

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

Finding of No Significant Impact

Amendment to the Meyers Groundwater Banking Exchange Agreement

FONSI-11-013

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Section 3 Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences

This section identifies the potentially affected environment and the environmental consequences involved with the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative, in addition to environmental trends and conditions that currently exist.

FONSI/EA-05-09, FONSI/SEA-07-102, and FONSI/SEA-09-062 analyzed the environmental impacts of storage of Meyers Farm's CVP water outside the SLWD service area within the Meyers Bank for later extraction and use on Meyers Farm's agricultural lands within SLWD over a 22 year period (through 2033). FONSI/EA-05-09, FONSI/SEA-07-102, and FONSI/SEA-09-062 also analyzed the utilization of exchange agreements with Reclamation for the extracted water, including both CVP and non-CVP, to be returned to Meyers Farm's lands within SLWD. As FONSI/EA-05-09, FONSI/SEA-07-102, and FONSI/SEA-09-062 have been incorporated by reference the affected environment in this EA will focus on updates to the previous affected environment as well as areas that were not previously covered.

3.1 Surface Water Resources

3.1.1 Affected Environment

Meyers Farm is a CVP contractor with a CVP allocation from SLWD of up to 8,000 AFY (Contract No. 14-06-200-7773A) from the Delta. In addition, Meyers Farm has an agreement with the Kings River Water Association which allows for the diversion of Kings River flood flows for banking when flows are available (Kings River Water Association 2001). Meyers Farm also has an agreement to bank up to 5,000 AFY of BCID's pre-1914 San Joaquin River water over a 22 year period (through 2033). This could be increased to 10,000 AFY should the Proposed Action be approved.

Meyers Bank Meyers Farm created the Meyers Bank in order to increase reliability of their water supply by storing water in above-normal and wet years for later use during below-normal, dry, and critically-dry years. Under the existing banking program, surface water is delivered to the Mendota Pool from the Delta-Mendota Canal where it is diverted by Meyers Bank from the Fresno Slough branch of the Pool into five recharge ponds totaling 91 acres during the fall, winter, and spring (Ponds 1-5 in Figure 2-1). Once delivered to the recharge ponds, surface water is allowed to infiltrate to the shallow aquifer for underground storage.

Most of the water recharged by Meyers Bank, since January 2001, has been carry-over water from Meyers Farm's CVP allocation from SLWD. When available, Kings River flood releases, Section 215 temporary water supplies from the Friant Division, and pre-1914 non-CVP water are also used to supplement carry-over water. Table 3-1 includes a list of banked water between 2005 and 2012.