

**MWD**

METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

July 29, 1992

To: Board of Directors (Water Problems Committee--Information)
(Executive Committee--Information)

From: General Manager

Subject: SWRCB Bay/Delta Interim Standards Hearing

Report

The Governor, on April 6, 1992, directed the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) to develop interim standards for the San Francisco Bay/Delta Estuary (Delta) by the end of 1992. According to the Governor, the interim standards are intended to protect public trust resources (fisheries) and provide "a significant first step toward restoring the Delta."

On June 22 and 23, 1992 the SWRCB opened its hearing on interim actions in the Delta and received policy and opening statements from more than 100 agencies and individuals. On July 6, the SWRCB began the evidentiary phase of the hearings and received testimony from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), National Marine Fishery Service (NMFS), Department of Fish and Game (DFG), Department of Water Resources (DWR), and the United States Bureau of Reclamation. These agencies each completed their testimony by the end of that week.

The DFG, USFWS, and NMFS all coordinated their testimony and the DFG recommended that the SWRCB take actions to restore the fisheries to levels that had occurred in the late 1960's and early 1970's. This period preceded water deliveries south of the Delta from the State Water Project (SWP) and the San Luis Unit of the Federal Central Valley Project, and was also hydrologically a wet period. DFG's proposed actions would have water supply impacts estimated at between 6 and 10 MAF per year. DWR is evaluating these actions and impacts in detail.

It was clear that both DFG and DWR have widely different recommendations. DFG recommendations focused on export curtailments, increased Delta outflows, and Delta Cross Channel Gate closures for long periods, and had little emphasis on fishery management measures. The fishery agencies also recommended that water transfers from north of the Delta not be allowed because of the adverse impacts to Delta fisheries.

The Hearings continued on July 15 and July 20 through 23 and testimony from the noticed water rights holders and other parties was presented. The State Water Contractors (SWC) presented its testimony on July 23. Staff presented testimony identifying potential economic and environmental impacts in Southern California if SWP supplies are reduced. Similar testimony was presented by the urban SWP contractors in the San Francisco Bay area, and by several agricultural SWP contractors in the San Joaquin Valley. The SWC also presented testimony recommending several management measures which would provide improvements to Delta fisheries without a significant loss of water supply, and summarized the SWC position and recommendations on additional interim actions which might be taken.

At the request of interests in Southern California, the SWRCB agreed to hold a hearing day in Santa Ana on July 17. Non-evidentiary policy statements were presented by approximately 75 speakers. Chairman Krieger spoke about the need for a comprehensive solution for Delta problems, and Assistant General Manager Duane Georgeson spoke about Metropolitan's need for Delta water and potential impacts if those supplies are reduced. Other speakers included local government officials, water agency representatives, business leaders, and private citizens.

The SWRCB currently plans to prepare a draft report of proposed interim actions by October 1, 1992 and adopt an interim decision by the end of 1992. Staff will continue to participate in activities related to the process and will keep you informed.

Board Committee Assignments

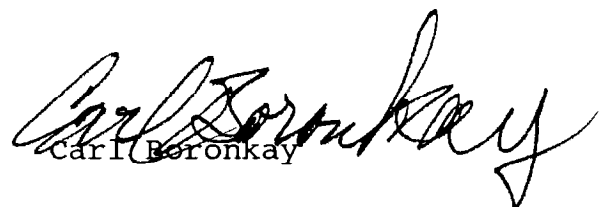
This letter was referred for information to:

The Water Problems Committee because of its authority to study, advise, and make recommendations with regard to policies, sources and means of importing water required by Metropolitan under Administrative Code Section 2461(a); and

The Executive Committee because of its authority to study, advise, and make recommendations on policies and procedures to be considered by the Board under Administrative Code Section 2417.

Recommendation

For information only.


Carl Boronkay