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# El Toro Ranch site may become new Santa Clara County reservoir

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A large ranch near Pacheco Pass in southern Santa Clara County is under consideration to create the first new reservoir in the Bay Area since 1998. The 12,000-acre site, known as El Toro Ranch, is about half the footprint of San Francisco.

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It could provide storage for 130,000-acre feet of water. That could supply 650,000 people for an entire year.

The last reservoir to be built in Santa Clara County, Uvas Reservoir near Morgan Hill, was 60 years ago.

"August 14th is the deadline for entities such as ours who are interested in surface water projects like this one to submit an application to the California Water Commission to receive funding for the non-water supply parts of the project," said Garth Hall the acting Chief Operating Officer for the Santa Clara Valley Water District.

The district has 10 existing reservoirs but the capacity of this eleventh one would be nearly the total of the five largest ones; a footprint about half the size of San Francisco.

The ranch is for sale for \$21 million. The Santa Clara Valley Water District is working with an inter-government agency to explore the acquisition of the property. However, the source of funds has not been worked out.

"You've got to look at the whole picture for your water district and not just look at additional storage as the only answer. Management, conservation, these are all things we push for over and over again that cost the ratepayer a lot less money," said Howard Penn, with the Planning and Conservation League.

The estimated cost has been pegged at \$800 million. The El Toro reservoir would be about double the size of the Crystal Springs Reservoir along Highway 280 on the Peninsula.

The project must also face an environmental review.