

1395 35th Avenue
Sacramento, CA 95822

DATE: April 23, 2025

TO: Interested Persons

FROM: Megan Thomas, Project Manager
Department of Utilities

RE: NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
AND SCOPING MEETING FOR THE RIVERARC PROJECT

COMMENT PERIOD: April 23, 2025 – May 23, 2025

SCOPING MEETING: May 14, 2025; 12:00 p.m.(noon)

By Computer: To join the meeting by computer, please register:

Zoom Meeting Registration Link:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_mR2UqLvpTx-0h1IJUjKKrw

The presentation will be recorded and available to view after **May 21, 2025**.

Responsible agencies and members of the public are invited to attend and provide input on the scope of the EIR. Written comments regarding relevant issues may be submitted during the meeting.

INTRODUCTION

The City of Sacramento (City) is the Lead Agency for preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed RiverArc Project (proposed project). The EIR will evaluate potentially significant environmental effects of the proposed project and other actions associated with its construction and operation. The City is requesting written comments regarding the issues that should be covered in the EIR, including potential alternatives to the proposed project and the scope of the analysis.

The EIR for the proposed project is being prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Under CEQA, upon deciding to prepare an EIR, the City as lead agency must issue a Notice of Preparation (NOP) to inform responsible agencies, the public, and trustee agencies of that decision. The purpose of the NOP is to provide information describing the proposed project and its potential environmental effects to those who may wish to comment regarding the scope and content of the information to be included in the EIR. Agencies should comment on such information as it relates to their statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project.

The EIR will provide an evaluation of potential environmental impacts associated with construction and operation of the proposed project. The proposed project location, description, and potential environmental issues associated with implementing the proposed project are described below. The EIR will evaluate potentially significant environmental impacts of the proposed project, on a direct, indirect, and cumulative basis; identify mitigation measures that may be feasible to lessen or avoid such impacts; and identify a range of alternatives that may lessen one or more potentially significant impacts of the proposed project.

PROJECT LOCATION/SETTING

The proposed project is located in agricultural, rural, and developed areas in Sacramento, Placer, and Sutter Counties. The location of the proposed project and associated components is shown in Figure 1, Project Location Map.

The proposed project begins at the Natomas Mutual Water Company's (NMWC's) existing Pritchard Lake Diversion intake facility located at river mile (RM) 75.15 on the eastern bank of the Sacramento River north of the Sacramento International Airport. From the diversion facility, the project components (a new raw water booster pumping station and raw water pipeline) extend eastward through agricultural lands and along existing roads to the proposed water treatment plant (WTP) site (located at the northwest corner of West Elverta Road and State Route 70/99). From the proposed WTP site, two treated water transmission pipelines would be installed in and along existing public roads. One of the water transmission pipelines runs south towards the City of Sacramento point of interconnection (POI) and the second pipeline extends east towards the PCWA and City of Roseville POIs.

An alternative WTP site has been identified on an agricultural parcel east of and adjacent to Power Line Road and immediately north of the Sacramento-Sutter County line. The alternative WTP site and associated water transmission pipelines will be described and evaluated in equal level of detail in the EIR.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The RiverArc partners (City of Sacramento, Placer County Water Agency [PCWA], City of Roseville, and Sacramento County Water Agency (SCWA) are proposing the RiverArc Project to support water supply and environmental benefits in the Sacramento Region.

The proposed project would shift a portion of existing and planned regional water demand from the Lower American River to the Sacramento River. To accomplish this shift, the proposed project would divert water through the existing NMWC Pritchard Lake Diversion intake facility at RM 75.15 on the Sacramento River, deliver the river water via a new raw water pipeline to a new

regional WTP, and distribute the treated surface water east and south through new and existing pipelines to service areas of the RiverArc partners.

The EIR will include a project-level analysis for the initial construction and operation phase of the proposed project (Phase I) and a program-level analysis for later project expansion phases (Future Phases). This approach allows for the initial phase to proceed through the permitting process and to construction in the near future, whereas the program-level analysis will appropriately reflect the more preliminary level of design pertaining to the future expansion phases.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the proposed project is to meet the Water Forum Agreement¹ (WFA) objectives of pursuing a Sacramento River diversion to meet water supply needs of the Placer-Sacramento region while reducing Lower American River diversion impacts and improving river flows to protect and enhance the Lower American River ecosystem in drier years. The WFA includes a solution package to achieve its two co-equal objectives: (1) providing a reliable and safe water supply for the region's economic health and planned development to 2030, and (2) preserving the fishery, wildlife, recreational, and aesthetic values of the Lower American River. Local agencies and interested parties have been implementing measures from the WFA since its inception in 2000.

An additional point of diversion for domestic water supply on the Sacramento River would help address long-term water supply reliability in the region while reducing reliance on American River diversions. Without these coordinated actions, the WFA's co-equal goals of regional water supply reliability and preserving the health of the Lower American River will be more difficult to attain.

PROJECT PHASING AND COMPONENTS

The proposed project for the purposes of CEQA is currently expected to be implemented in three phases over a 30-year period, starting around 2030. The project phases are based on the desired water supply distribution capacities in million gallons per day (mgd) from the project for each purveyor listed above. Each of the anticipated phases is briefly described below.

Phase I

Phase 1 of the proposed project is anticipated to be constructed as early as 2030 and would consist of installing new equipment at the existing NMWC Pritchard Lake Diversion intake facility to accommodate additional water diversion; constructing a new raw water pumping station to convey water from the vicinity of the Pritchard Lake Diversion facility to the new WTP; constructing a raw water pipeline between the existing diversion facility and the new WTP; constructing the new WTP; and constructing treated water transmission pipelines from the new WTP to the participating water purveyors. The Phase 1 improvements for the RiverArc Project would consist of the construction and operation of the following components (project locations shown in Figure 1):

¹ The WFA refers to a group of business and agricultural leaders, citizens groups, environmentalists, water managers, and local governments in Sacramento, Placer, and El Dorado counties working together to find solutions to regional water supply.

- A third pump and associated equipment at the existing NMWC Pritchard Lake Diversion intake facility.
- A new raw water booster pump station on the landside of the Sacramento River East Levee.
- Relocation of existing stormwater facilities downstream of the raw water intake facility.
- A new raw water pipeline to connect the raw water booster pump station to a new WTP.
- A new WTP with a Phase 1 capacity of 60 mgd on undeveloped lands located at the northwest corner of West Elverta Road and State Route 70/99.
- Electrical utility improvements to support the new raw water booster pump station and WTP.
- New treated water transmission pipelines from the WTP southerly along existing roads to the City of Sacramento and north/east along existing roads to PCWA and City of Roseville POIs to serve the participating water purveyors' service areas.

Future Phases

Future phases would start construction as early as 2040 and could involve increasing the capacities of various facilities, including the raw water pumping station, the WTP, and the transmission pipelines. Specific project infrastructure requirements to support buildout capacity would be determined at a later date. Increased transmission main capacity may involve the construction of new, parallel treated water pipelines. The anticipated uses of water received from the project by RiverArc Partners are based on previously evaluated projects that have a total maximum water projection of 189 mgd and are for capacities within existing known General Plan predictions of PCWA, City of Roseville, and City of Sacramento. The water received in future phases are consistent with the objective of the project described above.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS AND SCOPE OF THE EIR

The EIR will analyze potentially significant impacts that result from construction and operation of the proposed project. Project elements are analyzed at a degree of specificity that corresponds to the degree of specificity involved in the underlying activity that is described in the Final EIR (CEQA Guidelines § 15146). Project design information about Phase I components is available at a level of detail sufficient for a project-level analysis. As such, Phase I components will be analyzed at a project level of detail in the EIR. Details of future phases are not known. As a result, future phases will be analyzed at a programmatic level of detail in the EIR. Additional CEQA review may be needed for future phases pursuant to section 15162 of the CEQA Guidelines.

Pursuant to section 15063(a) of the CEQA Guidelines, an Initial Study has not been prepared for the proposed project. The EIR will evaluate the full range of environmental issues contemplated for consideration under CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines, as well as non-environmental issues including:

- Aesthetics
- Agricultural Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources

- Energy
- Forestry Resources
- Geology and Soils and Paleontology
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise and Vibration
- Public Services
- Population and Housing
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire
- Growth Inducement
- Cumulative Impacts

The EIR will identify and evaluate alternatives to the proposed project, including an alternative WTP site and alternative raw and treated water transmission pipeline alignments.

SUBMITTING COMMENTS

Comments and suggestions as to the appropriate scope of analysis in the EIR are invited from all interested parties. Written comments or questions concerning the EIR for the proposed project should be directed to the City's environmental project manager at the following email address: RiverArc@cityofsacramento.org, or by mail addressed to the following address:

Scott Johnson, Principal Planner
City of Sacramento, Community Development Department
300 Richards Blvd., 3rd Floor
Sacramento, CA 95811

Comments should be submitted no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 23, 2025. Please include the commenter's full name and address.

Figure 1. Project Location Map

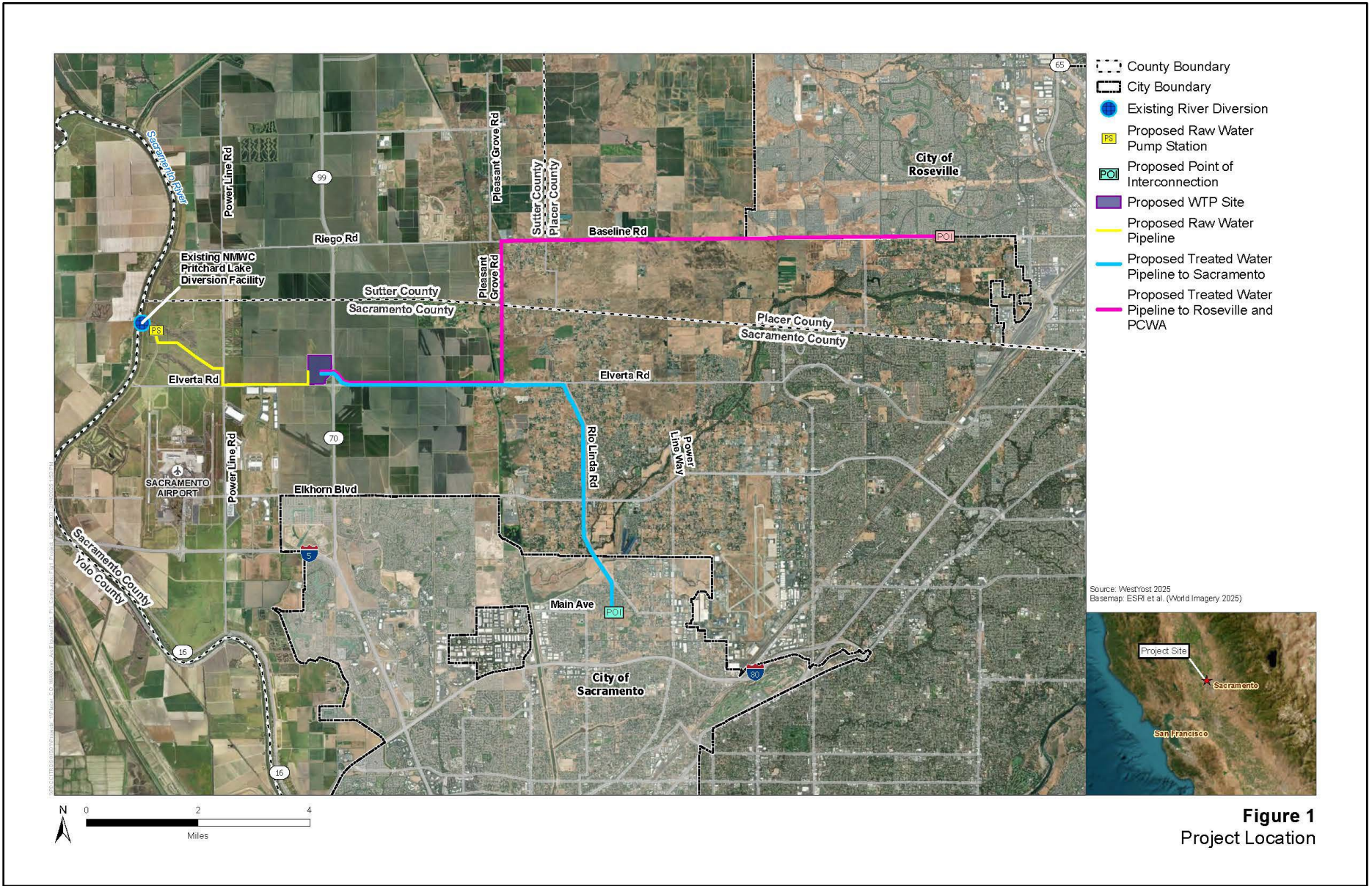


Figure 1
Project Location