State Water Resources Control Board

November 18, 2025

Gabrielle Myers
City of Hanford
317 North Douty Street
Hanford, CA 93230

CITY OF HANFORD (WATER SYSTEM), ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (EIR) FOR THE NEVES RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT (PROJECT), STATE CLEARINGHOUSE #2024120645

Dear Ms. Myers:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the EIR for the proposed Project. The State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water (DDW), issues domestic water supply permits under the Safe Drinking Water Act. This Project falls under DDW's Visalia District jurisdiction. The Visalia District issues permit amendments according to the Title 22 California Code of Regulations (Cal. Code Regs.) chapter 16. Public water systems need a permit amendment for modification of the water supply including new sources, new reservoirs with 100,000-gallon capacity or greater, service area expansions of twenty percent or more, and treatment design capacity or process changes as per Cal. Code Regs. § 64556. The Water System will need to apply for an amendment for two new drinking water sources and a possible new reservoir.

The State Water Board, DDW, as a responsible agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), has the following comments on the EIR:

- Per the City's email on October 28, 2025, Well 53 and Well 54, along with an additional water storage reservoir, is needed to serve the Neves Development. In the Project Description:
  - Please describe the new domestic water system components and ensure you consider the two planned wells, the water storage tank, possible treatment, piping, and any other new components of the system.
  - Identify the estimated capacity of the reservoir, the estimated gallons per minute of water the wells may produce, and the construction phase for the water system infrastructure. Please also discuss whether fire flow will be provided as part of the same system.
  - Identify the infrastructure location. If the components will be installed outside the currently analyzed Project area, please extend the Project area to include these areas.

- Under Section 2.4 Required Approvals, please add “approval of domestic water supply permit amendment by the State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water.”
- Please assess the impacts associated with the construction and operation of the system of the new domestic water infrastructure in the checklist. If the infrastructure will be located offsite, please consider the new environmental conditions not previously considered in the analysis.
- The Project falls within the San Joaquin Valley- Tulare Lake basin, a high priority and critically overdrafted basin according to the Department of Water Resources (DWR) Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SIGMA) prioritization dashboard. The Groundwater Sustainable Agency (GSA) for the site is Mid-Kings River (www.midkingsrivergsa.org). The project creates a new demand of 275 acre-feet per year that will increase pumping in an overdrafted groundwater basin (PDF page 56). The Sustainable Groundwater Management Plan has yet to be approved by the DWR.
    - The EIR lists the project as falling within the Kings Subbasin under the Kings River East GSA (PDF page 54). Please update the EIR to include the correct subbasin and GSA.
    - The EIR mentions a Kings River East GSA Annual Report that indicates groundwater levels at representative monitoring sites near the city are above the designated minimum thresholds and on track to meet the forecast groundwater projects and interim milestones established for the wells (Initial Study, PDF page 81). The Annual Report was produced by the wrong GSA and the statement was referenced from the urban water management plan, but there is no indication of this statement in the Water System’s urban water management plan. Please clarify this statement or remove as needed.
    - The Water Supply Assessment indicates the City’s available water supply during a single dry year is largely unaffected by dry weather conditions due to the City’s reliance on groundwater (PDF page 190) but also indicates that historically groundwater levels have decreased over time, with the overall trend of increased pumping (PDF page 189).
        - Please define the sustainable yield of the groundwater basin and if the increase in groundwater pumping for the Project in addition to the current extractions from the basin will exceed the sustainable yield.
        - If the Project’s projected demand in addition to the current extractions from the basin will exceed the sustainable yield, please include measures or actions that will be taken to reduce/eliminate the Project impacts to the groundwater basin.

When the CEQA process is completed, please forward the following items with the permit application to the State Water Board, DDW Visalia District at DWPDIST12@waterboards.ca.gov:

- The EIR and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (MMRP);

- The Resolution or Board Minutes certifying the EIR, adopting the MMRP, and approving the Project; and
- The Notice of Determination filed at the County Clerk's Office and the State Clearinghouse.

Please contact Lori Schmitz of the State Water Board at (916) 449-5285 or Lori.Schmitz@waterboards.ca.gov, for questions regarding this comment letter.

Sincerely,

Lori Schmitz

Digitally signed by Lori Schmitz
Date: 2025.11.18 11:30:34 -08'00'

Water Boards

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