

**MONDAY MORNING GROUP OF WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY  
ANNUAL ADVOCACY TRIP – SACRAMENTO, CA  
FEBRUARY 3-4, 2025**

**SITES RESERVOIR AND THE DELTA CONVEYANCE PROJECT**

**ISSUE:** After decades of delays, changes, and challenges, two critical water supply projects are nearing the point of starting construction. Sites Reservoir and the Delta Conveyance Project (DCP) have certified their environmental impact reports and have begun moving forward with design, engineering, and permitting. These approvals are a significant moment for both projects, but potential legislation may be introduced to attempt to delay or stop these projects.

**ACTION:** The Monday Morning Group urges the California regulatory agencies overseeing the permitting of Sites Reservoir and the DCP to prioritize these projects to ensure they continue to move forward. Additionally, the Monday Morning Group urges members of the California Legislature to oppose any legislative attempts to further delay or halt these projects.

**BACKGROUND:** Within the last ten years alone, California has experienced extreme weather swings that have resulted in record droughts and record flooding. It is more apparent than ever that California needs significantly improved abilities to capture, store, and move water on a large scale. Significant investments in statewide water infrastructure have not been made in decades, even while California's population continues to grow, weather patterns become less predictable, and the economy increases its global impact. Even the environment needs more water to improve habitats and recover endangered species, which is why major water projects are needed now.

Two projects that will make significant improvements to California's statewide water infrastructure are Sites Reservoir and the DCP. Both projects are at a crucial moment of potentially coming to fruition, but not without challenges. Here are some important details about each project:

**Sites Reservoir:**

- **Overview:** Sites Reservoir is designed to be an off-stream reservoir that provides 1.5 million acre-feet of additional water storage that will capture excess water from major storms and save it for drier periods.
- **Benefits:** Sites Reservoir can provide water to agriculture, urban, and environmental water uses during dry years and adds to the State's overall water storage capacity. The project will also help improve water quality, groundwater recharge, flood management, and offer recreational opportunities.
- **Status:** The Sites Project Authority have certified the final environmental impact report, which the court system deemed adequate despite legal challenges. The Sites Project Authority also made its first land purchase in late 2024, which is a significant step forward. Water right permitting is expected to conclude by June 2025, then construction would start in 2026 with the reservoir beginning operations in 2033.
- **Challenge:** Environmental groups still oppose the project and are challenging the project legally and legislatively.

**The Delta Conveyance Project:**

- **Overview:** The DCP is a 45-mile, 36-foot diameter pipeline that would be constructed 150 feet below the Delta. Once constructed it will be able to move 6,500 cubic feet per second of water from the north part of the Delta to the pumping plant at the beginning of the California Aqueduct.
- **Benefits:** During wet years, significant amounts of water could be moved through the project to other urban and agricultural users to recharge groundwater without negatively affecting the environment. It also prevents endangered fish species from getting potentially into the pumps by moving the intakes to a location where they are not found. It also protects vital drinking water supply from the risk of saltwater intrusion from levee failures and sea level rise.
- **Status:** The Department of Water Resources has certified the final environmental impact statement and is gathering the final regulatory approvals, which are expected to be completed by the end of 2026. Construction of the project is expected to take 10-15 years to complete once approved.
- **Challenge:** Litigation and advocacy by environmental groups are challenging the project at every point in the permitting process and will likely use legislation to delay or stop the project.