

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



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

June 8, 2010

Robert Epperson
Bureau of Reclamation
U.S. Department of Interior
1243 N Street
Fresno, CA 93721

Subject: Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Millerton Lake Resource Management Plan/General Plan (RMP/GP), Madera and Fresno Counties, CA. (CEQ #20100153)

Dear Mr. Epperson:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the above-referenced document 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.

EPA provided comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) on October 31, 2008 to the US Bureau of Reclamation and the Central Valley District, California Department of Parks & Recreation. We rated the DEIS as Environmental Concerns – Insufficient Information (EC-2) due to the need for additional information regarding air quality, naturally occurring asbestos, water resources, biological resources, climate change, noise, funding, and enforcement.

EPA is pleased that some of the issues identified in our review of the DEIS have been addressed in the FEIS. In particular, we commend the commitment to project-specific air quality analyses including General Conformity analyses, mitigation measures for dust control during construction and maintenance, and the addition of the cattle grazing discussion. In addition, we commend the development of the Boat Management and Natural Resource Plans that deal with the proposed mitigation measures for climate change, riparian restoration, and fish and aquatic issues, as well as the issue of enforcement of RMP/GP requirements. We also acknowledge the determination that there is no naturally occurring asbestos in the project area.

In our October 2008 comment letter, EPA recommended that the proposed phase-out of non-conformant two-stroke engines, including two-stroke personal watercraft, occur within one year of finalizing the RMP/GP, because of the significant air and water quality benefits. While we understand the reasons given for the proposed three year phase out, we continue to recommend that the phase-out be accomplished in the most expeditious time frame feasible.

We encourage monitoring the water quality of the lake in regard to the summer water color change, and, if warranted, performing additional water quality testing for cyanobacteria or blue-green algae blooms. We note that the constraints on leach fields may limit development options, and we support the performance of additional appropriate environmental reviews under any of the proposed Alternatives.

We recommend that the Record of Decision include a firm commitment to project-specific NEPA analyses.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this FEIS. When the ROD is signed, please send one copy to the address above (mail code: CED-2). If you have any questions, please contact me at (415) 972-3521 or contact Laura Fujii, the lead reviewer for this project. Laura can be reached at (415) 972-3852 or fujii.laura@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/

Kathleen M. Goforth, Manager
Environmental Review Office

cc: Central Valley District, California Department of Parks & Recreation