



**Contra
Costa
County**

To: Board of Supervisors

From: John Kopchik, Director, Conservation & Development Department

Date: August 8, 2017

Subject: Support for Los Vaqueros Reservoir Expansion Project - Proposition 1 Application

RECOMMENDATION(S):

AUTHORIZE the Chair of the Board of Supervisors to sign a letter to express the County's support for the Contra Costa Water District's funding application to the California Water Commission's Water Storage Investment Program for Proposition 1 funding for the Los Vaqueros Reservoir Expansion Project.

FISCAL IMPACT:

No fiscal impact to the County is associated with supporting the application to receive Proposition 1 grant funding for the Los Vaqueros Expansion project proposed by the Contra Costa Water District (CCWD). CCWD is seeking grant funding for up to 50% of the cost of construction of the project or approximately 450 million dollars.

BACKGROUND:

Los Vaqueros Reservoir is an off-stream reservoir west of Byron in Contra Costa County, with fully screened Delta intakes with a current capacity of 160,000 acre-feet.

Expansion of Los Vaqueros Reservoir improves Bay Area water supply reliability and water quality while protecting Delta fisheries and providing additional Delta ecosystem

☒ APPROVE

☐ OTHER

☒ RECOMMENDATION OF CNTY ADMINISTRATOR

☐ RECOMMENDATION OF BOARD COMMITTEE

Action of Board On: **08/08/2017** ☒ APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED ☐ OTHER

Clerks Notes:

VOTE OF SUPERVISORS

AYE: Diane Burgis, District III
Supervisor
Karen Mitchoff, District IV
Supervisor
Federal D. Glover, District V
Supervisor

ABSENT: John Gioia, District I
Supervisor
Candace Andersen, District II
Supervisor

I hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of an action taken and entered on the minutes of the Board of Supervisors on the date shown.

ATTESTED: August 8, 2017

David Twa, County Administrator and Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

By: Stephanie Mello, Deputy

Contact: Ryan Hernandez,
925-674-7824

cc:

benefits. The proposed project will include a regional intertie (the Transfer-Bethany Pipeline), improved pump stations and pipelines and would increase the reservoir's capacity from 160,000 up to 275,000 acre-feet.

BACKGROUND: (CONT'D)

The proposed project builds upon the successful first phase of expansion from 100,000 to 160,000 acre-feet funded by the Contra Costa Water District and completed in 2012. Los Vaqueros is one of the projects being evaluated in the context of a broader Bay Area effort to work collaboratively as a region to improve water supply reliability.

In 2014, California voters approved \$2.7 billion in funding for water storage projects as part of Proposition 1: the Water Quality, Supply and Infrastructure Act of 2014. The approval by voters signaled that they understand the importance of water storage and are willing to fund construction projects. The recent drought followed by the wettest year on record only further highlighted the statewide need for more storage to prepare for drought and flood emergencies.

Los Vaqueros Reservoir has the potential to provide multiple public benefits that qualify for Proposition 1 funding. Public benefits of this project include: supply for South-of-Delta wildlife refuges; drought and emergency preparedness; statewide integration potential; protection of water quality; and recreation enhancement.

An existing initiative that could be affected by the Expansion Project is the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP). The HCP/NCCP was adopted by the cities of Brentwood, Clayton, Oakley, Pittsburg and Contra Costa County in 2007 to implement an ambitious conservation strategy in the region. The HCP/NCCP, administered by the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy, has acquired over 13,000 acres of land and completed restoration projects to benefit special status species in the region. Notwithstanding the potential benefits from the Los Vaqueros expansion, the project includes a proposed alignment for the Transfer-Bethany Pipeline that will bisect existing conserved lands protected by the Conservancy. These properties and projects are obligatory conservation and mitigation related to the HCP/NCCP, as such, these properties have recorded deed restrictions signed by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and East Bay Regional Park District.

The concern with the alignment described in the Draft Supplement to the Final Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report document is that the Transfer Bethany Pipeline may have permanent impacts and/or recurring temporary impacts to lands that have been conserved by the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy (in partnership with US Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, East Bay Regional Park District, participating cities and the County.) The County has alerted CCWD to the critical importance of protecting these conserved lands. The County understands and expects that CCWD will collaborate to avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts to conserved lands to effectively address the County's concerns with the pipeline location.

Nevertheless, it is the County's policy to support multi-purpose storage options that incorporate water supply, flood control, surface water and groundwater storage, groundwater management and ecosystem components that address climate change impacts and the need to improve water supply reliability for California. In addition, CCWD has provided initial assurances that they will work with us to avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts.

Therefore, staff recommends that the Board transmit the attached letter expressing 1) the County's support for the California Water Commission's, Water Storage Investment Program application submitted for Proposition 1 funding for the Los Vaqueros Reservoir Expansion Project and 2) the County understands and expects that CCWD will collaborate to avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts to conserved lands to effectively address the County's concerns with the pipeline location.

CONSEQUENCE OF NEGATIVE ACTION:

Without the County's written support, the application for Proposition 1 funding for the Los Vaqueros Expansion project may be less competitive.

ATTACHMENTS

Final Draft - CCC Support Letter for LVE Funding