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**More Than 50,000 People Join Tribes and Fishermen To Express Opposition to Sites Reservoir
*Sites Reservoir Comments due January 28, 2022***

Redding, CA - Just before the new year, a petition in opposition of the Sites Reservoir reached 50,000 signatures. This milestone came just a week after the Sites Authority granted a request for an extension for the public to comment on the proposed 13,200-acre private reservoir. Sites Reservoir's infrastructure would cross Colusa, Glenn, Tehama and Yolo counties and divert water south from an already severely impacted Sacramento Delta River Basin. The reservoir has been linked to the controversial Delta Tunnel by investors.

"We are glad so many people are joining California's fishermen and Tribes in opposing building new reservoirs that would divert even more water from the already overtaxed Sacramento River and Bay Delta," said Mike Conroy, from the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations. "This year was disastrous for California's historic salmon runs. The National Marine Fisheries Service proclaimed this year was one of the worst years on record for endangered Sacramento River winter-run Chinook salmon. This is not a fish versus farms issue. Our fishing families and dependent communities are suffering and coastal towns are facing increased poverty. Sites Reservoir is an expensive water grab that benefits California's most wasteful water brokers, not average Californians."

According to the Revised Draft Environmental Impact Report (RDEIR) and Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS), the proposed Sites Reservoir project would have significant and unavoidable effects on water and air quality, vegetation, wetland and wildlife, and adverse impacts on Tribal cultural resources, causing further desecration of Tribal burial and culturally significant sites. Advocates of the Sites Reservoir have said that Sites would divert only during big storms, however the Sites Reservoir environmental documentation shows that this is not the case.

Some Bay Delta Tribes and Tribes that rely on Trinity River water, in addition to other Northern California Native communities, have expressed opposition to Sites Reservoir due to new water diversions and cultural and fisheries impacts.

"The Delta is being further diminished along with its cultural and traditional resources that Tribes have utilized from the Delta for food, medicine, transportation, shelter, clothing, ceremony and traditional lifeways from the beginning of time," stated Malissa Tayaba, the Vice Chairman of the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians. "Additional diversions from the Sacramento River watershed will exaggerate an already damaged and diminishing Delta ecosystem and estuary and our Tribe's ties to our homelands."

Tribal members, North State residents and NGOS also say at 13,200 acres Sites Reservoir would be one of the largest reservoirs in California and would include new water diversions from the Sacramento River that could adversely impact the Trinity River. Since the plan includes water storage for the Bureau of Reclamation, the agency that delivers federal water project water to Westlands Water District, the major diverter of Trinity River water, Sites could cause the Sacramento, Shasta and Trinity Reservoirs to be over drafted. The Trinity is the largest tributary to the ailing Klamath River and its coldest water source.

"We have been working to restore flows to help water quality, and to bring salmon back over the dams and back to Native lands for salmon survival and Tribal people," explained Pit River Tribal member Morning Star Gali. "California is losing the salmon and our clean water. This is an issue of justice. We already have over 1,000 reservoirs, and more water allocated than exists in California. An environmentally destructive private reservoir being built in an area that is important to Native people is a step in the wrong direction."

Environmental and commercial fishing organizations say that there is very little extra water in California's Northern rivers, where over five times as much water is allocated than exists. Those allocations go mainly to large farms that do not do their part to conserve water during droughts. Water justice advocates are requesting that California focus on reforming its antiquated water rights systems, which puts large landowners above Tribes, cities, fishermen and fish rather than build new dams.

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The petition is at <https://www.change.org/StopSitesReservoir>. Comments on the RDEIR/SDEIS may be submitted via email at EIR-EIS-Comments@SitesProject.org or via mail to Sites Project Authority, P.O. Box 517, Maxwell, CA 95955, or U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, 2800 Cottage Way, W-2830, Sacramento, CA 95825. Comments must be postmarked or received by 5 p.m. Pacific Standard Time (PST) on January 28, 2022.

More information and talking points are at californiasalmon.org, [@calisalmon](https://twitter.com/calisalmon) on twitter or [@californiarivers](https://www.instagram.com/californiarivers) on Instagram.

