

Criteria for Evaluating Campaign Options

Filled out by: Michael Jackson

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A. Possible Campaign Title: Stop Sites Now

B. Short Description: Sites Reservoir and diversion will divert up to 5,000 cfs of water out of the Sacramento River into a new diversion south of Hamilton City to storage behind a dam near Maxwell. This project will require huge energy use to pump up to 10,000 ac/ft a day from the river uphill to storage, will provide no flood control, will require a new diversion on the Sacramento river, and can only provide water at over \$300 ac/ft. The environmental and economic costs of this project have resulted in the inability of government agencies to identify a purpose or need for the project. No one presently knows who owns the project, who gets the water developed, how the water will be used, or where the water will be used. No one can evaluate environmental damage that would be done by the project since these questions are unresolved.

C. Purpose and Goals: The purpose of the proposed campaign is to educate environmentalists and the general public in the Sacramento Valley about Sites Reservoir and diversion. The goal of the campaign would be to ensure that the public trust values of the Sacramento River would not be degraded by the construction of the Sites Project. The campaign would require that all details of the project be adequately explained to the public and evaluated for environmental effects prior to any more money being spent on the project.

D. Lead Organizations: SVEWC

E. Supporting Organizations: SRPT, BEC, FOR, CSPA, NRDC

F. Lead Individuals and contact information: John Merz, Barbara Vlamis, Steve Evans, Lynn Barris, Jim Crenshaw, Mike Jackson, and David Behar

G. Major Milestones.

Past:

None, new campaign

Future:

1. Public education, negotiation, and testimony and comment on Draft and Final EIS/EIR
2. Likely legal challenge.
3. Major milestones in what is likely to be a multi-year legislative and political battle.

H. Potential Impact.

What specifically might the effort achieve?

1. Changing the local public perception of storage and diversion as the only water supply solution.
2. Retaining 100s of thousands of acre feet of water for the environment
3. Improved water conservation by agriculture in the valley.
4. Improved water recycling, water conservation, and use of non-Sacramento Valley water sources in export urban areas.

How might success here benefit other habitats and campaigns?

1. Examining Sites regarding water storage and diversion would educate the general public regarding dams and diversions, public trust, environmental effects, and alternative water supplies.
2. The public could better understand that the water belongs to the public and not to the government or exclusively to the farmers.

Will it help other campaigns outside of the Sacramento watershed? How?

1. It could help encourage the use of other water supplies such as conservation, reclamation, recycling in all areas of California.
2. Winning the campaign, even just engaging in the effort, could inspire other organizations to also challenge environmentally damaging new dams and diversions.
3. Collectively, these efforts could come together to advance state legislation or other strategies to rectify the problems that dams and diversion are having on California's environment.

I. Potential for Success.

How likely is success?

1. 80%-20%
2. Sites Reservoir has no articulated purpose nor does it satisfy a clear water need. It fails all traditional dam tests in that it supplies no firm yield, produces costly water only periodically, has large and expensive energy demands, provides no flood control, concentrates toxics, hot water, and chemicals, and depletes an already over-appropriated river.

What amount of resources needs to be invested to succeed?

1. This campaign requires both human and financial capital for the educational and political outreach components of the program. The human resources are available now in the area and they could be focused and supported for a reasonable amount of money.
2. This campaign offers much opportunity for volunteer/grassroots activist help.

What is the capacity and resources of the lead organization and its allies for this effort? Do they have the needed skill, experience and allies?

1. SVEWC has the capacity and can obtain the resources and allies necessary to change public opinion in the Sacramento Valley about more dams and diversions on the Sacramento

River. The SVWEC leadership is local, tested, and has been successful as independent entities; together, it is a formidable group in Sacramento Valley politics.

Is there the momentum behind the effort?

1. No. There has been no momentum to Stop Sites Now from the state environmental movement even though I think they know how preposterous a new dam and diversion would be on the Sacramento River. The only way I can imagine this project being built is if the taxpayers fund it on the misconception that it helps the Delta environment more than it hurts the Sacramento River environment. SVEWC can argue the opposing view with all the relevant facts in it's favor.

J. Potential to Broaden Coalition.

What is potential that the campaign could broaden the allies with whom the environmental community works?

1. Almost every environmental group with a stake in the Sacramento-Delta watershed should be interested.
2. Groups wanting to challenge other new dams and diversions would be supportive.
3. The environmental justice community would see the issue as important because a campaign to Stop Sites Now would prevent the waste of \$2.4 billion dollars to damage the Sacramento River and prevent an environmental injustice on the Sacramento River.
4. Sacramento Valley tribes would see this project as another water grab that would eliminate their opportunity to receive future recognition of tribal water rights from the river.

What "strange bedfellows" might become allies of the effort?

1. Farmers in the Sacramento Valley who do not receive Sites water could line up against a new appropriation that depletes the watershed for the benefit of export uses.
2. If local disagreement over the Sites Reservoir and diversion threatens to tie up transfers of Sacramento Valley water, MWD and other water purchasing groups might be interested in helping resolve the issues on terms satisfactory to the environment.
3. If the unfairness of the diverting more water from Sites to Westlands Water District and Southern California becomes apparent, cities and towns in the Sacramento Valley without such a subsidized agreement might become supportive of our environmental perspective on this issue.
4. If the campaign led to successful negotiations with the water districts, this could be a major step towards a positive long-term relationship with the agricultural community in the Sacramento Valley.

How sustainable might these relationships be?

1. Unknown.

K. Timing.

What is the timeline for success? Is victory ten years away or two?

1. I believe that an educational and political campaign in the Sacramento Valley could Stop Sites Now (2 years).

Is the timeline clear or are there many unknowns?

1. The timeline through approval of Sites Reservoir by CALFED is 3 to 5 years.
2. After a lawsuit is filed, the timeline is unclear.

L. Public Trust Water Rights case/Guaranteed environmental supplies

What impact might this campaign have on gaining public trust flows for streams in the watershed?

This campaign would be to protect and assure the existing flows on the Sacramento River. Without such a campaign, large amounts of present in-stream flow would be used for Sites Reservoir and diversion facility.

Will the campaign build the administrative record upon which good public trust court case can succeed?

This campaign would provide people and facts necessary to build an administrative record for a Sacramento River public trust lawsuit if the campaign failed to convince the public and governmental officials to Stop Sites Now.

Does the campaign help secure permanent water needs for riverine or terrestrial habitat?

The campaign actively protects present in-stream flow beneficial to riverine and terrestrial habitat. It actively educates the people of the Sacramento Valley about the threats to the long-term viability of these important habitats.

Value of it being selected as a SVEC campaign priority

Are other organizations already covering the needed work and doing it well? Would it make much difference to have the SVEC choose it as a priority campaign to support? How?

No one is doing this work presently. Sites is seen as a Sacramento Valley issue by state-wide environmental organizations who do not want to be seen as outsiders dictating Sacramento Valley water use. This campaign could be carried out by local people, providing local leadership, backed and assisted by state and national environmental organizations.

How would the campaign help increase the number of volunteers and activists?

Grass-roots action always attracts new volunteers and activists. Education and political action are something everyone can do and the threat to the Sacramento River if we don't Stop Sites Now is local and apparent to new activists.

Education and Reframing the Issues

This campaign is primarily educational at the beginning. It is designed to reframe the issue of dams and diversions to reveal the sham argument that more water is available from the Sacramento Valley for export use without harming the environment of the area

Will the campaign help reframe the mindset of the public that water belongs to the public and the public needs to ensure that habitat receives its fair share of the waters of the state?

This campaign would be designed to educate the local population on the issue of public trust, public ownership of water, and alternative water sources for export users.

What key messages will the campaign deliver?

1. The water belongs to the people of California.
2. The Sacramento River is already over-appropriated.
3. Sites Reservoir has no real water supply purpose for California.
4. Sites Reservoir cannot develop water for a reasonable cost.
5. CALFED has yet to articulate a water supply need for Sites Reservoir.
6. Sites Reservoir and diversion will harm the Sacramento River and its habitat.
7. Justifying building a dam and diversion for the environment is pure propaganda and in order to stop such a precedent we need to Stop Sites Now.