



Official Memorandum

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Los Banos, CA 93635
sldmwa.org

To: SLDMWA Board of Directors, Alternates

From: Pablo Arroyave, Chief Operating Officer
Rebecca L. Harms, Deputy General Counsel

Date: April 9, 2026

RE: Ratification of Execution of North to South Water Transfers CEQA Support Task Order with CDM Smith

Background

In September 2023, the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority (“Water Authority”) Board of Directors adopted Resolution No. 2023-516 which authorized execution of a North to South Water Transfers Activity Agreement (“Activity Agreement”) for Water Authority members who desired to participate in the north to south water transfers beginning in 2025. Nine Water Authority members joined the Activity Agreement and are current Activity Agreement members: Eagle Field Water District, Mercy Springs Water District, Pacheco Water District, Panoche Water District, Patterson Irrigation District, San Benito County Water District, San Luis Water District, Santa Clara Valley Water District, and Westlands Water District (“Activity Agreement Members”).

The Revised Long-term Water Transfers Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (“EIR”) provided National Environmental Policy Act (“NEPA”) and California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) coverage for a range of potential single-year north to south water transfers through 2024.

There were no north to south transfers in 2025.

The Water Authority intends to develop environmental documentation for future potential single-year north to south water transfers for 2028 and beyond (any water transfers in 2026 or 2027 would have environmental coverage under a different document). Reclamation held public scoping meetings in compliance with NEPA in late 2025. In the past, Reclamation and the Water Authority have prepared joint NEPA/CEQA documents. Due to significant changes in NEPA regulations over the last year, however, it is now recommended to proceed with separate NEPA and CEQA documents, although the Water Authority still intends to coordinate closely with Reclamation. To allow for the development of a separate CEQA document, the Water Authority requested CDM Smith to prepare a statement of work and cost estimate for the development of subsequent environmental analyses under CEQA. CDM Smith has demonstrated competence and the professional qualifications necessary for the satisfactory performance of the services required and has supported past north to south transfer analyses.

The Board previously authorized execution of contracts with CDM Smith for work supporting the DMC Subsidence Correction Project and the B.F. Sisk Dam Raise and Reservoir Expansion Project for Fiscal Year 2027 (see Board Resolution No. 2026-554); Water Authority staff executed a Professional Services Agreement with task orders for those tasks, as well as the north to south transfers CEQA support, concurrently.



Issue for Decision

Whether the Board of Directors should ratify execution of a North to South Water Transfers CEQA Support Task Order with CDM Smith.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Water Authority Board of Directors ratify the Task Order. North to South Water Transfers Activity Agreement Members also support this recommendation.

Analysis

CDM Smith's cost estimate for development of subsequent environmental analyses is \$717,604. The statement of work contemplates a time and materials contract meaning that the cost estimate is a maximum cost for this task. In addition, Water Authority staff is pursuing a cost share with non-member agencies that may be identified as "buyers" in the CEQA document.

After receiving CDM Smith's statement of work and cost estimate for developing subsequent environmental analyses, Water Authority staff met with Activity Agreement Members, who confirmed that entering a task order with CDM Smith for the development of the subsequent CEQA document was their desired path forward.

As noted above, the Water Authority executed the North to South Water Transfers CEQA Support Task Order, attached hereto. Execution of the Task Order in March allowed CDM Smith to begin work on the subsequent environmental analyses immediately. Because this cost was not previously budgeted for and is over the \$200,000 threshold in our Consolidated Procurement Policy, Board ratification of execution of the Task Order is needed.

Budget Implications

No direct budget impact due to the structure of the Activity Agreement whereby the cost for the Water Authority's coordination of water transfer activities pursuant to the Activity Agreement, and any additional financial obligations and liabilities associated with the coordination of transfer activities or individual transfers, will be paid for by only the Activity Agreement Members (and any non-Water Authority buyers that ultimately agree to cost share).

Attachment

North to South Water Transfers CEQA Support Task Order with CDM Smith

TASK ORDER 2 – FY27

North to South Water Transfers Project – CEQA Support

Detailed Scope of Work

Services may include, but are not limited to the following:

TASK 1 – Public Involvement

- a) Public Scoping Meeting
- b) Public Hearing

TASK 2 – Draft EIR

- a) Alternatives Development Report
- b) Administrative Draft EIR
- c) Backcheck Draft EIR
- d) Public Draft EIR

TASK 3 – Final EIR, and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

- a) Responses to Public Comments
- b) Administrative Final EIR
- c) Backcheck Final EIR
- d) Public Final EIR

TASK 4 – CEQA Approval Package

TASK 5 – Project Management and Quality Management

Detailed Scope of Services for Task Order 2 – FY27 is included as Attachment 1

Budget Maximum: \$717,604.00

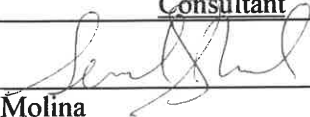
Estimate of Time Schedule: March 1, 2026 – February 28, 2027

SLDMWA Project Lead: Cynthia Meyer; cynthia.meyer@sldmwa.org

Consultant Project Lead: Chris Park; parkce@cdmsmith.com

Special Instructions: All invoices associated with Task Order 2 must be referenced and submitted to Accounts.Payable@sldmwa.org.

Accepted:

<u>San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority</u>	<u>Consultant</u>
By: <u>Pablo Arroyave</u> Pablo R. Arroyave San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority Date: <u>Mar 5, 2026</u>	By: <u></u> Servando Molina CDM Smith, Inc. Date: <u>March 5, 2026</u>

Statement of Work

North to South Water Transfers Project- CEQA support

Introduction

In April 2024, CDM Smith and MBK Engineers initiated work on the North-to-South Water Transfers (NSWT) EIS/EIR & Biological Assessment with the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation). San Luis and Delta Mendota Water Authority (SLMDWA) was identified as the CEQA lead agency on that document. In December 2025, SLMDWA requested CDM Smith prepare a SOW and cost estimate to develop a subsequent EIR for the same proposed project currently being evaluated under the NSWT EIS with the Bureau of Reclamation. The SOW and cost proposed presented herein is based on two key assumptions (1) the Project Description in the NEPA and CEQA document will be consistent and no additional modeling will be required for the CEQA effort; (2) Reclamation review on the CEQA document will be minimal.

Scope of Services

This scope of work describes the specific tasks to complete a subsequent EIR for the North to South Water Transfers Project.

Task 1 – Public Involvement

Objective: Engage interested members of the public in scoping and reviewing the draft EIR.

Subtask 1.1 Public Scoping Meeting

CDM Smith will assist with one, up to 4-hour long, Scoping Meeting, including preparing presentation material and handout materials for the meeting and assisting with meeting arrangements. CDM Smith will be responsible for the cost, set-up, and coordination of scheduling and renting the facility near SLDMWAs office (if needed) or setting up a virtual meeting, preparing handouts and presentation materials, and participating in the meeting. CDM Smith will develop a draft and final Notice of Preparation (NOP) to initiate the public scoping period.

CDM Smith will prepare the Scoping Report. The Scoping Report will contain the scoping purpose and process, the scoping meeting materials including meeting notices, a summary of scoping comments, a list of commenters, and the scoping comments themselves.

Assumptions:

- The public scoping meeting will be scheduled in a virtual meeting format or could be scheduled in person near SLDMWAs office.
- If in person meeting is scheduled, CDM Smith will arrange and pay for meeting room (up to \$1000).
- CDM Smith will pay for one newspaper advertisement (up to \$100)

- The full presentation will not be distributed as a handout; handouts will include one-page comment sheets that can be mailed back (up to 150 comment sheets)
- Public written comments will be submitted to agencies via mail or email, and sent to CDM Smith

Deliverables:

- Draft and Final NOP - electronic deliverable, one hard copy of final
- Draft and Final Public Scoping Meeting Materials -draft as electronic version, finals as posterboards, handouts, etc.
- Draft and Final Newspaper Advertisement
- Draft and Final Scoping Issues TM - electronic deliverable

Subtask 1.2 Public Hearing

CDM Smith will develop a draft and final Notice of Completion (NOC) for the State Clearinghouse, and a draft and final public Notice of Availability (NOA) of the Draft EIR. CDM Smith will submit the NOC to the State Clearinghouse. CDM Smith will publish a newspaper advertisement with the notice of availability and file the notice of availability with the counties that could be affected by the action (Alameda, Butte, Colusa, Contra Costa, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Kings, Merced, Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, San Benito, San Joaquin, Santa Clara, Shasta, Sierra, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Yolo, and Yuba counties). CDM Smith will assist the agencies in preparing a public hearing on the Draft EIR near the agencies' offices or virtually following the release of the Draft EIR. CDM Smith will coordinate pre-meeting planning activities; define objectives and format; determine locations; prepare notifications, handouts, poster boards, presentation, and other presentation materials; assist presenters with presentation materials; coordinate meeting logistics; provide a certified court reporter to transcribe verbal comments received during the meeting; attend the meeting; and track comments. CDM Smith will submit draft documents and materials and work with SLDMWA to finalize activities and materials.

Assumptions:

- The hearings will be scheduled in a virtual meeting format or could be scheduled in person near SLDMWAs office.
- CDM Smith will arrange and pay for meeting room (up to \$1000).
- CDM Smith will pay for one newspaper advertisement (up to \$100)
- CDM Smith will produce up to three display poster boards for the meeting
- The full presentation will not be distributed as a handout; handouts will include one-page comment sheets that can be mailed back (up to 150 comment sheets)
- Public written comments will be submitted to agencies via mail or email, and sent to CDM Smith

Deliverables:

- Draft and Final Notice of Completion - electronic deliverable
- Draft and Final Public Notice of Availability of a Draft EIR - electronic deliverable

- Draft and Final Newspaper Advertisement
- Draft and Final Public Meeting Materials - drafts as electronic versions, finals as poster boards, handouts, etc.
- Draft and Final Court Reporter Transcripts - electronic deliverable

Task 2 – Draft EIR

Objective: Complete analysis of potential environmental impacts in compliance with CEQA requirements.

CDM Smith will prepare the Draft Subsequent EIR to meet CEQA requirements. The Draft EIR will include an environmental setting description, effects analyses, and cumulative effects analyses. CDM Smith anticipates that the evaluation of groundwater resources and biological resources requires a more detailed analysis. For each checklist item, a determination will be made as to whether no impact is anticipated, or if a physical impact may occur (and whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant after mitigation, or less than significant). The explanation for each issue will identify the significance criteria or threshold consistent with the 2019 LTWT EIR, used to evaluate each question, and the mitigation measure(s) identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significant. References will be given to support all conclusions, additionally, a conclusionary statement comparing impacts to 2019 LTWT EIR will be included.

CDM Smith will not complete additional modeling for the NSWT EIR. The modeling evaluations currently underway for the NSWT EIS will be used to support the development of the NSWT EIR.

Subtask 2.1 Alternatives Development Report

CDM Smith will develop an alternatives development report for the EIR. Since an alternative formulation report has been prepared for the NSWT EIS under our current contract with Reclamation, this document will refocus the information presented in the report prepared for Reclamation to consider the CEQA lead agencies project objectives. As noted above, the proposed project and alternatives under consideration for the NSWT EIR will remain consistent with the NSWT EIS.

Assumptions:

- The alternatives chapter of the EIR will assess up to four alternatives to the Proposed Project.
- The proposed project and alternatives under consideration for the NSWT EIR will remain consistent with the NSWT EIS.

Deliverables:

- Description of No Project Alternative Proposed Project, and alternatives to be included in the Administrative Draft EIR

Subtask 2.2 Administrative Draft EIR

CDM Smith will prepare an Administrative Draft Subsequent EIR. The Administrative Draft EIR will be organized and formatted to meet CEQA requirements. SLDMWA (including legal counsel), and the Reclamation will review the document and provide comments to the team. Under this task, the CDM Smith team will also develop sections, such as introduction and executive summary, list of preparers, and consultation and coordination, and analyses required by CEQA not included in the resource effects

analysis, such as growth inducing impacts, significant and irreversible impacts, and identifying the environmentally superior alternative.

Assumptions:

- Consolidated comments will be provided as track changes in a Word document or in a spreadsheet form on the Administrative Draft EIR by each reviewing agency.
- Reclamation review will be focused on consistency between the NEPA and CEQA document.

Deliverables:

- Administrative Draft EIR - electronic deliverable

Subtask 2.3 Backcheck Draft EIR

CDM Smith will review the comments on the Administrative Draft EIR and revise the text accordingly. CDM Smith will document the way each comment has been addressed in the responses to comments spreadsheet. If required, CDM Smith will have a conference call with the commenters to resolve conflicting comments and issues that arise in the comments. CDM Smith will prepare a backcheck draft for the commenter to review the revisions made in response to their comments. It is assumed that comments on the backcheck draft EIR will be minimal and not require an additional review draft.

Assumptions:

- Consolidated comments will be provided as track changes in a word document or in a spreadsheet form on the Backcheck Draft EIR by each reviewing agency.
- SLDMWA and Reclamation will have limited comments on the backcheck draft and will focus on whether agency comments were addressed appropriately
- Comment issues on the Administrative Draft EIR can be resolved during one two-hour conference call.

Deliverables:

- Spreadsheet with responses to comments on the Administrative Draft.
- Backcheck Draft EIR-electronic deliverable

Subtask 2.4 Public Draft EIR

CDM Smith will prepare a Draft EIR for public distribution that incorporates agency comments on the Administrative Draft and Backcheck Draft EIR. CDM Smith will make the public distribution ready Draft EIR, 508 compliant and ready for upload to SLDMWA's website and the state clearinghouse website. The Noticing of the public draft is covered under Section 1.2.

Assumptions:

- CDM Smith will develop the website upload ready draft of the EIR.

Deliverables:

- Spreadsheet with responses to comments on the Backcheck Draft.

- Public Draft EIR- 508-complaint electronic deliverable

Task 3 – Final EIR, and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

Objective: Address public comments on the draft EIR.

Subtask 3.1 Responses to Public Comments

CDM Smith will create and maintain a process for tracking comments and developing responses. CDM Smith will track comments by commenter, issue, and environmental resource area. After initial review of the comments, CDM Smith will have a conference call with SLDMWA to discuss the major issues from comments received on the EIR. CDM Smith will group recurring comments and review these key topics with SLDMWA. Based on the results of this discussion, CDM Smith will develop master responses on recurring comments. CDM Smith will provide Draft Responses to Comments for review prior to the completion of the Administrative Final EIR.

Assumptions:

- Public comments on the Draft EIR will include up to 40 discrete substantive comments.
- CDM Smith will prepare up to 10 master responses
- Changes and corrections to the Final EIR due to response to comments will be minor and will not require recirculation of the document.

Deliverables:

- Draft Responses to Comments - electronic deliverable

Subtask 3.2 Administrative Final EIR

CDM Smith will prepare an Administrative Final EIR that incorporates the responses to comments and changes to the EIR based on public comments. The Administrative Final EIR will include errata sheets that show where changes were made to the Draft EIR based on comments received. After submitting the responses to comments in Subtask 4.1, CDM Smith will conduct a conference call with SLDMWA to address issues or conflicting comments on the draft responses. These changes will be incorporated in the Administrative Final EIR.

Assumptions:

- Consolidated comments will be provided as track changes in a word document or in a spreadsheet form on the Administrative Final EIR by each reviewing agency.

Deliverables:

- Administrative Final EIR - electronic deliverable

Subtask 3.3 Backcheck Final EIR

CDM Smith will review the comments on the Administrative Final EIR and Responses to Comments and revise the text accordingly. CDM Smith will document the way each comment has been addressed in the responses to comments spreadsheet. If required, CDM Smith will have a conference call with the commenters to resolve conflicting comments and issues that arise in the comments. CDM Smith will prepare a Backcheck Final for the commenter to review the revisions made in response to their

comments. It is assumed that comments on the Backcheck Final EIR will be minimal and not require an additional review draft.

Assumptions:

- Consolidated comments will be provided as track changes in a word document or in a spreadsheet form on the Backcheck Final EIR by each reviewing agency.
- SLDMWA will have limited comments on the backcheck final and will focus on whether agency comments were addressed appropriately
- Comment issues on the Administrative Final EIR can be resolved during one two-hour conference call.

Deliverables:

- Spreadsheet with responses to comments on the Administrative Final
- Backcheck Final EIR-electronic deliverable

Subtask 3.4 Public Final EIR

CDM Smith will prepare a Final EIR for public distribution that incorporates agency comments on the Administrative Final and Backcheck Final EIR. CDM Smith will make the public distribution ready Final EIR, 508 compliant and ready for upload to SLDMWA website and the state clearinghouse website. The Noticing of the Final is under Task 5.

Assumptions:

- CDM Smith will develop the website upload ready Final EIR.

Deliverables:

- Spreadsheet with responses to comments on the Backcheck Final.
- Public Final EIR- 508-complaint electronic deliverable

Task 4 – CEQA Approval Package

Objective: Complete and file CEQA approval package.

CDM Smith will prepare draft and final versions of the CEQA Project Approval Package for SLDMWA review. The approval package will contain the following: CEQA Findings; the MMRP; and Notice of Determination. CDM Smith will develop a final approval package that incorporates comments from SLDMWA on the draft. SLDMWA shall be responsible for preparing a resolution and finalizing the CEQA Project Approval Package and obtaining signatures. CDM Smith will then file the NOD with the State Clearinghouse and the counties where impacts could occur. This task will include paying the County Clerk filing fee (\$50-\$100 for most counties) and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) filing fee (in 2026, the fee is \$4,227.50 for EIRs; assumed \$4,500 to account for fee escalation). The filing fees for the County Clerks will be due for each of the counties where actions could occur; the DFW fee will only need to be paid once for the document.

Assumptions:

- A Statement of Overriding Considerations will not be required
- SLDMWA will be responsible for preparing a resolution and finalizing the CEQA Project Approval Package and obtaining signatures.

Deliverables:

- Draft and Final CEQA Findings -electronic deliverable
- Draft and Final MMRP- electronic deliverable
- Notice of Determination -electronic deliverable and 20 hard copies Final IS, MND, and MMRP (10 hard copies, 20 CDs).

Task 5 – Project Management and Quality Management

Objective: Manage project quality, scope, schedule, and budget.

Given the nexus between NSW EIS and this project, CDM Smith will work with SLDMWA to develop a schedule for this project that considers the NSW EIS schedule. It is currently anticipated that the NSW EIS Public Draft will be released in August 2026, and the Final will be released in August 2027. Since the NSW EIR will roughly follow NSW EIS schedule with a lag, the period of performance for this project is assumed to be March 2026 through December 2027.

CDM Smith will meet with SLDMWA for one (1) in-person meeting in Sacramento and up to twenty (20) team conference calls to manage the overall project. Additionally, CDM Smith will coordinate with SLDMWA staff via e-mail and through regular telephone calls. This task also includes project administration, such as developing invoices and progress reports, and implementing QA/QC of the deliverables.

Assumptions:

- The project will last for twenty months.

Deliverables:

- Monthly invoices and progress reports.

Schedule

Upon receiving a Notice to Proceed, CDM Smith will work with SLDMWA to prepare a detailed final schedule.

Costs

CDM Smith will complete the above tasks for the upper limit shown in Table 1 below. CDM Smith labor costs will be billed at the rates listed in Table 2 below.

Table 1. Budget

Task	Labor Dollars	Other Direct Costs	Subcontractor Costs
Task 1- Public Involvement	\$30,144	\$8,200.00	--
Task 2- Draft EIR	\$151,544	--	\$55,000
Task 3- Final EIR	\$231,916	--	\$47,300
Task 4- CEQA Package	\$16,528	\$6,700	--
Task 5- Project Management	\$157,072	--	\$13,200
TOTAL	\$587,204	\$14,900	\$115,500
TOTAL COST			\$717,604

Table 2. CDM Smith 2026 Billing Rate

Labor Category	2026 Rate
Engineer/Planner/Scientist 1	\$125.00
Engineer/Planner/Scientist 2	\$140.00
Engineer/Planner/Scientist 3	\$154.00
Engineer/Planner/Scientist 4	\$182.00
Engineer/Planner/Scientist 5	\$230.00
Engineer/Planner/Scientist 6	\$242.00
Engineer/Planner/Scientist 7	\$270.00
Engineer/Planner/Scientist 8	\$300.00
Editor	\$175.00
Subject Matter Expert	\$350.00
Project Manager	\$250.00
Principal In Charge	\$385.00
Project Controls	\$82.00
Project Delivery Assistant	\$138.00

Project Financials	\$200.00
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