

NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A NEGATIVE DECLARATION

DATE: JULY 14, 2025

PROJECT: 3RD LIFT CANAL LINING & MODERNIZATION PROJECT

LEAD AGENCY: FIREBAUGH CANAL WATER DISTRICT

The Firebaugh Canal Water District (FCWD) is the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) lead agency and project sponsor. It is responsible for implementation and operation of the 3rd Lift Canal Lining & Modernization Project.

CONTACT

Jeff Bryant, General Manager, Firebaugh Canal Water District, at bryant_jeff@sbcglobal.net.

PROJECT LOCATION

The Proposed Project is located in western Fresno County, approximately 7 miles west of the community of Firebaugh. The affected segment of the 3rd Lift Canal spans from Fairfax Avenue on the east to Brannon Avenue on the West, generally adjacent to and north of Nees Avenue. The proposed reservoir would be located adjacent to and south of the 3rd Lift Canal, approximately ¾ mile west of Fairfax Avenue. The approximate central coordinates for the project are 36.8516N and -120.58157W. The Proposed Project affects Fresno County APNs 006-160-021S and 006-160-022.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Proposed 3rd Lift Canal Lining and Modernization Project (Proposed Project) will include two improvement components:

- Replaced the unlined ditch with a concrete lined canal (approximately 2 miles).
- Construct a 13-acre Mid-stream storage reservoir connected to the 3rd Lift and 2nd Lift Canals.

The new lined canal would be 6 feet deep with a 6 foot bottom width, reducing the existing canal cross section to an estimated width of 20.4 feet, freeing up approximately 13 feet of right of way width for other uses and conserve water through seepage reduction. Based on a 2006 seepage study of the 3rd Lift Canal, this project will recover approximately 430 acre-feet per year of seepage losses.

The Mid-stream Storage Reservoir would be constructed adjacent to the 3rd Lift approximately ¾ of a mile west of Fairfax Avenue. The reservoir would be constructed with 6-foot-tall levees around a 13-acre field with an estimated storage capacity of approximately 50-60 acre-feet. The reservoir floor would be soil-conditioned to prevent seepage. An inlet/outlet facility would allow excess water from the 3rd Lift to spill into the reservoir and pump out of the reservoir to meet local demands. Additionally, this reach of the 3rd Lift is connected to the 2nd Lift Canal through an existing pipeline along Fairfax Avenue, which will allow the 2nd Lift access to this additional water supply flexibility from the reservoir. The Proposed Project will benefit approximately 2380 acres within the 3rd Lift Canal service area and approximately 1040 acres within the 2nd Lift Canal Service Area.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

FCWD has prepared an Initial Study to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of the proposed 3rd Lift Canal Lining & Modernization Project. FCWD has determined that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment. Accordingly, FCWD intends to adopt a Negative Declaration (ND) for the Project in accordance with CEQA. FCWD will consider adopting the ND as part of its consideration of the Proposed Project at a future public board meeting.

PUBLIC REVIEW

A 30-day public review period will begin on July 16, 2025 and end on August 15, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. Any interested person or agency may comment on this matter by submitting written comments to Jeff Bryant, General Manager, FCWD, via postal mail to P.O. Box 97, Mendota, CA, 93640; or via email to bryant_jeff@sbcglobal.net.

All comments must be in writing, must be received within the public review period, and should indicate a contact person for your agency or organization, if applicable. Responsible agencies are requested to indicate their statutory responsibilities in connection with this project when responding.

Digital versions of the Notice of Intent, Initial Study and ND are available on the FCWD website: <https://firebaughcanal.com/public-notices/draft-negative-declaration-project-3rd-lift-canal-lining-modernization-project/>

Copies may be reviewed during business hours at FCWD's main office at 2412 Dos Palos Road, Mendota, CA 93640.

Submitted by:



Jeff Bryant, General Manager
Firebaugh Canal Water District

7-14-2025

Date