

# Freeman Diversion Expansion



## Location:

Construction in Santa Paula Basin near Saticoy, an unincorporated area of Ventura County.

## Project Description:

Increase utilization of stormwater flows for aquifer recharge by expanding capacity of United's diversion and recharge facilities, improve fish passage, and complete Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP). The project is anticipated to increase groundwater recharge and in-lieu surface-water deliveries by 6,000 acre-feet per year (AFY) (Phase 1) to 10,000 AFY (Phase 2). Construction activities will occur in two phases:

- Phase 1 (estimated completion in 2028) to include an expanded intake and fish screens to accommodate a 750 cubic feet per second (cfs) diversion, and conveyance system improvements
- Phase 2 (estimated completion in 2036) to include conveyance expansion including new canals, pipelines, flow bifurcation structures, basin partitioning, and underground road crossings



## CURRENT STATUS

Construction of Phase 1 started in 2021 with the replacement of the headworks of the grand canal. This is the first of three conveyance system improvements scheduled and will increase the flow capacity through the headworks from the previous design of 375 cfs to 500 cfs. Alternative fish passage designs that include an expanded intake are currently being physically modeled. United's draft MSHCP was submitted to regulators in June 2020 and is currently being revised. The final MSHCP will be submitted in 2023.



## BENEFITS/YIELD

- Recharge of low-Total Dissolved Solids surface water (associated with high river flows) by United has been demonstrated in the past to improve groundwater quality, reduce nitrate levels for small mutual water companies and disadvantaged communities in El Rio and Saticoy and help combat seawater intrusion.
- Improved fish passage will benefit species preservation. Diversion of natural stormflows requires negligible energy, resulting in very low greenhouse gas emissions and costs per acre-foot of yield.



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## **Estimated Cost:**

\$50 million for construction (combined for Phases 1 and 2).



## **Current/Potential Partners:**

Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency, Local Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs)

## **Current/Potential Funding Sources:**

- United pumping charges, federal and state grants to help fund design through construction

## **Ask from United to Regulators, Legislators, Local Agencies, and Stakeholders:**

Assistance with permitting through the State Water Resources Control Board, County of Ventura, Army Corps of Engineers, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)/National Marines Fisheries Service, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, CalTrans, and United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

