

**DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES**

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**NOTICE OF PREPARATION**

**To:** Agencies and Interested Parties

**From:** California Department of Water Resources

**Date:** January 18, 2011

**Subject:** **Announcement of:**

- 1) Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report on the Joint Operations Center Relocation Project;**
- 2) Public Scoping Meetings to be held on February 3, 2011; and**
- 3) Scoping Comments due by February 17, 2011**

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) and the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) will prepare a joint environmental impact statement (EIS)/environmental impact report (EIR) for the Joint Operations Center (JOC) Relocation Project (proposed project for CEQA purposes) in Sacramento County, California. The EIS/EIR will be prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 United States Code [USC] Section 4321 et seq.) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (California Public Resources Code [PRC], Section 21000 et seq.; see also 14 California Code of Regulations [CCR] Sections 15220, 15222 [State CEQA Guidelines]). Reclamation will be the Federal lead agency for purposes of complying with NEPA, and DWR will be the State lead agency for compliance with CEQA.

**PURPOSE OF THE NOTICE OF PREPARATION:** The purpose of a notice of preparation (NOP) is to notify responsible and trustee agencies, Federal agencies involved in approving or funding a project, and interested parties that an EIR will be prepared. The NOP should provide sufficient information about the proposed project and its potential environmental impacts to allow recipients the opportunity to provide a meaningful response related to the scope and content of the EIS/EIR, including the potentially significant and significant environmental issues, reasonable alternatives, and mitigation measures that the responsible or trustee agency will need to have explored in the EIS/EIR (State CEQA Guidelines CCR Section 15082[a][1]).

The project location, description, and probable environmental impacts of the proposed project are presented below. An initial study has not been prepared because the EIS/EIR will address all issue areas and it is already known that the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment. The EIS/EIR will also include feasible mitigation measures, where available, and consideration of a reasonable range of alternatives to avoid or substantially reduce the proposed project's significant adverse environmental impacts.

The purposes of this NOP are to:

1. notify the appropriate parties that an EIS/EIR will be prepared for the proposed project;
2. briefly describe the proposed project and the anticipated content of the EIS/EIR;
3. announce the public scoping meetings to facilitate public input; and
4. solicit input by February 16, 2011, from Federal, State, regional, and local agencies, and from interested organizations and individuals, about the content and scope of the EIS/EIR, including the alternatives to be addressed and the potentially significant environmental impacts.

**PROJECT BACKGROUND AND NEED:** The following agencies/departments are currently collocated in a leased building at 3310 El Camino Avenue, Sacramento, California (referred to hereafter as the El Camino Interim JOC):

- Reclamation's Central Valley Operations Office (CVO);
- DWR's Division of Operations and Maintenance, Operations Control Office, State Water Project (SWP) Power and Risk Office, and Division of Flood Management's Offices of Operations and Maintenance and Hydrology and Flood Operations including the State-Federal Flood Operations Center; and
- The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service (NWS) Sacramento Weather Forecast Office and California-Nevada River Forecast Center.

The existing lease expires on June 30, 2015.

In 2005, Reclamation and DWR determined that the El Camino Interim JOC no longer met critical requirements of both agencies and that sufficient upgrades could not be accomplished to satisfy the new mandated requirements as follows:

- The El Camino Interim JOC does not meet the State of California's "Essential Service" requirements and cannot cost effectively be retrofitted to remedy the situation. During any retrofit, all tenants would be required to temporarily vacate the building, which would be impractical.
- Safety and physical security requirements including clear space building set-back allowances cannot be met. The El Camino Interim JOC allows uncontrolled commercial and public vehicles to within 12 feet of the building structure. The remedy to solve this issue is cost prohibitive.
- The El Camino Interim JOC space is constrained. All possible expansion possibilities have been explored and are infeasible.

In 2006, Reclamation and other JOC partner agencies discussed and weighed the many benefits achieved through the collocation of operations in the existing facility, and agreed to continue to jointly coordinate CVP and SWP operations by continuing to be collocated in new facilities in the future.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** Reclamation, DWR, and NWS propose to construct a new JOC in the Sacramento area to be occupied by June 2015. The proposed new JOC would provide the special needs, essential services, and requisite office space for the combined occupancy of Reclamation, DWR, and NWS (see specific list of departments/offices in “Project Background” above) to replace the El Camino Interim JOC. Special needs are defined as two control centers, flood operations center, backup power supplies, primary and backup communication systems, intense computer infrastructure, physical and cyber security systems, and meeting state essential service criteria. The criteria used by Reclamation, DWR, NWS, and the California Department of General Services (DGS) to establish a new JOC location include the following:

The following is a description of the criteria used by DWR, NWS, Reclamation and Department of General Services (DGS) established for a new JOC:

- The location of the new JOC must be acceptable by all major stakeholders (Reclamation, DWR, NWS).
- Relocation must be coordinated with the expiration of the El Camino Interim JOC’s existing lease terms.
- The new location must be along, or adjacent to a major traffic thoroughfare and within a 20-minute commute from downtown Sacramento (DWR headquarters).
- The new facility must be sited, designed, and constructed consistent with the Bureau of Reclamation Sustainable Buildings Implementation Plan requirements for leased buildings and should be consistent, where possible, with Recommendations on Sustainable Siting for Federal Facilities in accordance with Executive Order 13514.
- The new location must be certified as minimum LEED Silver in accordance with State requirements.
- The new location must have access to public transportation, bus service and/or light rail.
- The new location must be of sufficient size to adequately accommodate all stakeholder needs and requirements.
- There must be line of sight for all stakeholder specialized communications systems and equipment. Redundant communication systems must be immediately accessible.
- The new location must have excellent power service availability, reliability, and redundancy.
- The new location must be large enough to accommodate parking for all stakeholders as allowed by State and Federal guidelines and large enough to provide clear space building set-back allowances for physical security.
- The new site must be situated above the 200-year flood plain elevation.
- There must be adequate restaurant/food service facilities within the vicinity.
- The new building/complex should be located on a site where adjacent commercial

development and public events can be controlled, minimized, or monitored.

DGS would be responsible for the design and construction of the new JOC, which needs to accommodate approximately 500 employees and be approximately 200,000 square feet. The design and footprint of the new JOC would be completed by a private development team under contract to DGS; the preliminary design concepts being considered in the EIS/EIR are (1) one three-story building and two one-story buildings or (2) two one-story buildings and two two-story buildings. The new JOC would occupy approximately 16 acres of land, including access roads and parking lots.

In September 2007, Reclamation, DWR, and NWS completed a site criteria/ranking process to determine which site(s) in the Sacramento area were available at that time and could be considered for further evaluation. Based on the above criteria and stakeholder input, the following sites (Exhibits 1 and 2) have been selected for further review and will be analyzed, along with a No-Project Alternative (for CEQA purposes), in the EIS/EIR at an equal level of detail:

- Site 1 (Preferred): The Nimbus site is a 19-acre parcel owned by Reclamation and located adjacent to the California Department of Fish and Game's (DFG's) and Reclamation's Nimbus Fish Hatchery, near the Nimbus Dam on the American River. The site is adjacent to the Upper Sunrise Area of the American River Parkway and contains dredge spoils from gold mining on the American River. Access to the site is from U.S. Highway 50 via Hazel Avenue and Gold Country Boulevard. This site is owned by Reclamation and would be leased to DWR if selected. The EIS/EIR will analyze two JOC configurations at an equal level of detail for purposes of NEPA on Site 1: (1) one three-story building and two one-story buildings and (2) two one-story buildings and two two-story buildings.
- Site 2 - Commercial Site: The Kilgore site is a representative currently available commercial site that has been selected for the purposes of this environmental document for environmental analysis as it meets the minimum criteria for a potential building site. To implement this alternative, a full and open competitive procurement process would be utilized to obtain a commercial building site which may include but is not limited to the Kilgore site.

The Kilgore site is a privately owned, 18-acre property located northeast of the intersection of Kilgore Road and Crawford Drive. The site is in a commercial area adjacent to office buildings and is bounded on the south side by the Folsom South Canal. Access to the site is from U.S. Highway 50 via Sunrise Boulevard and Kilgore Road. The EIS/EIR will analyze one JOC configuration on Site 2: two two-story buildings and two one-story buildings.

**PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:** The EIS/EIR will describe the direct and indirect potentially significant and significant environmental impacts of the proposed project. The EIS/EIR will also evaluate the cumulative impacts of the project when considered in conjunction with other related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects.

The probable environmental impacts of the proposed project are as follows:

- **Aesthetics:** Temporary and long-term changes in scenic views or visual character of the project sites from the construction of the new JOC and tree/vegetation removal, including potential effects on the American River Parkway at the Nimbus site and to homeowners with views of the Nimbus site in particular; and creation of a new source of light or glare.
- **Air Quality:** Temporary and short-term increases in pollutant emissions associated with construction activities; and long-term increases in pollutant emissions during project operation (including stationary and mobile-source emissions).
- **Biological Resources:** Temporary disturbance or permanent loss of oak woodland habitat, jurisdictional waters of the United States (including wetlands), and special-status species habitats; construction disturbance or take of special-status species, especially valley elderberry longhorn beetle, California red-legged frog, white-tailed kite, Swainson's hawk, burrowing owl, and nesting birds.
- **Climate Change:** Temporary and long-term changes in greenhouse gas emissions resulting from the proposed project, which could contribute to global climate change.
- **Cultural Resources:** Temporary and/or permanent disturbance of known and unknown historic or archaeological resources, especially the mine tailings located on the Nimbus site.
- **Earth and Paleontological Resources:** Potential soil erosion or loss of topsoil during construction; potential loss of mineral resources; and potential disturbance of unknown unique paleontological resources during earthmoving activities.
- **Hazards and Hazardous Materials:** Potential spills of hazardous materials during construction; potential exposure to hazardous materials during construction; and increased exposure to wildland fire risk during construction.
- **Hydrology and Water Quality:** Potential temporary and permanent alteration of local drainage patterns and runoff effects, including potential drainage to the American River (from the Nimbus site) or the City of Rancho Cordova's storm drainage system (from the Kilgore site); temporary off-site effects on water quality associated with construction and long-term urban development; and potential effects of impervious surfaces on groundwater recharge.
- **Land Use and Planning (including Agriculture and Forestry Resources):** Consistency with adopted land use plans, including the Sacramento County General Plan and City of Rancho Cordova General Plan; consistency with adjacent adopted land use plans including American River Parkway Plan; division of an existing community; conversion of Important Farmland to nonagricultural use; conflicts with lands under Williamson Act contracts; and potential loss or conversion of forestland or timberland.
- **Noise:** Temporary and short-term increases in noise and vibration levels near sensitive receptors during construction; permanent increases in noise as a result of project operation.

- **Public Services and Utilities (including Power and Energy):** Potential disruption of utility service from construction activities; and potential increased need for public services and utilities, including power and energy needs, associated with operation of the new JOC.
- **Recreation:** Potential construction-related impacts to recreational facilities in near the project area, including the American River Parkway, Nimbus Fish Hatchery, and the Sacramento State Aquatics Center at the Nimbus site; and the International Drive bicycle path at the Kilgore site.
- **Socioeconomics (including Population, Employment, and Housing):** Temporary and permanent increase in local/regional employment opportunities; potential increased need for housing; and other potential socioeconomic impacts, the analysis of which is required by NEPA.
- **Transportation and Circulation:** Temporary increase in traffic and traffic hazards on local roadways and U.S. Highway 50 ramps during construction, including hauling; temporary disruption of emergency service response times and access; permanent increase in traffic on local roadways and U.S. Highway 50 ramps during project operation; potential effects on pedestrian and bicycle access to/from adjacent roadways.
- **Growth Inducement:** Potential growth-inducing impacts from project construction, including substantial new short-term and permanent employment opportunities.
- **Environmental Justice and Indian Trust Assets:** Potential for disproportionately high and adverse effects on minority or low income populations, including Tribal populations and assets, the analysis of which is required by NEPA.

These issue areas will be discussed further in the EIS/EIR, and mitigation measures will be recommended wherever feasible to reduce potentially significant and significant impacts.

**SCOPING MEETINGS:** Two public scoping meetings will be held to inform interested parties about the proposed project and to solicit agency and public input on the scope and content of the EIS/EIR:

- Thursday, February 3, 2011, 2:00–4:00 p.m. (brief presentation at 2:30 p.m.)
- Thursday, February 3, 2011, 6:30–8:30 p.m. (brief presentation at 7:00 p.m.)

The scoping meetings will be held at the Sacramento State Aquatics Center, 1901 Hazel Avenue, Sacramento, California. Each meeting will include a brief presentation about the project and then allow attendees to learn more and ask questions in an open-house format at several information stations.

If special assistance is required to participate in the public scoping meetings, please contact Mr. John Engstrom or Ms. Elizabeth Vasquez (contact information is provided below) as far in advance as possible to enable Reclamation to secure the needed services. If a request cannot be honored, the requestor will be notified. A telephone device for the hearing impaired (TDD) is available at 916-989-7285.

**COMMENTS:** This NOP is being circulated for a 30-day public comment period, beginning on January 18, 2011, and ending on February 16, 2011. Written or oral comments on the proposed content and scope of the EIS/EIR can be provided at the public scoping meetings, or written comments may be provided directly to Reclamation or DWR. Comments must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on February 17, 2011. Agencies that will need to use the EIS/EIR when considering permits or other approvals for the proposed project should provide the name of a contact person. Comments provided by e-mail should include the name and address of the sender. Please send all written and/or e-mail comments to one of the following:

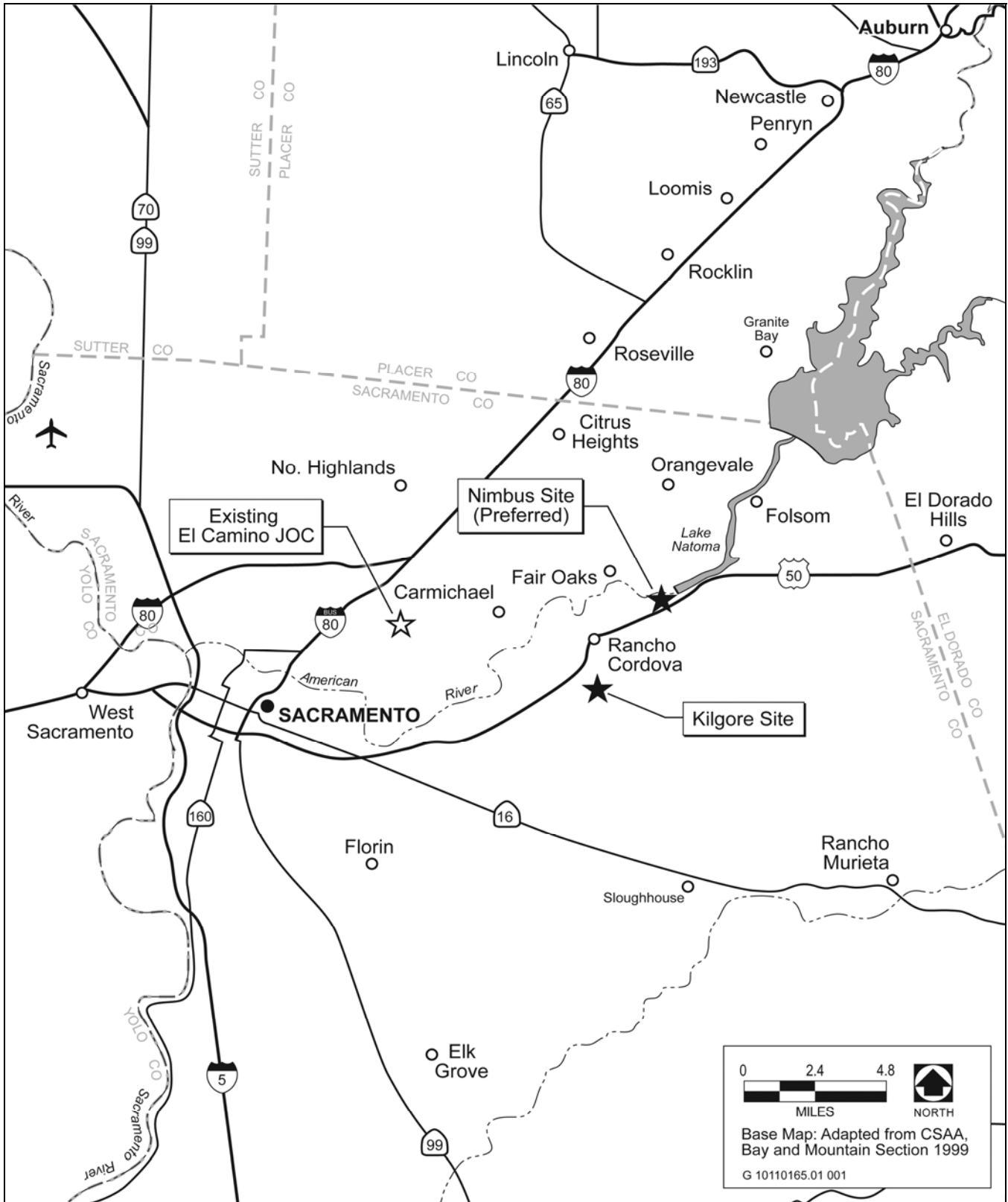
Division of Management Services  
**California Dept. of Water Resources**  
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Sacramento, CA 942836-0001  
Attention: John Engstrom  
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Fax: (916) 653-6476  
E-mail: engstrom@water.ca.gov

Office of Environmental Affairs  
**Bureau of Reclamation**  
2800 Cottage Way  
Sacramento, CA 95825  
Attention: Elizabeth Vasquez  
Telephone: (916) 978-5040  
Fax: (916) 978-5055  
E-mail: evasquez@usbr.gov

More information about the project is available at <http://www.usbr.gov/mp/cvo/joc.html>.

Before including your name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, please be aware that your entire comment, including your personal identifying information, may be made publicly available at any time. While you can request in your comment that your personal identifying information be withheld from public review, Reclamation and DWR cannot guarantee that this will be possible.

All comments received during the public comment period will be considered and addressed in the EIS/EIR, which is anticipated to be available for public review in spring 2011.

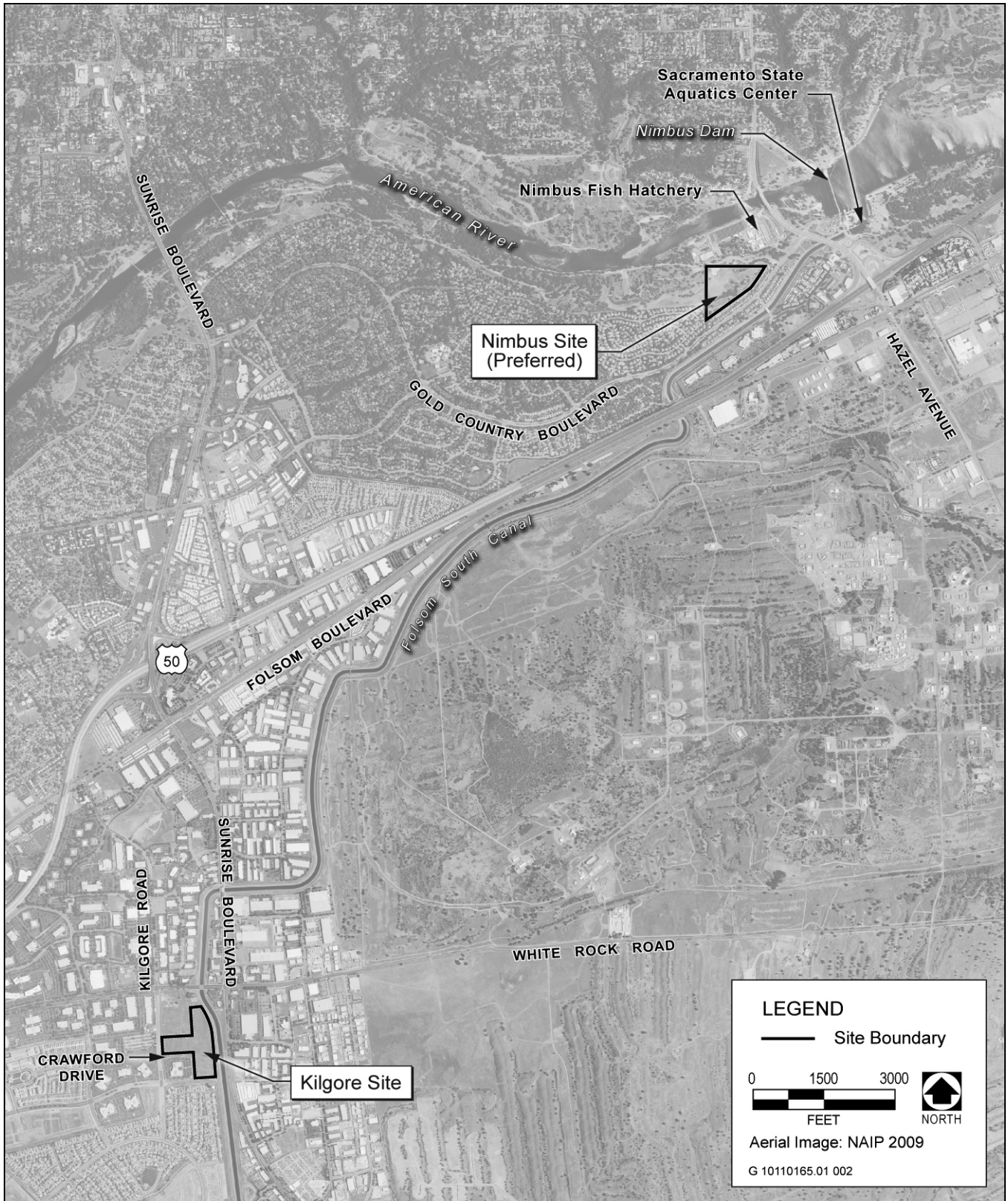


Source: Adapted by AECOM in 2010

**Project Vicinity**

**Exhibit 1**





Source: Adapted by AECOM in 2010

**Site Locations**

**Exhibit 2**



**4310-MN-P**

**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

Bureau of Reclamation

Joint Operations Center Relocation Project, Sacramento County, California

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Reclamation, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement/environmental impact report (EIS/EIR) and notice of public scoping meetings.

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act and the California Environmental Quality Act, the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), the lead Federal agency, and the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), the lead State agency, will prepare a joint EIS/EIR for the proposed Joint Operations Center (JOC) Relocation Project (Proposed Action). The purpose of the Proposed Action is to construct a new JOC in the Sacramento area to be occupied by June 2015. The new JOC would provide typical office space and special needs/essential services space for combined occupancy by Reclamation, DWR, and the NOAA's National Weather Service (NWS) to replace jointly occupied space at 3310 El Camino Avenue in Sacramento.

**DATES:** Written comments on the scope of the EIS/EIR will be accepted until February 17, 2011.

Two public scoping meetings will be held to solicit public input on the scope and content of the EIS/EIR:

- Thursday February 3, 2011, 2:30 pm to 4:00 pm, Sacramento, California.
- Thursday February 3, 2011, 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm, Sacramento, California.

**ADDRESSES:** Send written comments on the content and scope of the EIS/EIR to Ms. Elizabeth Vasquez, Division of Environmental Affairs, Bureau of Reclamation, 2800 Cottage Way, Sacramento, CA 95825 or e-mail [evasquez@usbr.gov](mailto:evasquez@usbr.gov).

The public scoping meetings will be held at Sacramento State Aquatics Center, 1901 Hazel Avenue, Gold River, California.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ms. Elizabeth Vasquez, 916-978-5040; email at [evasquez@usbr.gov](mailto:evasquez@usbr.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** As with the currently occupied space, the proposed JOC would be shared by the following departments:

- DWR's Division of Operations and Maintenance, Operations Control Office, State Water Project Power and Risk Office, and Division of Flood Management offices;
- Reclamation's Central Valley Project Operations Office; and
- The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's NWS and River Forecast Center.

Along with evaluating a No-Action Alternative, the EIS/EIR will analyze two potential sites for the proposed JOC at an equal level of detail – both of which are located in Sacramento County, California. The sites under consideration are:

- Site 1 (Preferred): The Nimbus site is an 18-acre parcel owned by Reclamation and located adjacent to the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) Nimbus Fish Hatchery, near the Nimbus Dam on the American River. The site is adjacent to the Upper Sunrise Area of the American River Parkway and contains

dredge spoils from gold mining on the American River. Access to the site is from U.S. Highway 50 via Hazel Avenue and Gold Country Boulevard.

- Site 2: The Kilgore/Crawford site is a privately owned 18-acre property located northeast of the intersection of Kilgore Road and Crawford Drive. The site is in a commercial area adjacent to office buildings and is bounded on the south side by the Folsom South Canal. Access to the site is from U.S. Highway 50 via Sunrise Boulevard and Kilgore Road.

At this time, there are no known Indian trust assets or environmental justice issues associated with the Proposed Action.

### **Special Assistance for Public Scoping Meetings**

If special assistance is required to participate in the public scoping meetings, please contact Ms. Elizabeth Vasquez (see “For Further Information Contact” above) as far in advance as possible to enable Reclamation to secure the needed services. If a request cannot be honored, the requestor will be notified. A telephone device for the hearing impaired (TDD) is available at 916-989-7285.

### **Public Disclosure**

Before including your name, address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be publicly available at any time. While you can ask us, in your comment, to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Dated: November 23, 2010

Signed: /s/ Anastasia T. Leigh  
Anastasia T. Leigh  
Acting Regional Environmental Officer  
Mid-Pacific Region