

**Mid-Canal Storage Project  
CEQA Initial Study  
and  
Mitigated Negative Declaration**

**Coachella Valley Water District Board of Directors  
Meeting**

**February 14, 2023**





# Meeting Agenda

- Project Team
- Project Objectives
- Project Summary
- Environmental Impact Analysis Requirements
- Summary of Environmental Impact Analysis
- Summary of Consultation
- Request for Board Approval of Final IS/MND and Project



# Project Team

## Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD)

- Steve Bigley, *Director of Environmental Services*
- William Patterson, *Environmental Supervisor*
- Carlos Huerta, *Environmental Specialist*

## Harvey Consulting Group / Dahl Consultants Team

- Jeff Harvey, *Project Manager*
- RCH Group, *Air Quality & GHG Emissions*
- HELIX, *Biological & Cultural Resources*
- Landmark, *Geotechnical Assessment*



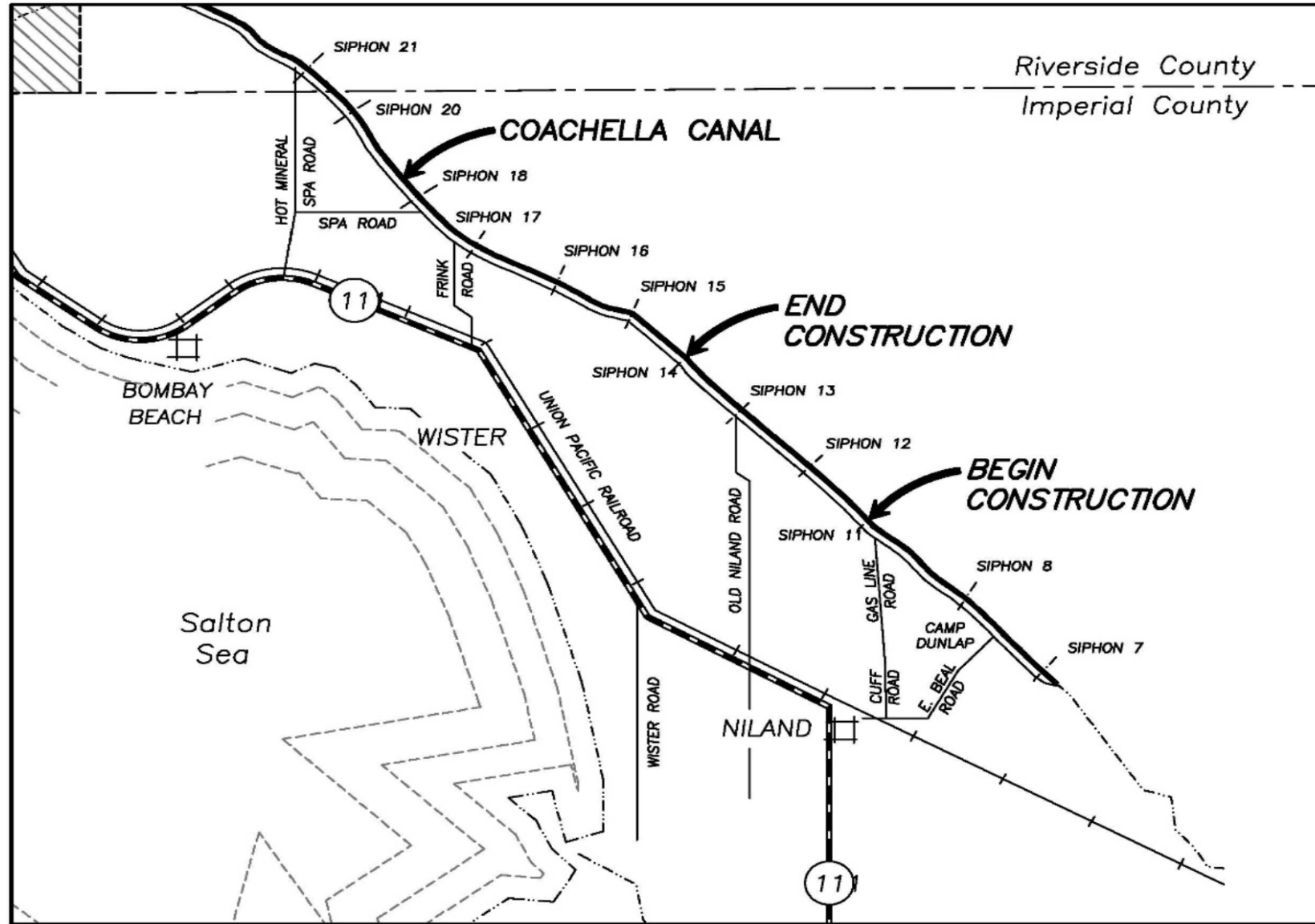
# Project Objectives

- Develop 728 acre-feet of water storage capacity to improve canal water management and efficiency, and correct for lost storage capacity with the CCLP
- Resolve ongoing canal lining maintenance issue resulting from high-clay soils in the canal segments to be converted to a storage reservoir
- Extend electrical power to the existing SCADA system at the Siphon 14 gate to replace the existing solar power source that has been subject to recurring vandalism.





# Project Location



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# Project Summary

- Earthwork to remove the berm separating the original earthen canal channel and the concrete-lined canal channel developed for the CCLP between Siphons 11 and 14 to create a single wide channel with up to 728 acre-feet of storage capacity.
- High-clay content soils in the berm and underlying soils spread and compacted to create a 2.8-foot thick clay lining equivalent to the concrete lining seepage control of the existing CCLP channel.
- Result is three “cells” between siphons 11 & 12, 12& 13 and 13& 14 to form the reservoir.
- Increase height of concrete collars at the siphons to account for higher water levels at full reservoir capacity



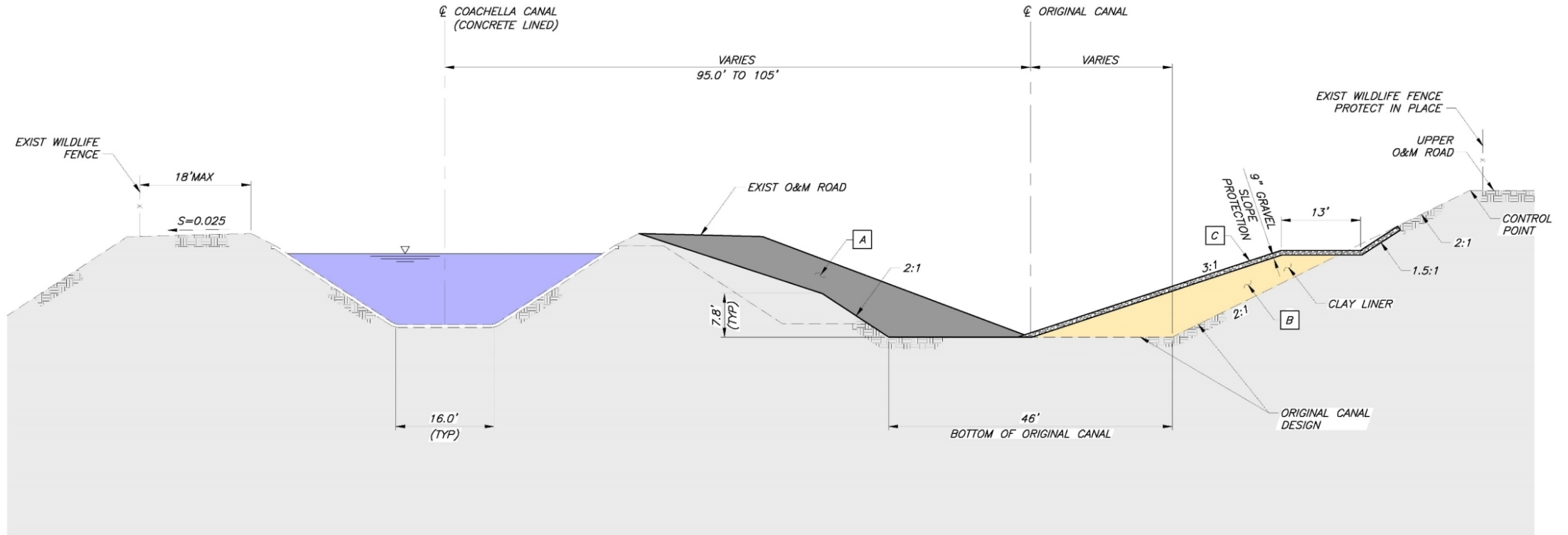


# Project Summary (cont.)

- Installation of rock armoring on the eastern (right) bank to prevent wave-induced erosion from predominantly westerly winds.
- Extension of an IID 12kV electrical circuit 3.1 miles from existing substation to Siphon 14 to repower the existing SCADA system.
- Three east side wildlife drinkers replaced with ramps extending into the side of the reservoir for access to water with safety fencing to prevent entrainment of animals into the reservoir current.
- All earthwork balanced on-site, rock imported from commercial source.



# Project Summary



## STEP 1:

- REMOVE PORTION OF EXISTING EMBANKMENT.
- CONSTRUCT COMPACTED EMBANKMENT ALONG OLD CANAL (RIGHT) USING THE MATERIAL FROM THE EXISTING EMBANKMENT.
- FURNISH AND PLACE 9-INCH-THICK ROCK PROTECTION ALONG EASTERLY SLOPE.
- WORK SHALL BE COMPLETED FOR ALL CELLS WITHOUT DISRUPTING SERVICE TO THE EXISTING CANAL.

## STEP 1



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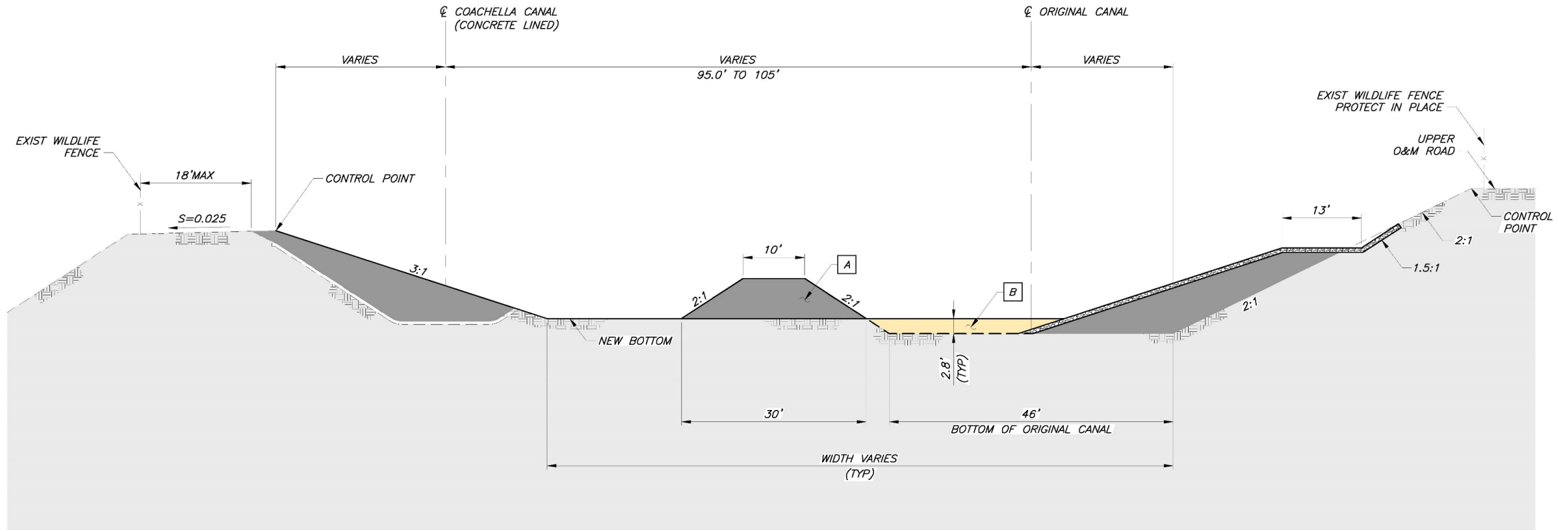


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- A. COORDINATE TEMPORARY SHUTDOWN WITH CVWD TO DIVERT FLOW INTO THE OLD CANAL.
- B. CUT AND REMOVE EXISTING LINING ON CANAL RIGHT TO INVERT.
- C. REMOVE PORTION OF EXISTING EMBANKMENT TO CONSTRUCT COMPACTED EMBANKMENT ALONG LINED CANAL (LEFT) USING THE MATERIAL FROM THE EXISTING EMBANKMENT.
- D. WORK SHALL BE COMPLETED FOR ALL CELLS WITHOUT DISRUPTING SERVICE TO THE OLD CANAL.

STEP 2

# Project Summary (cont.)



## STEP 3

- A. COORDINATE TEMPORARY SHUTDOWN WITH CVWD TO DEWATER THE OLD CANAL.
- B. USE REMAINING EMBANKMENT MATERIAL TO FILL IN CANAL BOTTOM.

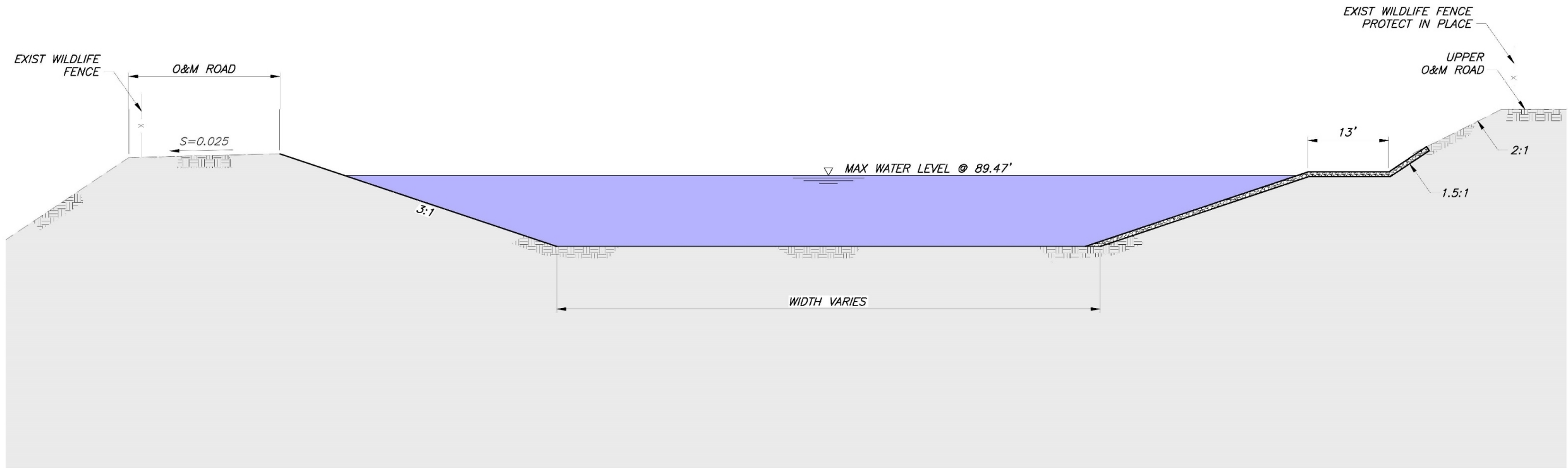
## STEP 3



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# Project Summary (cont.)



COMPLETED SECTION



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# Project Summary (cont.)



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# Environmental Impact Analysis Requirements

- The Project is subject to requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
- Proposed modification of the Coachella Canal, a federal facility owned by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, also triggers requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).
- Reclamation to prepare an Environmental Assessment to support its Finding of No Significant Impacts (EA / FONSI) to satisfy NEPA requirements. The two assessments are being closely coordinated to ensure consistency of conclusions and mitigation requirements.



# Resources Analyzed

## CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist Topics:

- Aesthetics, Agriculture, Air Quality, Biological and Cultural Resources, Energy, Geology/Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use/Planning, Mineral Resources, Noise, Population/Housing, Public Services, Recreation, Transportation, Tribal Cultural Resources, Utilities/Service Systems, Wildfire, Mandatory Findings
- Tribal Consultation



# Resources Analyzed

## NEPA Topics:

- Alternatives
- Resource topics closely aligned with CEQA list
- State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and Tribal Items
- Tribal Consultation
- Evaluation of Impact to Resource





# Environmental Impact Analysis

- Project-specific Biological Resources Survey, Cultural / Tribal Resources Survey, and Geotechnical Assessment
- All potentially significant impacts identified in the IS/MND can be mitigated to less than significant levels with implementation a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP)



# Mitigation Measures

**AQ-1-3:** Dust Control, Equipment Maintenance, Vehicle Idling

**BIO-1 & 2:** Pre-Construction Survey for Nesting Birds, Worker Environmental Awareness Program Training

**CR-1-3:** Worker Environmental Awareness Program Training, Unanticipated Discovery of Archaeological Resources, Unanticipated Discovery of Human Remains

**HAZ-1:** Construction General Permit and Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan

**Hydrology & Water Quality:** Same MM as HAZ-1

**Tribal Cultural Resources:** Same MM as CR-1-3



# Less than Significant Impacts with Mitigation

## Air Quality

Construction activities could produce dust and air emissions from earthwork equipment.

**AQ-1:** Construction permit from ICAPCD including a fugitive dust control program

**AQ-2:** All equipment to be maintained to manufacturer's specifications

**AQ-3:** Vehicle idling times limited to five minutes per State law.





# Less than Significant Impacts with Mitigation

## Biological Resources

Construction activities could disturb habitat for special status species.

**BIO-1**, Pre-Construction Survey for Nesting Birds: Construction activities shall avoid the nesting bird season or pre-construction nesting bird survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist and avoidance or minimization measures shall be undertaken.

**BIO-2** Worker Environmental Awareness Program Training: A biological WEAP training shall be conducted by a qualified biologist prior to the initiation of any ground-disturbing activities.



# Less than Significant Impacts with Mitigation

## Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources

Potential for inadvertent discovery of previously unknown archaeological materials and/or human remains.

**CR-1:** Worker Environmental Awareness Program Training Clean: A cultural resources WEAP training shall be conducted for all staff prior to the initiation of any ground-disturbing activities.

**CR-2:** Unanticipated Discovery of Archaeological Resources: If subsurface deposits believed to be archaeological are discovered during construction, all work must halt within a 100-foot radius of the discovery. A registered professional archaeologist shall evaluate the significance of the find and has authority to modify the no-work radius.



# Less than Significant Impacts with Mitigation

## Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources (cont.)

Potential for inadvertent discovery of previously unknown archaeological materials and/or human remains.

**CR-3:** Unanticipated Discovery of Human Remains: If human remains are accidentally discovered or recognized during construction excavation and grading activities, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 requires that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98.





# Less than Significant Impacts with Mitigation

## **Hazards & Hazardous Materials and Hydrology & Water Quality**

### **HAZ-1: Construction General Permit and Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan**

Comply with the most current Construction General Permit (CGP) including development and implementation of a project-specific Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to identify the locations and types of construction activities requiring BMPs and other necessary compliance measures to prevent soil erosion and stormwater runoff pollution. A Notice of Intent (NOI) to implement a SWPPP must be submitted through the Stormwater Multiple Application and Report Tracking System (SMARTS), in which a Waste Discharge Identification (WDID) number will be issued. The SWPPP and WDID must be kept on-site and used during the life of the project.



# Consultation

## AB 52 Consultation

Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians requested formal government-to-government consultation

## Section 106 Consultation (National Historic Preservation Act)

Cultural Resources Survey determined that the proposed Project activities would result in *No Historic Properties Affected*

## Section 7 Consultation (Federal Endangered Species Act)

The Biological Resources Survey determined that there would be *no effect* on federally listed species pursuant to the Endangered Species Act or any other special status species



# EAC Review and Public Review

EAC approval of release of the Draft IS/MND 12/22/22 for 30 public review period (12/23/22 – 01/23/23)

- Published Notice of Availability (NOA) for the Draft IS/MND and filed Notice of Completion (NOC)
- Draft IS/MND available to identified stakeholder groups including tribal governments, local and State resource agencies, local governments, County Clerk, and State Clearinghouse





# Comments Received on the Draft IS/MND

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Inland Desert Region
- Caltrans District 11
- Imperial Irrigation District

All comments reviewed and Chapter 6, Comments and Responses added to the Final IS/MND

Original letters added as Appendix G to the Final IS/MND



# Comments Received on the Draft IS/MND

## California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Inland Desert Region

Expressed concerns regarding:

- Project Description failure to include artificial nighttime lighting (none is proposed),
- Impacts to streams (the project does not encroach on any stream)
- Assertion that the entire canal is a “natural stream” subject to Fish and Game Code Section 1600 et seq. (the canal is a federal facility, entirely human-made, operated and maintained by CVWD for water supply, and is not a “natural stream”)
- Burrowing owl habitat (added as part of required pre-construction nesting bird surveys)
- CDFW Fees to be paid when filing the NOD (comment noted)
- Environmental data filing requirements, if applicable (comment noted)



# Comments Received on the Draft IS/MND

## Caltrans District 11:

- Noted Caltrans requirements for permit for oversize vehicles (transporting earthmoving equipment) and need for a Traffic Control Plan if any road closures, detours or other public traffic re-routing or delays are required. (Note: *They are not required for this project.*)

## Imperial Irrigation District

- Provided previously unavailable details of the required electrical circuit to be added to the Project Description to ensure it is covered by this CEQA document.
- Additions were made as suggested. Potential affects and mitigation measures did not change.



# Final IS/MND Contents

## Final IS/MND:

- Draft IS/MND with revisions as needed in response to comments to comprise the Final IS/MND) shown in Track Changes
  - Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP)
  - Chapter 6: Comments and Responses added
  - Appendix G with original comment letters added
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- Responses to Comments sent to individual agencies 10-days prior to this Board meeting as required by CEQA

## Also includes:

- Notice of Determination (NOD) documenting the Board's approval of the IS/MND and Project for submittal to the Imperial County Clerk and State Clearinghouse (SCH) (*if project is approved*)





# Board Approvals Requested

Staff recommendations to the Board:

- Board adoption of the Final IS/MND and MMRP
- Board approval of the Mid-Canal Storage Project
- File Notice of Determination with the County Clerk and State Clearinghouse
- Authorize Staff to solicit bids for project construction



# Questions?



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