

College Lake Integrated Resources Management Project Final Environmental Impact Report

October 3, 2019

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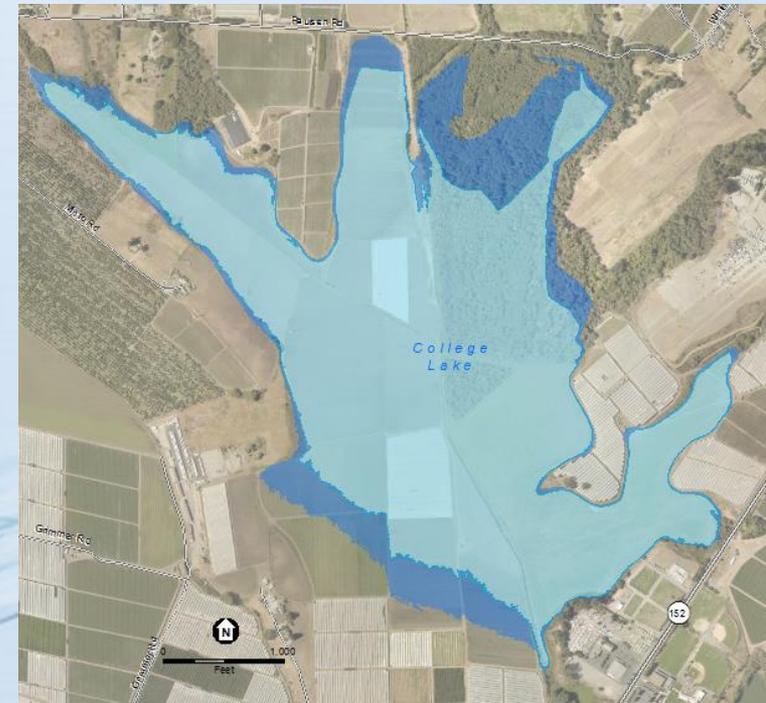


College Lake Integrated Resources Management Project Overview

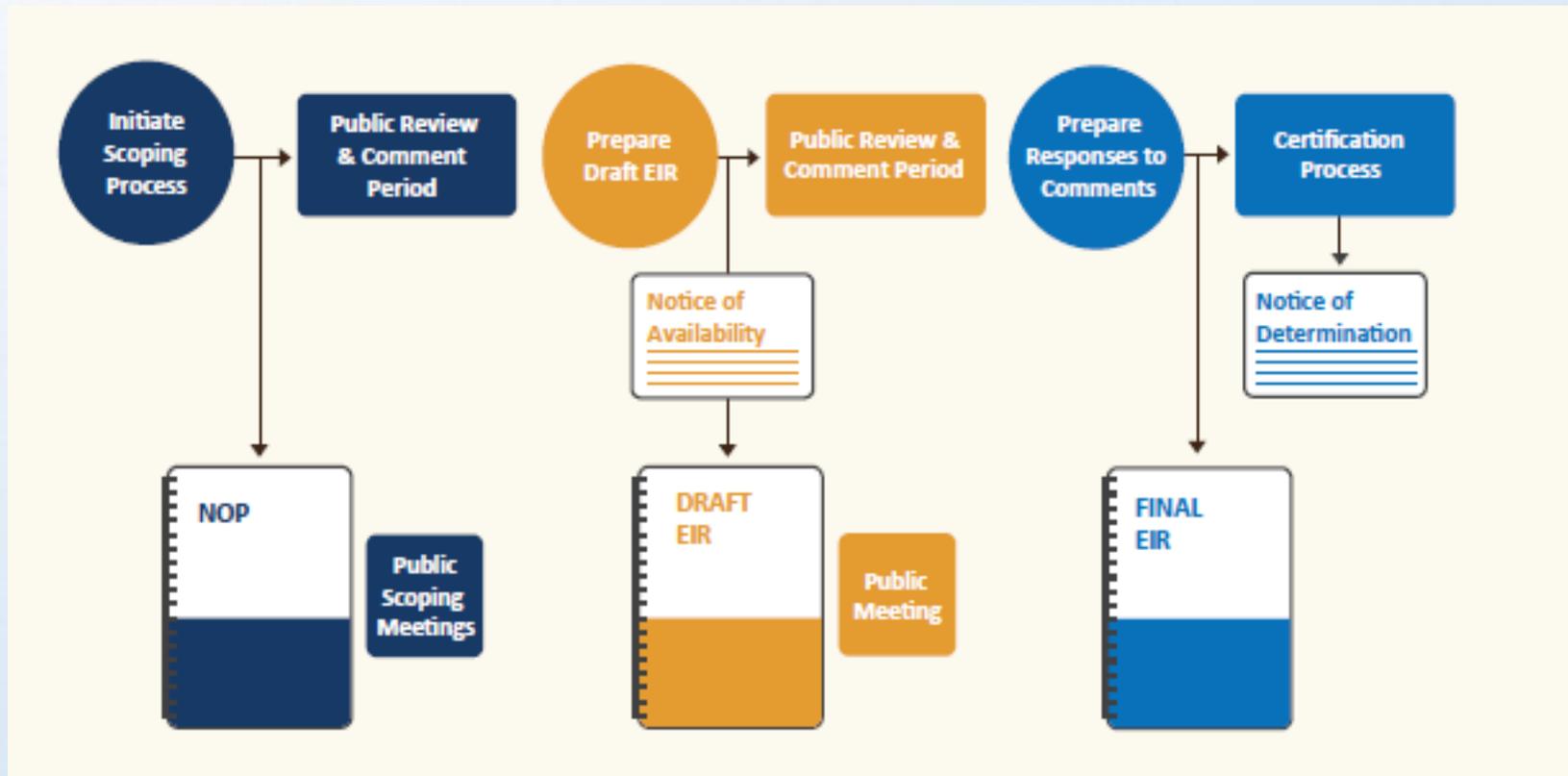
Task	Calendar Year						
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Grant/Loan Funding	█						
Property Rights	█	█	█		█		
Water Rights	█	█	█	█			
Environmental Permitting		█	█	█			
Engineering Planning and Design	█	█	█		█		
Construction						█	█
Outreach	█	█	█	█	█	█	█

College Lake Project Final EIR

- Agenda
 - CEQA Process
 - Comments on the DEIR
 - Responses to Comments
 - Next Steps



CEQA Process Overview

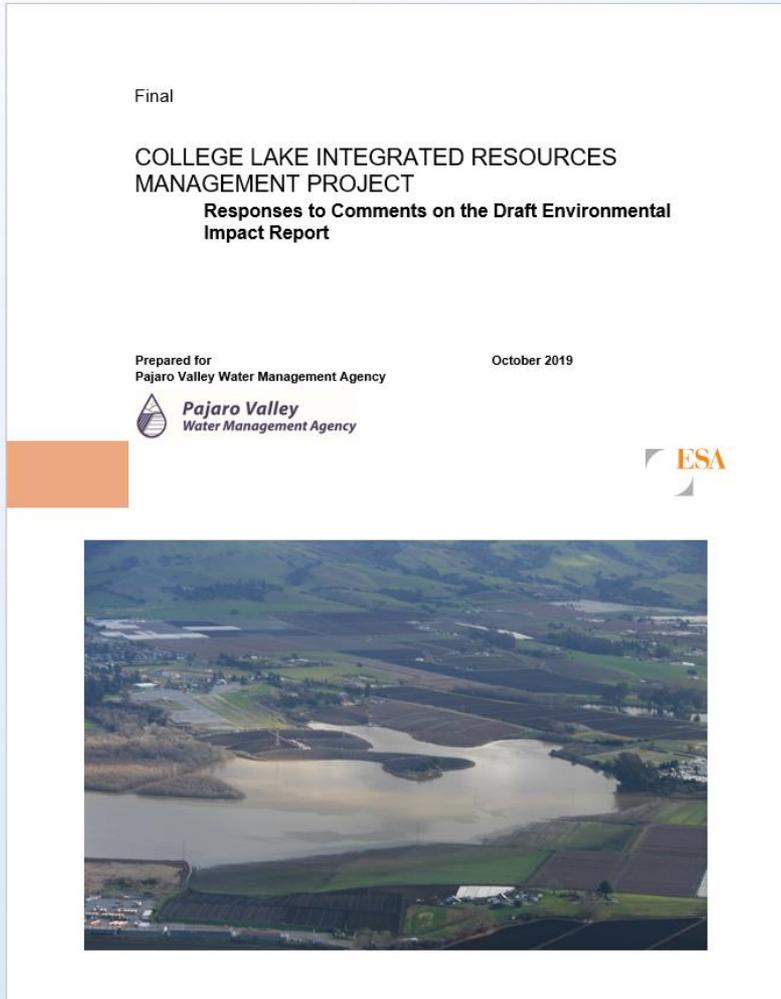


Dec 2017

DEIR Public Review
Apr 17 – June 21 2019

Oct 2019

Responses to Comments Document



Contents

1. Introduction
2. List of Persons Commenting
3. Responses to Comments Received on the Draft EIR
4. Draft EIR Revisions

Final EIR: Draft EIR plus
Responses to Comments
Document

Comments on Draft EIR

11 Agencies & Organizations, 18 Individuals
~200 Comments

- Caltrans
- Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Santa Cruz County
 - Flood Control and Water Conservation District - Zone 7
 - Vector Control
- College Lake Reclamation District
- Monterey Audubon Society
- Santa Cruz Bird Club
- Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society
- Sierra Club
- Watsonville Wetlands Watch
- N. Adams
- M. Bannister
- J. Bracovich
- C. Banovac
- J. Busch
- J. Diffenbaugh
- V. Fenner-Evans
- J. Greatorex
- C. Jensen
- S. Kauffman
- A. Key
- L. Lewit
- T Marci
- M. Rambo
- F. Remde
- M. Sptizer
- E. Wagner
- D. Watkins

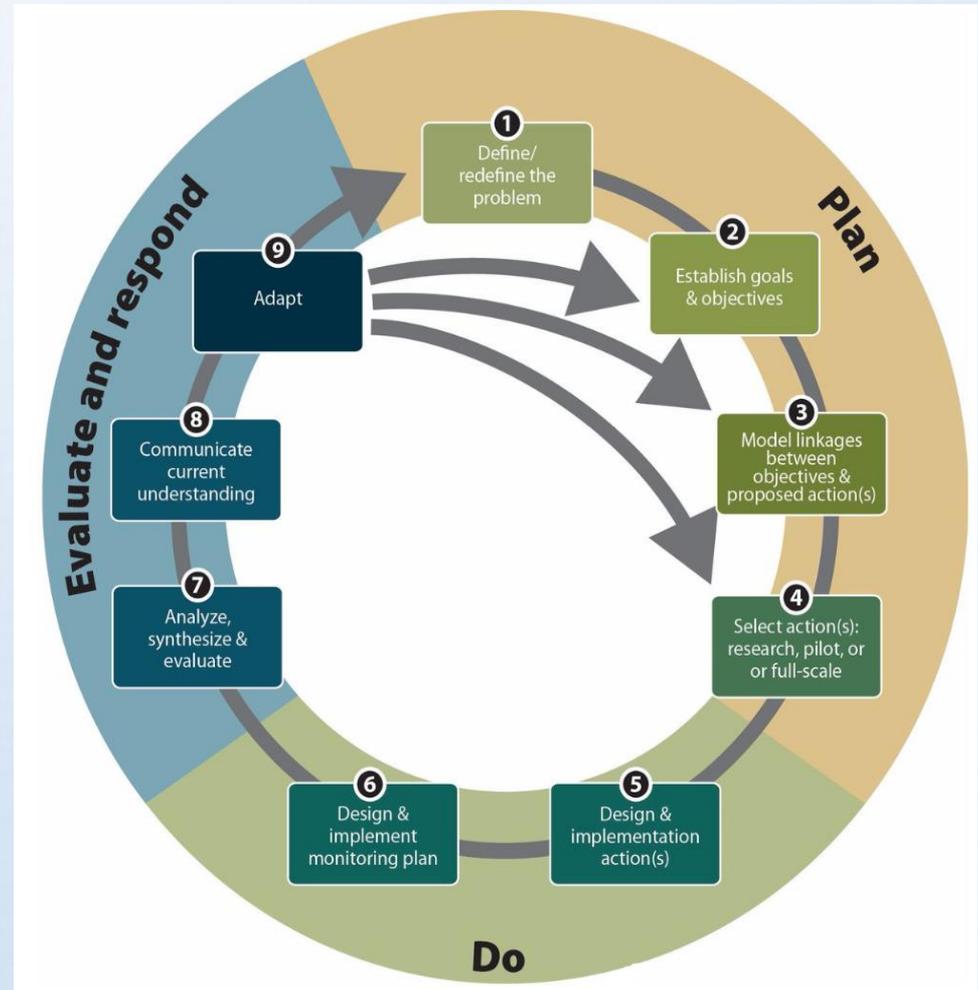
Comments on Draft EIR

- Biological Resources
 - Adaptive Management Plan
 - Waters and wetlands
 - Birds and other wildlife
- Alternatives
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Agriculture
- Other

Adaptive Management Planning

Figure RTC 3.1-1

“A framework and flexible decision-making process for ongoing knowledge acquisition, monitoring and evaluation leading to continuous improvements in implementation of a project to achieve specific objectives.”



Board committed to AMP in 2014 to mitigate impacts to waterfowl, habitat, other species

Adaptive Management Plan

Comments: AMP Development

- *Stakeholder involvement*
- *Funding*
- *Commitment to implement*

Response

Master Response on AMP (RTC Section 3.1.1)

- Development process
- Potential Ad Hoc Committee (similar to BMP Update)
- PV Water committed to implementing, funding AMP

Text in light blue represents comments on the Draft EIR

Adaptive Management Plan

AMP Content

- *EIR should include more detail on AMP*
- *Objectives to protect wetlands, wildlife*
- *Other (suggested content: baseline studies, action triggers)*
- AMP development during permitting, design
- Project operations not expected to result in net loss of wetlands/waters
- Four mitigation measures to address impacts to birds, special status species during O&M
 - 1 (invasive fish species control plan) would be implemented through AMP

Wetlands and Waters of the US, State

- *Analysis of wetlands deficient (area on east side of lake is not farmed wetland; field survey data used inadequate)*
- Purpose of aquatic resources delineation: define boundaries between wetland/waters and upland. Fieldwork conducted per US Army Corps of Engineers methods.
- 6 additional surveys used to characterize biological resources at College Lake. Survey data for referenced area on east side of lake reevaluated, area changed from farmed wetland to seasonal wetland.
- **With Project** (Impact BR-4):
 - Composition, characteristics of wetland habitats would change at lowest lake elevation (longer inundation)
 - Total area of aquatic habitats not expected to decrease. Riparian habitats not expected to decrease although species composition may shift. (DEIR Table 3.4-4, RTC Chapter 4)

Birds and Other Wildlife

- *Evaluate impacts to birds from loss of mud flat habitat, changes in vegetation composition*
- **With Project** (Impacts BR-4, BR-7):
 - Areas above 59 ft would largely remain unchanged as habitat: would be farmed or subject to vegetation management (effect similar to current farming practices)
 - Existing conditions: mudflat habitat 3-4 weeks during spring. With Project: mudflats would likely shift to fall at lower elevations, available as food source for fall shorebird migration. Prolonged water storage would prolong lake as aquatic habitat food source.
 - Water levels would continue to fluctuate between years, water year types, leading to high variability in distribution, abundance of annual plant communities.
 - Speculative to predict which annual plants would grow in which areas; not possible nor practical to prescribe composition or abundance of certain plant species.

Birds and Other Wildlife

- *Request for additional information on birds*
- *Effects on steelhead from construction, consider revising adult steelhead migration period*
- *Effects, mitigation for other special status species*
- More data provided on birds (DEIR Appendix BIO, Response SCBC-3, RTC Tables BIO-3, BIO-4)
- Additional information on fish relocation provided (Sierra-7), PV Water in discussions with CDFW re: adult steelhead migration period
- Mitigation measures for western pond turtle, SF dusky footed woodrat revised

Hydrology and Water Quality

- *Concerns regarding EIR evaluation of flood risk due to higher weir, flooding on Holohan Road,*
- CEQA: evaluate effects of the Project on the environment. Proposed operations designed not to exacerbate existing flood hazards, consistent with Board-adopted mitigation (2014).
- **With Project** (Impact HYD-5):
 - Weir crest would be kept at 60.1 ft, during wet season (same elevation as existing weir).
 - Modeling: Project would not increase frequency or severity of flooding (i.e., flood water elevation) nor cause flooding to occur in areas where it otherwise would not.
 - Preferred WTP site would not impede or redirect flood flows (located outside FEMA flood hazard zone).

Hydrology and Water Quality

- *Concerns regarding flood risk from sedimentation in Salsipuedes Creek*
- New topographic survey conducted in channel after 2017 storms
- Because weir would not be raised until after last anticipated significant storm, Project would not substantially alter sedimentation in channel.
- Project would not affect contributions to flow in Salsipuedes Creek and elsewhere downstream at times when higher flows naturally occur throughout the watershed.
- Reductions in discharge of flows from College Lake to Salsipuedes Creek would occur when flows from lake are much lower than peak discharge.

Alternatives

Suggestions for Alternatives

- *Use existing sewers, wastewater treatment plant to convey, treat College Lake water*
- *Construct berm southwest of College Lake*
- *Store College Lake water in aquifer*
- *Route College Lake pipeline along, or convey College Lake water via creek, Pajaro River*
- *Build water treatment plant elsewhere*
- Most suggested alternatives were already considered in DEIR (Section 5.5) or in previous EIRs evaluating College Lake Project
- Suggested alternatives were infeasible, unable to reduce significant impacts or add meaningfully to range of EIR alternatives, and/or did not meet most project objectives

Alternatives

- *EIR did not include enough alternatives*
- PV Water has considered alternatives to the College Lake Project in 4 previous EIRs
- College Lake EIR incorporates alternatives evaluations in prior EIRs, reconsidered some in light of project-specific information on impacts

Agriculture

- *EIR may underestimate loss of farmland (up to 320 acres of prime agricultural land will be lost).*
- *Can College Lake pipeline be installed at greater depth so trees will be permitted above pipeline?*
- Threshold: loss of Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland (Important Farmland) a significant impact.
- Not all land within College Lake basin is Important Farmland.
- Impact LU-1: potential conversion of Important Farmland up to ~198 acres (DEIR Table 3.2-4). Area of College Lake Reclamation District (320 acres) ≠ area of Important Farmland estimated to be converted.
- PV Water proposes to install pipelines with 5 feet of cover; burying pipelines deeper would substantially increase cost.

Other Comments

- Traffic
- Mosquito Abatement
- Permits and approvals
- Aesthetics
- Non-CEQA Topics
 - Property Acquisition and Compensation
 - Opinions on the Project
 - Other PV Water Activities

College Lake habitat changes with Project

Elevation	Change in inundation	Anticipated Changes in Habitats
50-57 ft	+3-4 mos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farmed wetland* → Open water (11/1-July or Aug.), Mudflat with sparse seasonal wetland vegetation Riparian Forest: no habitat type change, shifts in species composition, abundance Seasonal wetland: no habitat type change but subject to annual mowing, tilling → sparser vegetation dominated by annual species Vegetation mgt. would maintain open water, mudflat habitat, prevent woody plant encroachment
57-59 ft	+2-3 mos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farmed Wetland* → similar to 50-57 ft Riparian Forest: no habitat type change, shifts in species composition Seasonal Wetland: no habitat type change; Vegetation mgt.
59-62 ft	+1-3 mos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farmed Wetland*: no habitat type change. Inundated longer but seasonal crops where, when feasible. Areas not farmed: Vegetation mgt. Riparian forest, seasonal wetland: no change.
62-64 ft	+1-2 wks, not continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farmed Wetland*: similar to 59-62. Riparian forest/scrub, seasonal wetland: no change. Annual grassland → seasonal wetland Agriculture → Farmed wetland

* Consists of open water (11/1-3/31), seasonal wetland (4/1-5/31), agriculture (6/1-10/31)

Final

COLLEGE LAKE INTEGRATED RESOURCES
MANAGEMENT PROJECT

Responses to Comments on the Draft Environmental
Impact Report

Prepared for
Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency



Pajaro Valley
Water Management Agency

October 2019



Next Steps:

- October 16, 2019 Board Hearing:
 - Board to consider certifying EIR
 - Board to consider approving the Project
- As part of project approval, Board would:
 - Adopt Findings
 - Adopt Statement of Overriding Considerations
 - Adopt Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

Final

COLLEGE LAKE INTEGRATED RESOURCES
MANAGEMENT PROJECT

**Responses to Comments on the Draft Environmental
Impact Report**

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Questions?

Thank You