

- Board of Directors  
*Water Planning and Stewardship Committee*

September 11, 2007 Board Meeting

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**Revised 8-4**

## **Subject**

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Adopt criteria for conveyance options in implementation of Long Term Delta Plan

## **Description**

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**Overview** In June 2007, Metropolitan's Board approved a Delta Action Plan that provides a framework for actions to build a sustainable Delta and reduce conflicts between water supply conveyance and the environment (**Attachment 1**). Additional detailed information on potential near-, mid-, and long-term actions, and their water supply planning implications, were provided in written and oral reports to the Board in July and August 2007.

The approved Delta Action Plan also established a process where staff would provide monthly updates to the Board on Delta-related processes and would seek board direction on key issues including: Bay-Delta legislation; administrative decision processes; and legal and regulatory decisions.

This board letter requests further board direction on key conveyance components being discussed in the Governor's Delta Vision Process and the Bay-Delta Conservation Plan. Other near-term actions previously brought before the Board are summarized below.

**Near-Term Actions.** Recent action by the California Department of Water Resources and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to curtail pumping of the State Water Project and Central Valley Project from the Delta to protect Delta smelt underscores the incompatibility of how water is conveyed to California's economy and protection of in-Delta native fisheries. While the shutdown was temporary, the underlying need to protect Delta smelt and other fisheries is likely to challenge Metropolitan and other Delta export users with more prolonged water supply curtailments and potentially serious economic consequences throughout the state prior to the implementation of a long-term solution. The following is a set of near-term actions previously brought before the Board that staff is moving forward on:

- **Post-Event Emergency Response Plan.** Analyses from the Delta Risk Management Study state there is a significant risk of levee collapse from an earthquake or flood in the Delta. Consistent with April 2007 board direction regarding implementing a Post-Event Strategy, efforts are being made to secure state approval and funding for a Delta Levees Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan, including pre-placement of rock and material in key locations throughout the Delta.
- **Real-Time Operations and Monitoring.** Current operations of the state and federal pumping plants in the Delta rely heavily on prescriptive flows and water quality standards to assist in maintaining a viable ecosystem for fisheries. However, these standards do not take into account the natural variability of runoff patterns, tidal cycles, temperature and other factors that significantly affect fish migration and consequently salvage of fish at the state and federal pumping plants. In an effort to minimize fish salvage, efforts are being made to fund and implement real-time fish monitoring/tracking along with integrated, real-time operations of the Delta Cross Channel and Sacramento and San Joaquin River flows.
- **Temporary & Reversible Eco-Crescent/Middle River Corridor.** In addition to the real-time operations and monitoring, additional near-term, stop-gap efforts are being further analyzed to turn a portion of the estuary from a habitat area with conflict for smelt into a safe haven, away from the north-to-south movement of water supplies to the Bay Area, Central Valley and Southern California. This effort would include a series of temporary and removable rock barriers with tidal-gates, located strategically on four waterways in the

southern Delta, to create a physical separation between the flows for water supply and the nearby rearing habitat for smelt. These temporary structures would only be in place and operated from February through June when Delta smelt enter the Delta to spawn and rear. This project would include funding for real-time monitoring and operation of these gates, and assessments would be made to ascertain whether a more permanent structure should be constructed later as part of a more comprehensive Delta Vision.

**Long-Term Delta Vision Alternatives.** In addition to the ongoing effort to resolve near-term issues, two efforts are in progress to develop long-term solutions to resource management conflicts within the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay Delta system: the Bay-Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) and the Governor's Delta Vision process. The BDCP is a voluntary effort initiated by water user representatives and state/federal fishery regulatory agencies to develop a conservation plan that will serve as the basis for long-term federal and state endangered species act operational permits for the SWP and CVP. The Governor's Delta Vision process is an effort to develop a specific long-term alternative for addressing Delta resource conflicts and a strategic plan for implementation.

As initially reported to the Board at its workshop in July 2007, four alternatives are under discussion by the Governor's Delta Vision Stakeholder Coordination Group, which advises the Blue Ribbon Task Force. These alternatives include:

1. Existing Delta (with fortified levees)
2. Eco-Crescent/Middle River Corridor Conveyance
3. Dual-Intake Facility (Eco-Crescent + Isolated Conveyance Facility)
4. Fully Isolated Facility

On August 4, 2007, the Delta Vision Stakeholder Coordination Group submitted a report to the Blue Ribbon Committee that narrowed the list of recommended alternatives for further analysis to the Eco-Crescent/Middle River Corridor Conveyance and the Dual-Intake Facility. In addition to these alternatives, the Governor's Blue Ribbon Task Force has received a number of other alternatives from various groups and individuals. The Task Force has begun narrowing down the alternatives and intends to select a Delta Vision to move forward in its Phase I Report to the Governor's cabinet-level Delta Vision Committee. The Phase I Report is due on January 1, 2008,<sup>1</sup> and will include a vision for sustainable management of the Delta's multiple uses, resources and ecosystem.

Phase II of the Governor's Delta Vision effort includes development of a Strategic Plan to drive implementation of a Vision, addressing related governance, funding and system management issues relative to that Vision.

**Proposed Direction on Delta Vision Alternatives.** In August, the four alternatives listed above were reviewed with the Board. Each alternative was evaluated with feasibility-level modeling of water supply and water quality impacts, and quantitative information regarding environmental enhancement and costs. The alternatives were also compared to the Metropolitan Board principles (April 2006) relating to development of a long-term Delta Vision.

Although Metropolitan staff is continuing to participate in the collaborative BDCP and Delta Vision efforts to further analyze the pros and cons of these alternatives, after a review of existing analyses and board policies, staff proposes the Board adopt the following criteria to further clarify Metropolitan's position on the water supply conveyance element of the long-term solution:

1. **Provide water supply reliability.** Conveyance options need to provide water supply reliability consistent with DWR's most recent State Water Project Reliability Report (2005).
2. **Improve Export Water Quality.** Conveyance options should reduce bromide and dissolved organic carbon concentrations. Existing in-Delta intakes cause direct conflict between the need to reduce organic carbon to meet stricter urban drinking water standards, and the need to increase carbon to promote a healthy food web for fish.

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<sup>1</sup> The Delta Vision Committee is comprised of the Secretary of Resources as Chair, and the Secretaries of Business, Transportation & Housing, Food & Agriculture, and Cal-EPA; and the President of the California Public Utilities Commission.

3. Allow Flexible Pumping Operations in a Dynamic Fishery Environment. Water supply conveyance options should allow the greatest flexibility in meeting water demands by taking water where and when it is least harmful to migrating salmon and in-Delta fish species. All options should reduce the inherent conflict between fisheries and water conveyance.
4. Enhance Delta Ecosystem. Conveyance options should provide the ability to restore fishery habitat throughout the entire Delta and minimize disruption to tidal food web processes, and provide for fluctuating salinity levels.
5. Reduce Seismic Risks. Conveyance options should provide significant reductions in risks to export water supplies from seismic-induced levee failure and flooding.
6. Reduce Climate Change Risks. Conveyance options should reduce long-term risks from salinity intrusion associated with rising sea levels. Intake locations should be able to withstand an estimated 1- to 3-foot sea-level rise in the next 100 years.

**Future Recommendations.** As outlined in Metropolitan's Delta Action Plan, staff will seek board direction on other key issues including funding for environmental restoration, governance and financing issues, levee improvements, potential infrastructure or floodway corridors, sizing and location of an isolated facility component, potential legislation, and other key components of the Governor's overall Delta Vision.

## **Policy**

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By Minute Item 45753, dated May 11, 2004, and Minute Item 46637, dated April 11, 2006, the Board adopted a set of Delta policy principles to ensure a solid foundation for development of future Metropolitan positions and to provide guidance to Metropolitan staff.

By Minute Item 47135, dated May 25, 2007, the Board supported, in principle, the proposed Delta Action Plan, as set forth in the letter signed by the General Manager.

## **California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)**

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CEQA determination for Option #1:

The proposed action is not defined as a project under CEQA because the proposed action involves continuing administrative activities such as general policy and procedure making (Section 15378(b)(2) of the State CEQA Guidelines). In addition, where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the proposed action in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the proposed action is not subject to CEQA (Section 15061(b)(3) of the State CEQA Guidelines). For future, and not yet known, proposed projects, the appropriate lead agencies will be responsible for complying with all applicable federal and state environmental laws and regulations.

The CEQA determination is: Determine that the proposed action is not subject to the provisions of CEQA pursuant to Sections 15378(b)(2) and 15061(b)(3) of the State CEQA Guidelines.

CEQA determination for Option #2:

None required

## **Board Options**

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### **Option #1**

Adopt the CEQA determination and conveyance criteria, as described in this board letter, for water supply conveyance options in a long-term Delta Vision.

**Fiscal Impact:** None

**Business Analysis:** The recommended conveyance criteria would be beneficial in reducing conflict while enhancing the Delta ecosystem, water quality, and water supply reliability. It would also reduce longer-term risks associated with seismic-induced flooding and sea-level rise.

**Option #2**

Do not adopt conveyance criteria.

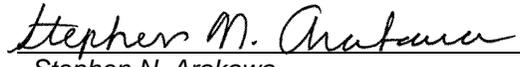
**Fiscal Impact:** None

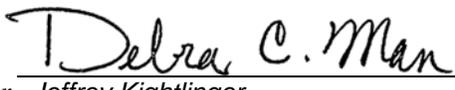
**Business Analysis:** Metropolitan's ability to influence conveyance criteria will be significantly reduced. Criteria established by others may not meet Metropolitan's water supply and financial interests.

**Staff Recommendation**

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Option #1

 9/7/2007  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Stephen N. Arakawa Date  
Manager, Water Resource Management

 9/7/2007  
\_\_\_\_\_  
for Jeffrey Kightlinger Date  
General Manager

**Attachment 1 – Metropolitan Water District Delta Action Plan**

BLA #5548



**I N F O R M A T I O N**

**Date:** 8/4/2007      **BLA #:** 5548      **Filename:** WRM09\_8-4\_Delta Vision BRDLTRv6  
9-11-2007.doc

**BL Subject:** Recommend direction on key Delta issues in Metropolitan's Delta Action Plan

**Author:** Randall Neudeck      **Board Letter Coordinator:** Carmen Piña 7-6670  
Name / Extension      Name / Extension

**D E A D L I N E S**

**BOARD MEETING DATE: 9/11/2007**

**PERT (A1) Deadline:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PERT Meeting Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ERT (B4) Deadline:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ERT Meeting Date:** 8/16/07

**Final Signature (B5) Deadline:** 8/20/07

**Dry Run Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**B O A R D L E T T E R R O U T I N G S L I P**  
**R e q u i r e d A p p r o v a l s**

**FOR CONTENT REVIEW:**

<b>ROUTE TO</b>	<b>DATE SIGNED</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
1. G. Chan	_____	_____
2. S. Arakawa	_____	_____
3. R. Patterson	_____	_____
5. _____	_____	_____
6. _____	_____	_____
7. _____	_____	_____
8. _____	_____	_____
9. _____	_____	_____
10. _____	_____	_____
11. _____	_____	_____
12. _____	_____	_____

**SUBMIT BOARD LETTERS FOR REVIEW TO THE OUTLOOK FOLDER IN THE FOLLOWING ORDER:**

**External Affairs (Editorial)**

**Legal (Legal)**

**Publishing Services (Formatting)**

**Audit (if needed)**

**Group Manager**      Stephen N. Arakawa

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

**P R O C E S S   S T E P S**

**P E R T**

<b>STEP #1 - AUTHOR WILL:</b>	<b>DATE COMPLETED</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Draft/prepare letter and attachments (if applicable) <i>*Start with NEW template!</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Reference policy (if applicable)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Initiate request for CEQA language by Environmental Planning Unit	
<input type="checkbox"/> Secure review by Section Manager and Legal liaison	
<input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate comments for update by BLC	
<b>STEP #2 - BOARD LETTER COORDINATOR WILL:</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Review and update material for format, grammar, etc.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate with Author all updates as needed	
<input type="checkbox"/> Save file to your "group/section's" drive using the proper naming convention	
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide copy for Group Manager's review – <b>DEADLINE: Thursday at 11 a.m. Signature:</b>	
<b>STEP #3 - BOARD LETTER COORDINATOR WILL:</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Review all letters to ensure compliance	
<input type="checkbox"/> Post to <b>"A1 – Preliminary"</b> <b>DEADLINE: Monday at 11 a.m.</b>	

**E R T**

<b>STEP #4 - BOARD LETTER COORDINATOR WILL:</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Forward PERT comments to author and appropriate section manager	
<b>STEP #5 - AUTHOR WILL:</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Incorporate PERT recommendations (if applicable)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide routing information for surnaming	
<input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate all comments secured through surnaming/postings	
<b>STEP #6 - BOARD LETTER COORDINATOR WILL:</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Initiate red folder w/white, pink, yellow routing	
<input type="checkbox"/> Post to <b>"B1 – External Affairs"</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Verify public folder response/approval <input type="checkbox"/> Update as appropriate	
<input type="checkbox"/> Post to <b>"B2 – Legal"</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Verify public folder response/approval <input type="checkbox"/> Update as appropriate	
<input type="checkbox"/> Post to <b>"B2a – Audit"</b> (as applicable)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Verify public folder response/approval <input type="checkbox"/> Update as appropriate	
<input type="checkbox"/> Post to <b>"B3 – Publishing Services"</b> only after receiving Legal approval	
<input type="checkbox"/> Verify public folder response/approval <input type="checkbox"/> Update as appropriate	
<input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate with the Author all updates as needed	
<input type="checkbox"/> Save file to your "group/section's" drive	
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide copy for Group Manager's review – <b>DEADLINE: Thursday at 11 a.m. Signature:</b>	
<b>STEP #7 - BOARD LETTER COORDINATOR WILL:</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Review all letters for compliance	
<input type="checkbox"/> Secure Group Manager's signature	
<input type="checkbox"/> Submit signed final to 12 <sup>th</sup> floor staff	
<input type="checkbox"/> Post to <b>"B4 – CEO Exec. Review"</b> – <b>DEADLINE: Monday at 11 a.m.</b>	

**F I N A L**

<b>STEP #8 - BOARD LETTER COORDINATOR WILL:</b>	<b>DATE COMPLETED</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Forward ERT comments to author and appropriate section manager	
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide assigned board letter numbers	

**NOTE: IF NO CHANGES ARE MADE AT ERT TO THE POSTED VERSION -- JUMP TO STEP #11**

<b>STEP #9 - AUTHOR WILL:</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Address any comments/requests (if applicable)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate updates with BLC	
<b>STEP #10 - BOARD LETTER COORDINATOR WILL:</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide final copy for Group Manager's review/signature <b>DEADLINE: Thursday at 11 a.m. Signature:</b>	
<b>STEP #11 - BOARD LETTER COORDINATOR WILL:</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Final review for compliance (format, grammar, spell check, etc.)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Post to <b>"B5 – CEO Final"</b> <b>DEADLINE: Friday at 11 a.m.</b>	

Revised: 10/7/2015