

CALIFORNIA-NEVADA CONFERENCE OF OPERATING ENGINEERS
OF THE INTERNATIONAL UNION OF OPERATING ENGINEERS

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December 13th, 2021

Teresa Alvarado
Chair, California Water Commission
P.O. Box 942836
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001

Dear Chairwoman Alvarado,

On behalf of the **California-Nevada of Operating Engineers**, we are writing to express our continued support for the Sites Reservoir Project (Sites Project) and the invaluable benefits it would bring to California's working families, farms and cities, providing much needed flexibility in our statewide water management system, providing water for environmental purposes, and providing much needed regional flood control benefits. Sites Reservoir was named as one of the projects to "expand smart surface water storage where it can benefit water supply and the environment" in the Governor's 2020 Water Resilience Portfolio, we agree Sites Reservoir is vital to California's long-term success.

The International Union of Operating Engineers is a progressive, diversified trade union that primarily represents operating engineers, who work as heavy equipment operators, mechanics, and surveyors in the construction industry. Our organization prides itself in standing ready to provide skilled and trained workers to support the building of our States infrastructure.

Sites Reservoir is a 21st century project that can meet the needs of today and tomorrow. While many traditional water storage projects were designed and built to capture snowmelt, the realities of climate change mean less snow and more rain for California. To capture the excess water from faster moving and often more intense storms that come more frequently, we need a new model for water storage. As an off-stream reservoir, Sites Reservoir captures excess water from major storms.

As you know, the Sites Project is a 1.5 million acre-foot off-stream reservoir that will divert and store excessive Sacramento River flows. The diversion levels will be dependent upon hydrologic conditions and will ensure that water taken from the Sacramento River is truly in excess of downstream needs. If Sites Reservoir had been operational at the beginning of 2021, nearly 1 million acre feet of additional water would have been available to support California's environment, farms and cities during this critically dry year.

What makes this project most unique and valuable is the operational flexibility it provides the State's entire water system. The reservoir will have many uses, including but not limited to, dedicated water for fishery and flow purposes, a reliable water supply for California agriculture, increased Pacific Flyway habitat for migratory birds, and greater water security for urban areas.

As we continue to see more extreme shifts in weather of punishing droughts and excessive rainfall the development of smart storage, like the Sites Project and flexibility it provides, is critical.

Thank you for the continued work that you and the Water Commission are doing to increase water supply reliability in the state. We look forward to the continued partnership with exciting and valuable projects like Sites Reservoir.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tim Cremins".

Tim Cremins
International Union of Operating Engineers