

SRCS D South County Agriculture & Habitat Lands Recycled Water Project

Background:

SRCS D is seeking to construct the South Sacramento County Agriculture and Habitat Lands Water Reuse Project. This “green project” will provide multiple benefits including protection of surface water and groundwater supplies by providing about 10,000 to 41,000 acre-feet (AF) per year of recycled water to irrigate between 2,000 to 8,000 acres of permanent agriculture and habitat lands. This project has broad support from a stakeholder coalition.

The project proposes to use tertiary treated recycled water on allowed crops (e.g. alfalfa, irrigated pasture, etc.), in lieu of pumped groundwater, to irrigate permanent agriculture lands and habitat mitigation lands through new recycled water transmission and distribution pipelines, and treatment, pumping, and storage facilities. The amount of water saved is the equivalent amount of potable water needed to serve up to 80,000 homes annually in the Sacramento region. The estimated total capital cost is \$116 million* for the 2,000 acre project option and \$293 million* for the 8,000 acre project option. The project is flexible and can be built in phases to facilitate its financing and constructability.

The South County Agriculture & Habitat Lands Water Reuse Project has several environmental benefits including reducing the overdraft of local groundwater supplies, reducing green house gas emissions by saving the electrical consumption required for production of the potable water it replaces and providing habitat for species such as the endangered/threatened Swainson’s hawk. The State’s water resources are severely impacted during years of low precipitation or drought. Recycled water is drought-proof water and can provide an additional water supply that is reliable and sustainable. The project also reduces the amount of treated effluent discharged from the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District’s wastewater treatment plant to the Sacramento River.

This project has regional and national implications as communities and water resources located in the state struggle to meet growing water demands.

The key benefits of the project are:

- Protects surface water and groundwater supplies by providing about 10,000 to 41,000 acre-feet of recycled water in-lieu of potable water sources, on an annual basis, to irrigate 2,000 to 8,000 acres of permanent agriculture and habitat lands;
- Provides an alternative, sustainable water supply equivalent to the amount of potable water needed to serve up to 80,000 homes annually;



*Estimated project costs are based on net present worth in 2011 dollars



- Reduces over-drafting of local groundwater table;
- Augments flows in nearby surface waters;
- Reduces discharge of treated effluent to the Sacramento River;
- Helps promote water recycling and habitat restoration;
- Can be used to help with Delta ecosystem restoration efforts.

*Estimated project costs are based on net present worth in 2011 dollars