

FILED

SAN FRANCISCO County Clerk

February 18, 2026

**NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY of the
BUTTE WATER DISTRICT – TEMPORARY WATER TRANSFERS FROM 2026 TO 2030 PROJECT
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
SCH # 2025081335**

by: Melvin Galvez
Deputy County Clerk

Copies of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) are now available for public review. The review and comment period starts on Friday February 13th, 2026, and ends on Monday, March 30, 2026. More information on how to access the documents and submit comments is located below. Butte Water District is the Lead Agency on the below-described project and has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Report on the proposed project (Project).

Project Description:

District Background

The Butte Water District (BWD) was formed in 1956 and may divert up to 133,200 acre-feet (AF) of water during the defined irrigation season under the terms of a 1969 Agreement on Diversion of Water from the Feather River with the State of California, acting by and through the Department of Water Resources (DWR) and allocated through a 1970 Joint Operating Agreement with Butte Water District, Richvale Irrigation District, Biggs-West Gridley Water District, and Sutter Extension Water District, known collectively as the Joint Water Districts. As a result of these agreements, BWD's water is diverted from the Thermalito Afterbay, part of the Oroville Complex. The 1969 Diversion of Water agreement requires written approval from DWR before any of the districts can transfer water outside the service areas of the Joint Board. An agreement between DWR and the proposed water purchasers to store or transport the water through the State Water Project (SWP) or Central Valley Project (CVP) facilities may also be required to implement a water transfer.

Water Transfers

The District is preparing for potential one-year water transfers over a five-year period from 2026 through 2030. The transfers may be for environmental enhancement or for one or more buyers with temporary unmet consumptive water demands. Santa Clara Valley Water District (Valley Water) would have the first right of refusal for the water transfers from BWD. If Valley Water chooses to not take the water transfers, the District could transfer to any potential buyer in the State including, but not limited to, those in Sacramento County.

A water transfer temporarily moves water from a willing seller (BWD) to an environmental purpose or willing buyer. To make new water available, the seller must take an action to reduce consumptive use, use a substitute water supply such as groundwater, or use water in storage. Additionally, water transfers must comply with all applicable State and federal law. Moreover, under the 1969 Diversion of Water Agreement with the State of California, BWD's water entitlement is subject to a drought reduction under certain circumstances related to dry hydrologic conditions. If BWD's entitlement is curtailed 50 percent for an irrigation season, pursuant to the 1969 Agreement, BWD has not historically participated in a land idling transfer. However, in the event of a lesser reduction, the District may still participate in a land idling transfer. BWD may participate in a groundwater substitution transfer for its lands located in Sutter County under any drought reduction scenario.

This EIR analyzes water transfers as if the full amount would be transferred every year during the five-year transfer period; however, transfers may be less frequent and smaller in volume over this period. Annual approval of transfers is required by BWD, the end user, and DWR, regardless of the EIR term or the duration of a water transfer contract.

Water Transfer Availability

The water transfers would include short-term transfers of up to 24,000 AF in any year. This includes up to 14,000 AF from crop idling transfers and up to 10,000 AF from groundwater substitution transfers. These volumes may increase if BWD develops additional groundwater substitution capacity during the five-year period of analysis. Water made available by crop idling and/or groundwater substitution within the boundaries of the District would be retained and stored by the DWR at Lake Oroville for delivery to Valley Water (or a different buyer if Valley Water refuses, as further discussed below), pending approval from DWR.



Santa Clara Valley Water District

It is anticipated that a key recipient of BWD's transfer supplies will be Valley Water, who has the first right of refusal of water transfers as a part of the Project. In the event that Valley Water does not elect to receive the transferred water, the District may pursue transfers to the environment or other buyers where BWD can utilize existing water infrastructure to convey transfer water. If both Valley Water and direct conveyance route for the transfer water are not available, BWD may pursue a simultaneous water exchange to convey water to the environment or other buyers. BWD may also transfer water for environmental enhancement, such as for purposes like the Healthy Rivers and Landscapes program if it were to be adopted during the five-year period.

Valley Water has contracts for 100,000 AF per year (AFY) of SWP water and 152,500 AFY of CVP water. However, water availability and environmental conditions impact the actual amount of water delivered. As a result, Valley Water receives an average of approximately 170,000 AFY from the two sources combined. During periods of water shortage when contract allocations are low, Valley Water has historically participated in water transfers to secure supplemental water supplies. In addition, Valley Water's Anderson Reservoir is currently restricted to deadpool due to seismic concerns, which, in turn, takes away substantial drinking water resources for Santa Clara County. The Anderson Dam is presently undergoing a seismic retrofit, but the project is not anticipated to be completed until 2033. As such, Valley Water's dependence on water transfers is expected to be higher until project completion.

Since 1996, Valley Water has participated in a water banking and exchange program with the Semitropic Water Storage District located in Kern County. In wet years, Valley Water stores excess Delta-conveyed water in the Semitropic Groundwater Bank for later use, such as during dry years.

To meet current and future demands, Valley Water has also implemented a long-term water conservation program. With a target of saving 100,000 AFY by 2030, the long-term program offers a variety of incentives and rebates that achieve sustainable water savings. The program saved approximately 85,000 AF in 2024.

Project Location: The Project area, from which the water for the Project's proposed water transfer would be made available, is defined by the BWD boundaries, which is situated approximately 50 miles north of Sacramento and 85 miles south of Redding.

Draft Environmental Impact Report

The Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) is prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to evaluate the potential environmental impacts associated with the implementation of the proposed Butte Water District Temporary Transfer from 2026 to 2030 Project (Project). This document is prepared in conformance with CEQA (California Public Resources Code Section 21000, et seq.) and the CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15000, et seq.).

The purpose of this DEIR is to inform decision-makers, representatives of affected or responsible agencies, the public, and other interested parties of the potential environmental effects that may result from implementation of the Project. This DEIR describes potential impacts relating to a wide variety of environmental issues and along with methods by which these impacts can be mitigated or avoided.

Potentially Significant Environmental Impacts Identified

Analysis in the DEIR has identified potentially significant environmental impacts in the following areas: Biological Resources and Hydrology.

Known Hazardous Waste Sites

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15807(c)(6) and 65962.5 of the Government Code, a listing of contaminated sites within the Butte Water District – District Boundaries and the Project vicinity are available through the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) Envirostor database. According to this listing, there are three hazardous waste sites listed within the vicinity of the Project, however, none of these sites are located near idling fields or the well site.

Availability of Documents for Review

Copies of the DEIR are available for review on the Butte Water District website at: <https://buttwatertdistrict.org/>



State of California - Department of Fish and Wildlife
2026 ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT FILING FEE CASH RECEIPT
DFW 753.5a (REV. 01/01/26) Previously DFG 753.5a



RECEIPT NUMBER:

38-02/18/2026-022

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NUMBER (*If applicable*)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON REVERSE. TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY.

LEAD AGENCY BUTTE WATER DISTRICT	LEAD AGENCY EMAIL donnie@buttewater.net	DATE 02/18/2026
COUNTY/STATE AGENCY OF FILING BUTTE		DOCUMENT NUMBER 2026-0000015
PROJECT TITLE		

TEMPORARY WATER TRANSFERS FROM 2026 TO 2030 PROJECT

PROJECT APPLICANT NAME DONNIE STAINNETT, BUTTE WATER DISTRICT GENERAL MANAGER	PROJECT APPLICANT EMAIL donnie@buttewater.net	PHONE NUMBER (530) 846-3100
PROJECT APPLICANT ADDRESS 735 VIRGINIA STREET	CITY GRIDLEY	STATE CA
ZIP CODE 95948		

PROJECT APPLICANT (*Check appropriate box*)

Local Public Agency School District Other Special District State Agency Private Entity

CHECK APPLICABLE FEES:

Environmental Impact Report (EIR) \$ 4,227.50 \$ _____
 Mitigated/Negative Declaration (MND)(ND) \$ 3,043.75 \$ _____
 Certified Regulatory Program (CRP) document - payment due directly to CDFW \$ 1,437.25 \$ _____

Exempt from fee

Notice of Exemption (attach)
 CDFW No Effect Determination (attach)

Fee previously paid (attach previously issued cash receipt copy)

Water Right Application or Petition Fee (State Water Resources Control Board only) \$ 850.00 \$ _____
 County documentary handling fee \$ 84.00 \$ _____
 Other NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY \$ _____

PAYMENT METHOD:

Cash Credit Check Other

TOTAL RECEIVED \$ 0.00

SIGNATURE

AGENCY OF FILING PRINTED NAME AND TITLE

Melvin Galvez Deputy Clerk