



● **Bay-Delta Matters**

Summary

This report provides a summary of the activities related to the Bay-Delta

Detailed Report

Bay Delta Conservation Plan

Work continued on many elements of the Bay-Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) this month. Information provided to the BDCP Steering Committee this month included preliminary results of modeling for the long-term operation scenario and preliminary cost estimates for program implementation. Additionally, a comparison for the tunnel, west alignment, and east alignment for the Isolated Conveyance facility was presented that highlighted engineering, environmental, and cost considerations. Work continued on development of near-term and long-term operational scenarios. A comprehensive technical analysis of the effects of the proposed conservation measures is underway, and staff is participating in effects analysis workgroups addressing physical modeling, fisheries and food web issues. Metropolitan is continuing to participate in all BDCP-related workgroup efforts.

Near-Term Delta Actions

Two-Gates Fish Protection Demonstration Project

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) released the Draft Environmental Assessment/Finding of No Significant Impact (EA/FONSI) for the Two-Gates Fish Protection Demonstration Project on October 19, 2009 for public review. Public comments on the draft were received on November 30, 2009. In conjunction with the release of the draft environmental documents, USBR held public meetings to provide information on the project in Fresno on October 26, 2009, Discovery Bay on October 27, 2009, and Stockton on October 28, 2009.

Metropolitan and the other water contractors have worked to identify secure funding sources for project design and construction. Sources of project funds include Category III funds of the 1995 Bay-Delta Accord, remaining state bond funds from Propositions 13, federal appropriations for fiscal year 2010, and SBX7 funds recently appropriated by the state legislature. In addition, the U.S. Department of the Interior has indicated a willingness to provide funds for the U.S. Geological Survey to conduct the science and monitoring component on the Two-Gates project, including delta smelt and salmon monitoring.

The CALFED Science Program held an independent scientific peer review workshop for the Two-Gates Fish Protection Demonstration Project on August 6, 2009 in Sacramento. The CALFED Science Program Independent Review Panel was receptive to the project and the broad field-test approach to the project, and focused on the need for more definitive monitoring and field sampling to support experimental design. The Review Panel report and responses to the report by project proponents were posted to the CALFED Web site on September 29, 2009 and November 15, 2009 respectively. Meanwhile, in coordination with state and federal agencies, augmented water quality sensors have been deployed to the Delta telemetry network to begin Two-Gates project baseline monitoring of delta smelt, turbidity, etc., this coming year. Consequently, we expect to see accelerated work on the modeling and science behind the Two Gates project in 2010 with implementation aimed for 2011.

State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Issues

SWRCB Periodic Review of Bay-Delta Water Quality Objectives

The SWRCB process for the periodic review and update of the southern Delta salinity and San Joaquin River flow objectives from the 2006 Water Quality Control Plan (WQCP) for the Bay-Delta Estuary was initiated in August 2008. Currently, the SWRCB is focusing on the review and potential amendment of the southern Delta salinity objectives, which protect the agricultural beneficial uses within the Delta. The SWRCB held a public staff workshop for November 4, 2009 to continue the discussion of Dr. Glenn Hoffman's draft study report titled

Board Report (Bay-Delta Matters)

Salt Tolerance of Crops in the Southern Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The purpose of the workshop was to discuss responses to comments on the draft report and how the comments will be addressed in the final study report, anticipated for release by the end of 2009. Metropolitan staff worked with State Water Contractor staff to review the comments submitted on the draft report and participate in the November 4 workshop. The SWRCB staff has proposed a timeline for the periodic review process that includes completing the technical review early next year, followed by environmental review workshops, and then adoption of an EIR and revisions to the WQCP in 2011.