Read file

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION IX
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105-3901

April 30, 2007

Shawn E. Oliver
Natural Resource Specialist
Bureau of Reclamation
Central California Area Office (Folsom)
7794 Folsom Dam Road
Folsom, CA 95630

Subject: Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Folsom Dam Safety and Flood Damage Reduction Project (CEQ# 20070118)

Dear Mr. Oliver:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the above project pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and our NEPA review authority under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

We commend the Bureau of Reclamation's (Reclamation) commitment to use the cleanest on–road vehicles available and the most recent pollution control equipment for all off-road equipment, use of electrical power for all stationary equipment, reduction of haulage miles, and scheduling changes to minimize the overlap of emission producing activities (p. ES-17). These emission control measures will be essential to meet Federal General Conformity *de minimis* thresholds and reduce air quality impacts to the greatest extent possible.

We appreciate your March 28, 2007 presentation to EPA on this project and the opportunity to provide comments on project refinements that, when implemented, will reduce air emissions below Federal Clean Air Act General Conformity *de minimis* thresholds for the Sacramento Federal Non-Attainment Area. Per our discussion, please provide EPA and the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (Sacramento Metropolitan AQMD) with a list of the control measures to be implemented and their corresponding emission reduction data. We recommend the Record of Decisions (ROD) include a clear commitment to these project refinements and the list of control measures with their emission reduction data.

While we commend Reclamation's efforts to reduce air emissions, we continue to have concerns regarding the exceedence of the nitrogen oxide California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) significance threshold. We recommend that the Partner Agencies continue to work with the Sacramento Metropolitan AQMD to meet federal and California air quality standards and to ensure the identified reduction in air emissions is fully realized.

A number of actions–Auxiliary spillway dredging and updated Folsom Facilities operations manual–were evaluated at a programmatic level in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) pending completion of detailed engineering design. In addition, the issuance of the U.S. Corps of Engineers Flood Damage Reduction ROD will not occur in conjunction with the proposed Dam Safety and Joint Federal Project actions. As stated in our comments on the DEIS, these actions are of interest to EPA given their potential water quality effects. We request notification of these actions and receipt of supplemental and/or project-level environmental documentation, when available.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). Please send copies of the Dam Safety ROD, Joint Federal Project ROD, and Flood Damage Reduction ROD to the above address (mail code: CED-2), when available. If you have any questions, please contact me at 415-972-3846, or Laura Fujii, the lead reviewer for this project, at 415-972-3852 or fujii.laura@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

Nova Blazej, Manager
Environmental Review Office
Communities and Ecosystems Division

cc: Brigette Tollstrup, Sacramento Metropolitan AQMD
Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency
California State Reclamation Board
State Water Resources Control Board