



# Santa Clara Valley Water District

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**File No.:** 17-0255

**Agenda Date:** 4/25/2017

**Item No.:** \*7.1.

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## BOARD AGENDA MEMORANDUM

### **SUBJECT:**

Recommended Position on Federal Legislation: HR 1269 (LaMalfa) - Sacramento Valley Water Storage and Restoration Act, Support Request for the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance grant program, \*and S 698 (Cantwell) - National Landslide Preparedness Act.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

- A. Adopt a position of support on HR 1269 (LaMalfa) - Sacramento Valley Water Storage and Restoration Act;
- B. Adopt a position of support for the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) grant program; and
- C. \*Adopt a position of support on S 698 (Cantwell) - National Landslide Preparedness Act.

### **SUMMARY:**

A. **HR 1269 (LaMalfa) - Sacramento Valley Water Storage and Restoration Act**

**Recommendation: Support**

**Priority Recommendation: 2**

HR 1269 would expedite the federal review of Sites Reservoir by coordinating review efforts and setting timelines to better position the project for funding under Proposition 1, the California water bond passed by voters to ensure funding for Water Quality, Supply, Treatment, and Storage projects. The bill would also authorize the federal government to be involved in construction of the project should it be found feasible and is an innovative new way for the federal government to participate in a locally controlled project.

The Sites Project or Reservoir (sometimes referred to as “North of Delta Offstream Storage”) has been identified by the State of California and the Federal Government as an important component to integrated water management in the Sacramento Valley that would advance the co-equal objectives of improving water management and restoring ecological health for beneficial uses of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and the Sacramento River watershed.

The Reservoir would divert water from the Sacramento River and its tributaries through existing

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canals during high flow periods (i.e., December, January, and February) into off-stream storage, so the water would be available for use later in the same year or stored across years for drier periods of time.

Further, the Sites Reservoir was found in the CALFED Record of Decision to be the preferred location to provide North of Delta Offstream Storage and subsequent studies have shown the Sites Reservoir to be technically feasible.

**Status:**

HR 1269 was introduced on March 1, 2017. The bill was referred to the House Natural Resources Committee. To date, no hearings have been held.

**Importance to the District:**

Staff is recommending a “Support” position on this bill.

The District became a participant in the Sites Joint Power Authority (JPA) in July 2016. On March 14, 2017, the board authorized the CEO to execute the Sites Project Authority’s Amended and Restated Phase 1 Reservoir Project Agreement and to pay the Sites JPA \$913,146 towards the current phase of Project expenditures. The Project Agreement allows the District to join the Project Agreement Committee and become part of the team implementing the Sites Reservoir Project.

Passage of this bill could help to expedite the federal review of Sites Reservoir and position it for Prop 1 funding. The District is interested in additional off-stream water storage as it would support infrastructure and provide water security for California during future droughts. With the state recently experiencing one of the driest periods on record, and now in 2017 is experiencing one of the wettest years on record, new surface water storage infrastructure is critical for both water supply reliability and the environment.

As a member of the Sites Project Agreement Committee, the District would be eligible to receive water supply benefits.

**Pros:**

- Improve groundwater management in the region
- Would provide sound water infrastructure for adequate storage to capture more water during wet seasons and allow the use of that water effectively during times of future drought.
- Improve the operation of the State’s water system to provide improvements in ecosystem and water quality conditions in the Bay-Delta while providing a more reliable water supply for the State of California.
- Help alleviate the effects of climate change.

**Cons:**

- None identified at this time.

**B. FEMA'S HMA grant program**

**Recommendation: Support**

**Priority Recommendation: 2**

**SUMMARY:**

The Administration's Fiscal Year 2018 overview budget, released on March 16, 2017, proposes to cut FEMA's HMA grant program. This program provides funding for eligible mitigation activities that reduce disaster losses and protect life and property from future disaster damages, including the 404 Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Program (PDM) and the Flood Mitigation Assistance program (FMA).

The February 2017 Presidents' Day Storm and flood event underscore the importance of continuing funding these grant programs to provide assistance for states, local governments and communities to implement a sustained pre-disaster natural hazard mitigation program to reduce overall risk to the population and structures from future hazard events as well as provide a post-disaster mitigation grants to fund cost-effective projects that will protect public or private property in an area covered by a federal disaster declaration.

**C. \*S 698 (Cantwell) - National Landslide Preparedness Act**

**Recommendation: Support**

**Priority Recommendation - 2**

This legislation establishes a national program to identify and reduce losses from landslide hazards and establishes a national 3D Elevation Program.

The bill establishes a National Landslide Hazards Reduction Program under the Department of the Interior. The program's intent is to identify and understand landslide hazards and risks, reduce losses from landslides, to protect communities at risk of landslide hazards, and help improve communication and emergency preparedness, including by coordinating with communities and entities responsible for infrastructure that are at risk of landslide hazards.

The program will establish an Interagency Coordinating Committee on Landslide Hazards which will coordinate with Federal agencies to identify, map, assess, and research landslide hazards, respond to landslide events, and coordinate with States and Indian tribes to identify regional and local priorities.

A national strategy for landslide hazards and risk reduction in the United States will be developed, and a national landslide database will be developed. Landslide hazard and risk preparedness resources will be developed for communities working to improve landslide hazard preparedness.

As part of the program, the early warning system for flash floods and debris flow warning system will

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be expanded and emergency response activities will be established for rapid deployment of Federal scientists, equipment, and service to areas impacted by a significant landslide event.

The legislation establishes a 3D Elevation Program to provide 3D elevation data coverage for the United States. 3D elevation data is 3D high-resolution data.

Finally, a grant program may be provided to State, local, and tribal governments to research, map, assess, and collect data on landslide hazards.

**Status:**

S 698 was introduced on March 22, 2017 and referred to the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation committee.

**Importance to the District:**

The Casa Loma landslide is located above the Santa Clara Valley Water District's Chesbro Reservoir. The National Landslide Preparedness Act may provide additional data to understand the hazard and risk it poses to the reservoir.

**Pros:**

- Creates an Interagency Coordinating Committee on Landslide Hazards which will coordinate with Federal agencies to identify, map, assess, and research landslide hazards, respond to landslide events, and coordinate with States and Indian tribes to identify regional and local priorities.
- Creates a national strategy for landslide hazards and risk reduction in the United States and a national landslide database.
- Expands the early warning system for flash floods and debris flow.
- Establishes a 3D Elevation Program.
- Establishes a grant program to research, map, assess, and collect data on landslide hazards.
- Research and data from this program may benefit the District in providing data to assess the risk that the Casa Loma landslide poses to Chesbro Reservoir.

**Cons:**

None identified at this time.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

There is no financial impact associated with this item.

**CEQA:**

The recommended action does not constitute a project under CEQA because it does not have a potential for resulting in direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

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\*Original Agenda Memorandum  
\*Supplemental Agenda Memorandum

**UNCLASSIFIED MANAGER:**  
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