storing their appropriated water rights.

Long-term and Interim Beneficial Uses

With the use of existing SMUD facilities, EDWPA can exercise the assigned portion of these two state-filed applications under this project immediately after the approval by the State Water Board. During the period when the in-County water demand is developing, EDWPA may provide available water on an interim basis to support out-of-County beneficial uses that can be implemented with existing facilities and consistent with approved General Plans, applicable law, regulations, and regional agreements. **Table 1** illustrates the allocation of water between in-County and interim out-of-County beneficial uses, showing how the 40,000 afy of water could be allocated under the project over time for beneficial use. The periods associated with different phases and the water use amounts will vary due to hydrologic conditions, and will be refined during the EIR process. However, the combined use will not exceed 40,000 afy.

TABLE 1
SCHEDULE FOR PLANNED USE

Benefit Use	Initial Phase	Intermediate Phase	Buildout
In-County Use	up to 5,000	up to 30,000	up to 40,000
Interim Out-of-County Use	0 – 40,000	5,000 – 20,000	5,000 - 10,000
Total Not-to-Exceed Amount	**40,000**	**40,000**	**40,000**

Use of Existing Diversion and Storage Facilities for Operation Needs

The project will rely entirely on existing diversion, conveyance, and storage facilities; EDWPA would not construct any new facilities as part of this Project. Specifically, EDWPA will use the existing diversion and storage facilities of SMUD's UARP to avoid capital costs and additional

environmental impacts for diverting and storing water under the proposed water rights. EDWPA proposes that, when appropriated, the water will be directly diverted and released from storage for withdrawal at the White Rock Powerhouse Penstock (owned and operated by SMUD) and/or at Folsom Reservoir (owned and operated by Reclamation), consistent with the stipulations in the Cooperation Agreement (see Figure 1). Diversions from Folsom Reservoir could also occur through existing EID facilities. Thus, EDWPA could utilize the proposed water upon approval of the water right.

Although EDWPA would not need to construct any new facility infrastructure to take and manage the proposed water, water distributors would ultimately need to construct new or upgraded water diversion or distribution facilities to serve the County's growing water demand. Such facilities have not been designed, as their required parameters and ultimate design will be partially based on the outcome of the proposed water rights application process. Additionally, these facilities would be developed by entities separate from EDWPA. Therefore, these potential facilities will be described in the EIR, to the extent that information is available, and evaluated at a programmatic level only. Their full, project-level potential to generate environmental impacts will be evaluated separately during subsequent CEQA review. Note that EDWPA would also use the existing available facilities for all interim out-of-County beneficial uses, as applicable.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED

The EIR will evaluate potential direct and indirect project impacts and cumulative environmental effects associated with the proposed Project. Issue areas of primary focus are those associated with the proposed project operations, including water diversion, storage, and use. The chief environmental resources and issues areas for analysis will be surface water and groundwater resources, fisheries, aquatic and riparian biological resources, water supply and reliability, hydropower production, water quality and water-oriented recreation.

As noted previously, the project would make use of existing water system infrastructure, including existing water diversion and storage facilities. In the future, purveyors will need to expand water treatment and distribution facilities within their service areas to make full use of this and other supplemental supplies they are pursuing for their long-term supply portfolio. The EIR will address the potential environmental impacts associated with such future facilities generally, at a program level of analysis only, with more detailed, project-level CEQA review to be completed later when facility plans are more developed and available for analysis.

The EIR also will discuss growth inducement potential and the secondary effects of growth that could be associated with increased water use supported by the Project. Because this project was developed specifically to secure a supplemental water supply to meet the projected needs associated with buildout of the County's approved General Plan, the project would not support or induce growth that is in locations or at levels beyond that called for in the existing adopted land use plan. The project will support planned growth, and the EIR discussion of the secondary

effects of this growth will reference and build on the information in adopted El Dorado General Plan and associated EIR, which evaluated the secondary effects of planned growth in detail.

The potential environmental effects to be addressed in the EIR will include, but may not be limited to, those discussed below. Responsible and Trustee agencies are requested to provide input on the scope of the EIR analysis relevant to environmental issues under their jurisdiction.

Effects of Water Diversion / Supply Management

Surface Water Resources: Hydrology and Water Quality

The project could affect surface water resources in a variety of ways. Diversion of water for consumptive use in El Dorado County and interim uses of water outside the County could affect storage and operations at Folsom Reservoir and in the UARP and, in turn, affect flows in the UAR, the lower American River, or further downstream in the Delta system. Changes to existing hydrology could also drive impacts to water quality along the American River or downstream. Potential effects to be evaluated in the EIR include:

- Effects of proposed diversions and other proposed water management activities on hydrology, flows, and water quality along the American River, Sacramento River, the Delta, and other affected waterways. Effects on hydrology and water quality could depend on the timing, volume, and location of proposed diversions and other water management actions. Project effects will be considered both along the Upper American River and Folsom Reservoir, as well as hydrologically or operationally connected waterways downstream.

- Effects of reduced surface water availability on reservoir storage, including Folsom Reservoir and other California reservoirs that are hydrologically or operationally connected to the project area.

- Effects of altered surface water diversion schedules on SMUD Upper American River reservoir operations, including power generation potential.

- Potential for changes in surface water flows to affect other beneficial uses (including instream uses such as aquatic habitat and fisheries, environmental uses, and recreation and consumptive uses).

Aquatic Resources/Fisheries

American River fisheries and aquatic resources could be affected directly or indirectly due to changes in river flows or water quality, proposed changes or increases in water diversion, or other proposed changes in water management. These changes could also affect aquatic resources and fisheries in downstream areas that are hydrologically or operationally connected to the American River. Potential effects to be evaluated in the EIR include but are not limited to:

- Changes in the extent of habitat or habitat quality
- Changes in a fish population that cause it to drop below self-sustaining levels
- Effects on special-status species

- Interference with the movement of any native or migratory fish species

Water-Oriented Recreation

Proposed changes in the volume and timing of diversion from the American River, or potential changes in reservoir storage, could affect water-based recreation. The EIR will evaluate the effects of the proposed water supply options and operations on water-based recreation, such as boating, rafting, or fishing, associated with the regional water system or downstream water resources. Potential effects to be evaluated in the EIR include:

- Effects on water-based recreation opportunities along the American River system
- Effects on land-based recreation facilities and activities due to the siting or operations of proposed facilities or construction activities (e.g., short-term effects due to noise, dust, access restrictions)

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Over time, increased water diversion for use in El Dorado County would result in increased energy use to divert, convey, treat, and distribute water supply, which would contribute to increased GHG emissions. EDWPA is coordinating with SMUD to understand to what extent the project could alter hydropower generation. A reduction in hydropower generation could indirectly result in increased demand for fossil power to meet SMUD electricity demand. The EIR will examine the potential for project operations to affect other hydropower generation operations. Potential effects to be evaluated in the EIR include:

- Direct increases in GHG emissions during project operation
- Potential for project operations to affect hydropower generation

Facility-Related Effects

EDWPA anticipates that use of the full amount of water available under the proposed water right for this project will require future construction of some additional facilities, as discussed previously. These are anticipated to include upgrading or replacement of Upper American River watershed diversion structures, new or upgraded water transmission and distribution facilities, new or upgraded water treatment facilities, and other structures and facilities in the upper watershed needed to ensure effective conveyance, treatment, management, and distribution of water in El Dorado County. The EIR will review these potential future facilities at a program level of analysis only, as there are no specific plans yet available for more detailed analysis. In the future, when such facility improvements or additions are proposed, more detailed project-level environmental review will be conducted.

Aesthetics

The project could ultimately involve construction of upgraded or new water diversion, treatment, or transmission facilities in the Upper American River watershed, which could alter aesthetic resources within affected areas. Key potential impacts to be considered will include:

- Construction of new or modified facilities for proposed project components would result in temporary land disturbance and could result in short-term changes in the existing visual character of proposed facility sites and surrounding areas. However, most proposed facilities would be buried (pipelines), limited in size (wells and other appurtenances), or located on site with or as a replacement of existing facilities and equipment. Potential effects to be evaluated in the EIR include: potential for substantial temporary construction period changes in the existing visual quality and other scenic/visual resources.

- Potential for substantial ongoing, operation period changes in the existing visual quality and other scenic/visual resources will also be evaluated.

Agricultural and Forest Resources

Most of the anticipated project components would be installed within areas that are not presently used as agricultural land. However, because specific locations of many facilities are not yet known, impacts to agricultural resources may occur as a result of project construction and operation. Potential effects to be evaluated in the EIR include:

- Potential for conversion of important farmland to another use;
- Potential for conflicts with existing Williamson Act contracts; and
- Potential for loss of forest land or conversion to another use.

Air Quality

Project construction would result in temporary emissions relating to the use of construction equipment and construction period worker trips. During operation, it is anticipated that the project would result in air quality emissions that would be limited to worker trips to support ongoing/ routine facility maintenance and operation. Potential effects to be evaluated in the EIR include:

- Emissions from construction equipment during the construction of proposed facilities; and
- Operation period air emissions, which would primarily include vehicle use to support operations and maintenance.

Cultural Resources

Implementation of anticipated infrastructure could result in ground disturbance, which could impact existing cultural, historic, or archaeological resources. Potential effects to be evaluated in the EIR include:

- Disturbance of known or unknown archaeological resources;
- Adverse change in the significance of historic and architectural resources, including historic resources deemed eligible for listing;
- Disturbance of known or unknown Native American resources; and
- Disturbance of known or unknown paleontological resources.

Geology, Soils, and Seismicity

Implementation of the anticipated infrastructure could result in ground disturbance. The proposed facilities could be constructed in areas where they would be subject to local geology and soils hazards. Potential effects to be evaluated in the EIR include:

- Seismic hazards to the facilities and/or increased exposure of people and structures to seismic hazards;
- Increased exposure of people or structures to geologic hazards (such as liquefaction, poor soil conditions, or unstable slopes); and
- Increased erosion potential

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Ground disturbance during the construction of project components could result in the encounter of existing hazardous materials. In addition, operation of proposed components could require the use of hazardous materials such as fuels, lubricants, and other common hazardous materials, for facility maintenance and upkeep. Site-specific facility construction and operation impacts will be evaluated in the EIR. Potential effects to be evaluated in the EIR include:

- Potential to encounter hazardous materials or waste during construction or potential to release hazardous materials during construction;
- Potential for accidental release of chemicals during facility operations;
- Potential to interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan;
- Hazards related to nearby airports; and
- Increased exposure of people or structures to wildfires.

Land Use Plans and Policies

Construction of project facilities could have "footprint" impacts that would affect existing or planned land uses within the project area. In addition, construction or operation impacts could affect adjacent land uses. The EIR will provide an overview of the potential land use impacts associated with implementation of anticipated facilities. In addition, the EIR will review appropriate local, regional, state, and federal plans and policies within the overall project area and evaluate their relationship to the Project. Potential effects to be evaluated in the EIR include:

- Substantial conflict with established local, regional, state, or federal plans, policies, and/or guidelines;
- Disruption of an established community;
- Inconsistency or incompatibility with existing or planned land uses at or adjacent to proposed regional facility sites;
- Short-term construction disruption effects on neighboring land uses; and

- Operations effects on adjacent land uses.

Noise

The construction of facilities anticipated under the project would result in a temporary and localized increase in noise in the vicinity of construction areas. Potential effects to be evaluated in the EIR include:

- Construction period increases in noise during the installation of proposed facilities; and
- Operation period increases in noise due to the use of groundwater injection and extraction wells.

Public Services

The project is anticipated to have limited effects on acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for public services. As a water project with limited new facilities, the project is not expected to require substantial increases in demand for fire protection, police protection, schools, parks, or other public facilities.

Terrestrial Vegetation and Wildlife

Installation of infrastructure could result in disturbance or loss of habitat. Project construction could result in short-term effects, such as direct interference with special-status species, as well as indirect effects including construction-related noise, vibration, dust, and erosion. Potential effects to be evaluated in the EIR include:

- Changes in the extent of habitat or habitat quality for terrestrial plants and wildlife;
- Effects on special-status species;
- Effects on species populations and the ability to maintain self-sustaining levels; and
- Interference with wildlife species movement corridors or migration.

Transportation and Traffic

Construction of the project could involve a temporary increase in construction-related traffic, including truck trips as well as worker trips. During operation, vehicle trip generation would be limited to limited operations and maintenance activities. Potential effects to be evaluated in the EIR include:

- Potential for conflict with established traffic and transportation plans and policies;
- Potential to substantially reduce level of service;
- Potential to substantially increase traffic related hazards, or to result in inadequate emergency access; and
- Potential to interfere with air traffic patterns.

Utilities and Services

Short-term effects on utilities and services could occur during construction of facilities, particularly if in-street construction of pipelines is proposed. Potential effects will be evaluated in the EIR.

Alternatives

CEQA requires that an EIR evaluate a reasonable range of feasible alternatives to the Project, or to the location of the Project, that would attain most of the basic project objectives, but that could avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the Project, so that the merits of each alternative can be compared to those of the proposed Project. The EIR alternatives analysis will identify the potentially significant impacts of the Project. The findings of the impact analysis will guide the refinement of an appropriate range of alternatives to be evaluated in the EIR to avoid or substantially lessen identified impacts.

EDWPA is currently in the process of developing a range of feasible alternatives to be evaluated within the EIR. The EIR will review identified alternatives in comparison to the Project, and will analyze potential impacts of each alternative in comparison to those of the Project. The EIR will also include a discussion of impacts associated with the No Project Alternative, and will compare the potential impacts of the project with the impacts that would be expected to occur in the event that the project is not implemented.

CEQA ENVIRONMENTAL SCOPING AND REVIEW PROCESS

EIR Scoping

As part of the environmental review process, EDWPA would like to know the views of you and/or your agency as to the scope and content of the proposed EIR, as relevant to your interests or your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the Project. Whether you are a public agency, stakeholder, landowner, or interested member of the general public, you are encouraged to participate in the preparation of the EIR by attending the scoping meetings and/or providing written comments as discussed below. Pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines Section 15206, this is considered a project of "statewide, regional, or area wide significance" and a scoping meeting is required.

Two scoping meetings, one in El Dorado County and one in the Lower American River Basin, will be conducted to seek public and agency input on the scope of the environmental review, alternatives, and issues and concerns to be addressed in the EIR. The schedule and location of the scoping meetings are as follows:

Lower American River Basin
January 29, 2018, 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm
Regional Water Authority
Conference Room
5620 Birdcage Street, Suite 180
Citrus Heights, CA 95610

El Dorado County
January 30, 2018, 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm
El Dorado County Government Center
Planning Commission Hearing Room
2850 Fairlane Court
Placerville, CA 95667

Written Comments. In addition to the opportunity to provide input during the scoping meetings, written comments on scope, content, alternatives, and environmental issues to be addressed in the EIR are also encouraged. Due to time limits mandated by state law, your **written comments must be received by February 5, 2018**. Please submit written comments to:

Julianne van Leeuween, Clerk of the Board
El Dorado Water & Power Authority 4330
Golden Center Drive, Suite C Placerville,
CA 95667
julianne.vanleeuwen@edcgov.us

Please make sure that you provide your name, the name of the agency you are representing, title, your address, phone number, and email so that we can contact you and keep you informed throughout the EIR process. If you should have any questions or need additional information, please contact Julianne Van Leeuween at julianne.vanleeuwen@edcgov.us or (530) 621-6635.

Intended Uses of the EIR

EDWPA is the CEQA Lead Agency for review of the proposed El Dorado Water Reliability Project. The EDWPA Board of Directors will consider the information contained in the EIR prior to considering project approval. The EIR will also provide information to other agencies that have an approval or permitting role over some aspect of the project and/or will consider whether to participate in the Project. Responsible Agencies under CEQA that will use this EIR as part of their review and approval process for the project may include, but are not limited to:

- State Water Board
- Potential project participants outside of the County for interim water uses (when identified)

Trustee agencies under CEQA with jurisdiction over State resources occurring within the project area include:

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- California State Parks
- California State Lands Commission

Federal Agencies with jurisdiction over facilities and resources potentially affected by the project include:

- Reclamation (owns/operates Folsom Reservoir)
- National Marine Fisheries Service
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Forest Service

REFERENCES

County of El Dorado. County of El Dorado Adopted General Plan. Available at: https://www.edcgov.us/Government/Planning/pages/Adopted_General_Plan.aspx. 2004 Accessed December 19, 2017.

County of El Dorado, 2005. El Dorado-SMUD Cooperation Agreement. Available at: https://www.edcgov.us/waterandpower/water_power_pdf/ElDoradoSMUDCooperationAgreement.pdf Accessed December 21, 2017.

County of El Dorado, EDCWA, EID, and GDPUD. Revised Second Amendment to the Joint Powers Agreement of the El Dorado Water and Power Authority. March 2008.

County of El Dorado, EDCWA, EID, GDPUD, EDWPA, and SMUD. *El Dorado – SMUD Cooperation Agreement*. September 2005.

EDCWA. West Slope Update to Water Resources Development and Management Plan. November 2014.