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NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING REGARDING THE PROPOSED BIGGS WEST GRIDLEY WATER DISTRICT AND SUTTER EXTENSION WATER DISTRICT - ONE YEAR WATER TRANSFERS FROM 2027 TO 2036 PROJECT

Notice is hereby given that the Biggs West Gridley Water District (BWGWD) and the Sutter Extension Water District (SEWD) (Districts) will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). BWGWD and SEWD will be the joint Lead Agencies. The EIR will address the Districts' One Year Water Transfers from 2027 to 2036 Project (Project). The Districts have determined that an EIR must be prepared for the Project prior to making any final decision regarding whether to approve the Project in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Districts' Boards of Directors will consider the EIR when determining how to move forward with the Project. The Districts are requesting any responsible. trustee or cooperating agency or interested person to participate, review, and provide input on how the Project may affect the environment. If you are an authorized representative of an agency with facilities that may be affected, the Districts would like to know the views of your agency regarding the scope and content of the environmental information that is relevant to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the Project. If you provide comments in response to this Notice of Preparation (NOP), please provide the name, address, telephone number, and email address of the contact person for your agency.

The Districts are seeking an examination of scope and content of the goals, objectives, policies, and actions of the Project to guide and protect the physical, environmental, economic, and social conditions on lands within the Districts' boundaries and in the surrounding communities.

Project Title: One Year Water Transfers from 2027 to 2036 Project

Project Proponents: Biggs-West Gridley Water District
1713 W Biggs Gridley Road
Gridley, CA. 95948

Sutter Extension Water District
4525 Franklin Road
Yuba City, CA 95993

Project Location:
The Project area, which would provide the water for the proposed transfer, encompasses the boundaries of BWGWD and SEWD. BWGWD and SEWD are located approximately 60 and 50 miles north of Sacramento, respectively, and 100 and 130 miles south of Redding, respectively. (see Figure 1 and Figure 2 below).

Project Description:
BACKGROUND OF THE DISTRICTS
BIGGS-WEST GRIDLEY WATER DISTRICT
Biggs-West Gridley Water District (BWGWD) is a California Water District responsible for providing irrigation water to agricultural water users within its service area and was formed by a vote of landowners on September 24, 1942. BWGWD's service area and distribution system have further expanded over the years, and the service area currently encompasses 34,785 acres of land. Since its inception, a majority of the land in the BWGWD boundary has been in rice production due to the dominance of heavy clay soils, favorable climate, and availability of water for irrigation. BWGWD includes approximately 31,300 acres of irrigable land, of which approximately 22,379 acres are used for rice production. BWGWD is entitled to approximately 161,000 acre-feet (AF) of the Joint Water District Board's (Joint Board) allowed diversions from the Feather River between April 1 and October 31 of each year under the 1969 Diversion Agreement (1969 Agreement) with the Department of Water Resources (DWR), which is subject to reduction under certain conditions. The Joint Board's 1969 Agreement requires written approval from DWR before BWGWD

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and the other districts in the 1969 Agreement can transfer water outside the service areas of the Joint Board. An agreement between DWR and the proposed water purchasers to store the water or implement the water transfer through the State Water Project (SWP) will also be required to implement the transfer.

SUTTER EXTENSION WATER DISTRICT

Sutter Extension Water District (SEWD) is also a California Water District responsible for providing irrigation water to agricultural water users within its service area and was formed in 1950. SEWD includes approximately 19,000 acres of irrigable land, of which approximately 16,000 acres are used for rice production. SEWD is entitled to approximately 111,000 AF of the Joint Board's allowed diversions from the Feather River between April 1 and October 31 of each year under the 1969 Agreement with the DWR, which, like for BWGWD, is subject to reduction under certain conditions. As mentioned, the Joint Board's 1969 Agreement requires written approval from DWR before SEWD, and the other districts can transfer water outside the service areas of the Joint Board. An agreement between DWR and the proposed water purchasers to store the water or implement the water transfer through the SWP will also be required to implement the transfer.

WATER TRANSFERS

The Districts are proposing to conduct a series of one-year water transfers over a 10-year period from 2027 through 2036. The water to be transferred may be for environmental enhancement or by one or more buyers with temporary unmet consumptive water demands due to dry conditions or other factors. Santa Clara Valley Water District (Valley Water) would have the first right of refusal for the water transfers from BWGWD and SEWD.

A water transfer temporarily moves water from a willing seller (in this case, BWGWD or SEWD) to an environmental purpose or willing buyer. To make water supplies available for transfer, the seller must take an action to reduce consumptive use such as fallowing crops. Additionally, water transfers must comply with all applicable State and federal laws.

This EIR analyzes water transfers as if the full amount would be transferred every year during the 10-year transfer period; however, transfers may be less frequent and smaller in volume over this period. Annual approval of transfers is required by BWGWD and/or SEWD, 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 18,780 AF for BWGWD and up to 14,850 AF for SEWD in any year. Water made available by crop idling within the boundaries of the Districts 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.

The Project area, from which the water for the potential transfers would be made available, is defined by the two Districts' boundaries, which encompass approximately 31,300 acres for BWGWD and approximately 19,000 acres for SEWD, in the northern Sacramento Valley in Butte and Sutter Counties. Land idled for the purpose of the potential transfers would be drawn from the rice acreage within the Districts. Crop idling acreages for transfers would be to the exclusion of habitat of the giant garter snake. Adjoining areas, other irrigated lands, drains, wetlands, and waterfowl habitat would not be affected, as those areas would receive their normal entitlement, and canals and drains would operate at normal operating capacity. Water would generally be available on the same pattern during the growing season as it would have been consumed had a crop been planted.

CROP IDLING TRANSFERS

Cropland idling water transfers make water available by reducing the consumptive use of surface water applied for irrigation. The equivalent surface water supplies are then not diverted and are made available

for transfer. The Districts' proposed water transfers would fully comply with DWR's DRAFT Technical Information for Preparing Water Transfer Proposals in 2019 where applicable regarding land idling.

The quantity of transfer water made available through crop idling is currently calculated based on the pattern of Evapotranspiration Rate of Applied Water (ETAW). In the absence of technical information supporting an alternate method, the quantity of transfer water will continue to be calculated based on ETAW for any crop acreage idling. Consistent with the provisions contained in California Water Code Section 1018, potential participating landowners would be encouraged to cultivate or retain non-irrigated cover crops or natural vegetation into their cropland idling transfer to protect habitat value in the area to be idled. In addition, only 20 percent of irrigable acres may be idled under crop idling water transfers according to DWR's DRAFT Technical Information for Preparing Water Transfer Proposals in 2019.

WATER TRANSFER OPERATIONS

No new construction or improvements by BWGWD, SEWD, Valley Water or other potential buyers, or DWR would be necessary for the production and transfer of water resulting from the Project. Normal operations involve DWR releasing water from the Oroville Reservoir to the Thermalito Afterbay to be diverted by BWGWD and SEWD. For water transfers, DWR reduces what it releases, and, as a result, one or both of the two Districts also reduce their water diversions. Water would be stored in the Oroville Reservoir if capacity is available, and stored water follows DWR's applicable policies and regulations. Storing transfer water could not affect the ability of DWR to meet environmental commitments or water deliveries and would not be possible if flood releases were being made from the Oroville Reservoir as no capacity would be available. Water would become available for transfer on the same schedule that it would have been delivered to BWGWD and SEWD.

SANTA CLARA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT

It is anticipated that a key recipient of BWGWD's and SEWD'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 Districts may pursue transfers to the environment or other buyers where BWGWD and/or SEWD can utilize existing water infrastructure to convey transfer water. If both Valley Water and direct conveyance route for the transfer water are not available, BWGWD and/or SEWD may pursue a simultaneous water exchange to convey water to the environment or other buyers. BWGWD and/or SEWD may also transfer water for environmental enhancement.

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 at least 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.

Public Review and Scoping Meeting:
Comments on the proposed scope and content of the EIR may be submitted in writing to the attention of:

Mr. Danny Robinson, General Manager
Biggs-West Gridley Water District
1713 W Biggs Gridley Road
Gridley, CA. 95948
Phone: (530) 846-3317
Email: drobinson@bwgwater.com

Mr. Lynn Phillips, General Manager
Sutter Extension Water District
4525 Franklin Road
Yuba City, CA 95993
Phone: (530) 673-7138
Email: lphillips@sutterewd.com

Ms. Dawn E. Marple, Principal Planner, Environmental Project Manager
Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group
120 N. Floral St.
Visalia, CA 93291
Phone: (559) 636-1166
Email: dmarple@ppeng.com

Comments in response to the Notice of Preparation will be accepted from October 16, 2026, through November 16, 2026. Persons with questions or requests for information may also use the above contact information.

All written scoping comments should reference Biggs-West Gridley Water District's and Sutter Extension Water District's - One Year Water Transfers from 2027 to 2036 Project. Please include your name, address, and phone number, and/or email so that we may contact you for clarification, if necessary.

All supporting documents can also be found at https://www.bwgwater.com/ for BWGWD and https://sutterewd.com/ for SEWD.

Pursuant to Section 15083 of the CEQA Guidelines, Public Scoping Meetings will be held to solicit public comments on the scope and content of the EIR. Each District will hold a separate scoping meeting. The Public Scoping Meeting for BWGWD and SEWD will be held as follows:

Biggs-West Gridley Water District – Butte County Fairgrounds – Butte Hall
Date: Wednesday, October 28, 2026
Time: 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM
Place: Butte County Fairgrounds – Butte Hall, 199 E. Hazel St., Gridley, CA 95948

and

Sutter Extension Water District – Sutter Youth Organization – Elwood Munger Hall
Date: Wednesday, October 28, 2026
Time: 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM
Place: Sutter Youth Organization – Elwood Munger Hall, 7740 Butte House Rd, Sutter, CA 95982

Newspaper Notice of Preparation Published:
Gridley Herald, October 16, 2026
Appeal Democrat, October 16, 2026

Summary

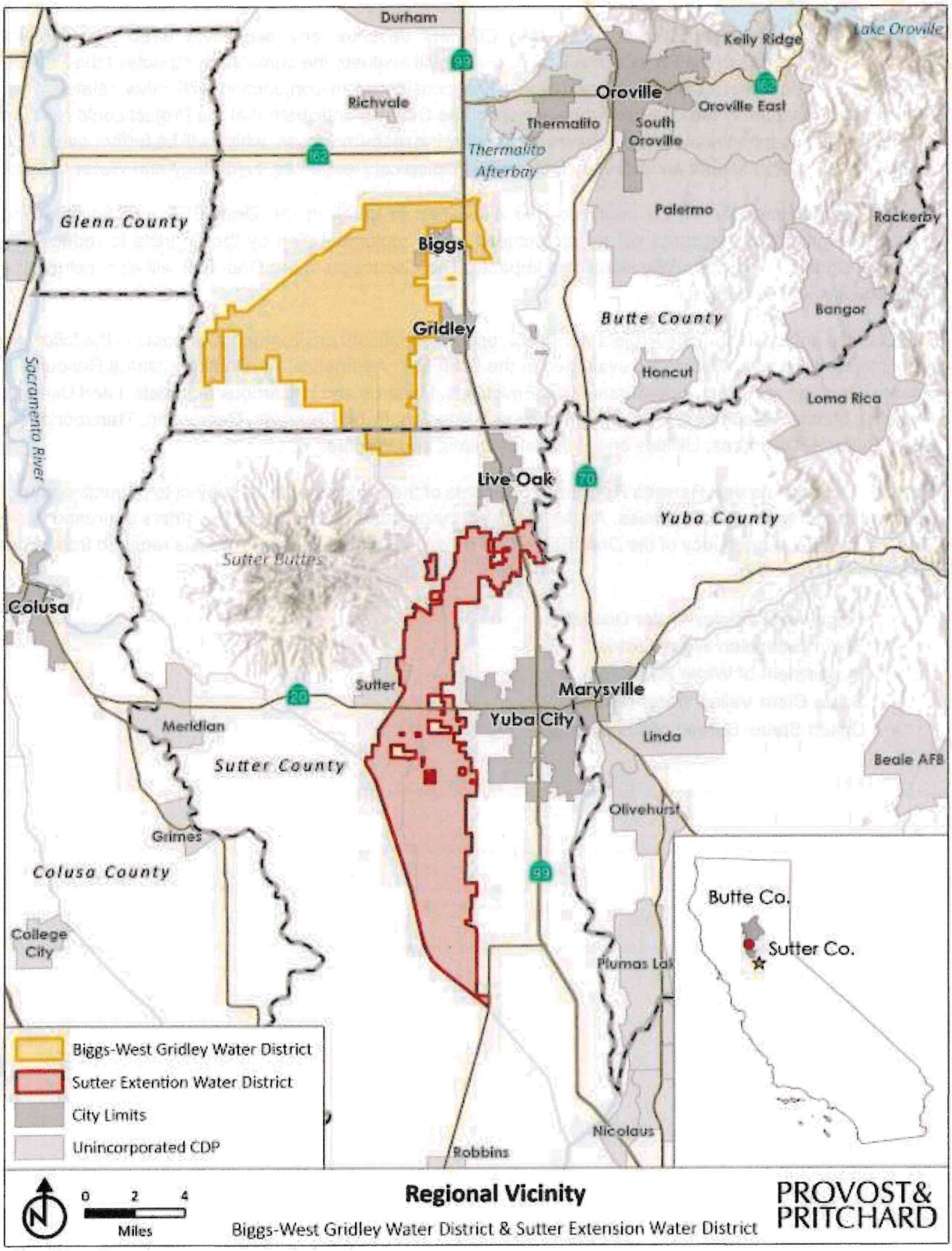
Potential Environmental Effects: The Draft EIR will describe any significant direct and indirect environmental impacts of the Project. The Draft EIR also will evaluate the cumulative impacts of the Project, defined as impacts that could be exacerbated when considered in conjunction with other related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects. The Districts anticipate that the Project could result in potentially significant environmental impacts in the following resource areas, which will be further evaluated in the Draft EIR: Agricultural and Forestry Resources, Biological Resources, Hydrology and Water Quality.

These potential impacts will be analyzed and discussed in detail in the Draft EIR, and feasible and practicable mitigation measures will be recommended for implementation by the Districts to reduce any identified significant or potentially significant impacts. The discussion in the Draft EIR will also include the required alternatives analysis.

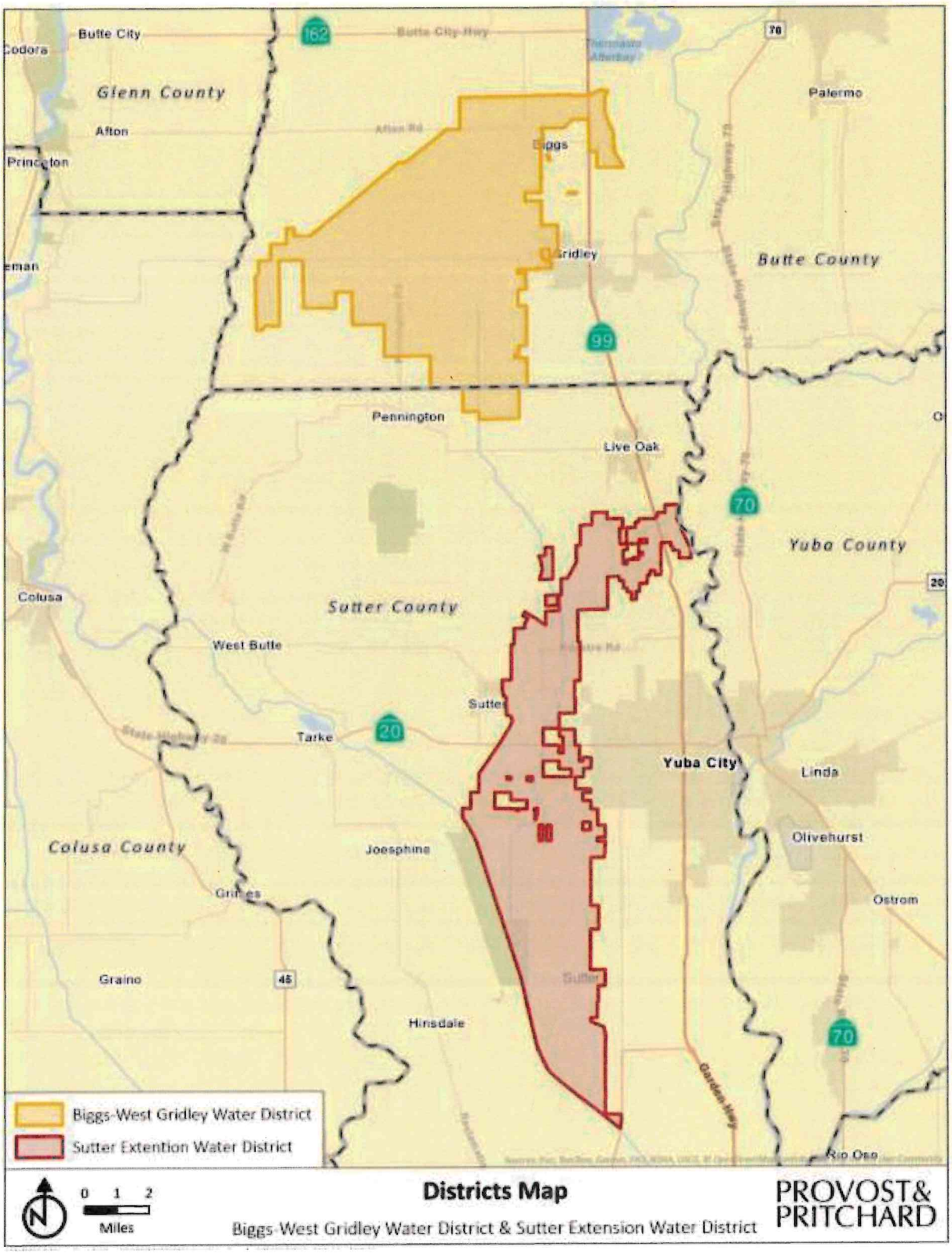
The Districts anticipate that the Project would not result in significant environmental impacts in the following resource areas, which will also be evaluated in the Draft EIR: Aesthetics, Air Quality, Cultural Resources, Energy, Geology and Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Land Use and Planning, Mineral Resources, Noise, Population and Housing, Public Services, Recreation, Transportation, Tribal Cultural Resources, Utilities and Service Systems, and Wildfire.

Potential Approvals and Permits Required: Elements of the Project could be subject to permitting and/or approval authority of other agencies. As the lead agency pursuant to CEQA, The Districts are responsible for considering the adequacy of the Draft EIR. Other potential approvals and/or permits required from other agencies could include:

- Biggs-West Gridley Water District
- Sutter Extension Water District
- Department of Water Resources
- Santa Clara Valley Water District
- United States Bureau of Reclamation


Durham
Kelly Ridge
Lake Oroville
Oroville
Oroville East
Richvale
Thermalito
South Oroville
Thermalito Afterbay
Glenn County
Palermo
Rackerby
Biggs
Gridley
Butte County
Bangor
Honcut
Loma Rica
Sacramento River
Live Oak
Yuba County
Sutter Buttes
Colusa
Sutter
Marysville
Yuba City
Meridian
Linda
Beale AFB
Sutter County
Olivehurst
Grimes
Colusa County
College City
Plumas Lake
Nicolaus
Robbins
Butte Co.
Sutter Co.
Biggs-West Gridley Water District
Sutter Extention Water District
City Limits
Unincorporated CDP
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Miles
Regional Vicinity
Biggs-West Gridley Water District & Sutter Extension Water District
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Butte County
Pennington
Live Oak
Yuba County
Colusa
Sutter County
West Butte
Sutter
Tarke
Yuba City
Linda
Olivehurst
Ostrom
Colusa County
Joesphine
Grimes
Graino
Hinsdale
Rio Oso
Biggs-West Gridley Water District
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Districts Map
Biggs-West Gridley Water District & Sutter Extension Water District
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