



## ● Bay-Delta Management Report

### Summary

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This report provides a summary of the activities related to the Bay-Delta for June 2010.

### Detailed Report

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#### Long-Term Delta Actions

Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP): Metropolitan staff continued to focus on the BDCP environmental effects analysis this month. A significant amount of Metropolitan staff time was dedicated to reviewing the results of the various analyses on the effects of the BDCP conservation measures on terrestrial and aquatic resources and natural communities. Working with the other water contractors, Metropolitan coordinated a review of the effects analysis to ensure consistency with recent litigation and emerging science. The effects analysis is critical as it will form the basis of the BDCP permits and mitigation obligations, the Delta Habitat Conservation and Conveyance Program (DHCCP) EIR/EIS, and the federal Biological Assessment/Opinion. Another key area of effort this month was on governance of the BDCP. Governance issues under consideration include the role the water contractors will have as it relates to implementation of the BDCP and obligations under the permits.

Delta Habitat Conservation and Conveyance Program (DHCCP): Work continued this month on planning, engineering, and cost estimate evaluations for the DHCCP conveyance options. Metropolitan arranged an inspection trip for the water contractors to tour the Southern Nevada Water Authority's Third Intake Project where they visited the tunnel segment casting facility and inspected their 23.5 foot diameter tunnel boring machine. Approximately 20 water contractor representatives attended. Metropolitan attended a tunneling workshop for the water contractors. The goal of the workshop was to inform the water contractors about issues that are important to developing a successful tunneling program. There were over 30 workshop participants. The water contractors continue to work on completing the analysis of optimum benefits for various sizing alternatives for the conveyance options.

Delta Stewardship Council: At their June 24-25 meeting, the Delta Stewardship Council (DSC) appointed ten nationally and internationally prominent scientists to the Delta Independent Science Board (Science Board), as required by legislation signed into law in fall 2009. The ten scientists represent a broad range of scientific disciplines and are also geographically diverse. The Science Board reports to the DSC and will provide oversight of the scientific research, monitoring, and assessment programs that support adaptive management of the Delta through periodic reviews of each of those programs. The DSC also released the First Draft Interim Plan (Interim Plan) for public review. The purpose of the Interim Plan is to provide a framework for actions by the DSC until their Delta Plan is adopted by January 2012. Staff is working with the state and federal water contractors to submit comments on the draft by the July 2, 2010 deadline.

#### Near-Term Delta Actions

Habitat Restoration: During the past month, the habitat restoration effort continued to advance the 700 acre tidal marsh project in the southern Yolo Bypass. The State and Federal Contractors Water Authority board approved funds for final project design, environmental documentation, biological surveys, and project monitoring and science. Baseline biological surveys are currently underway and are about 70 percent complete at the Lower Yolo Ranch property. These surveys include vernal pool shrimp, rare plants, nesting burrowing owls, wetland delineation, and general observations of all other species noted during the other surveys. The surveys will support environmental documentation analyses and restoration planning. Preparation of the survey reports is scheduled for completion by mid-July 2010.

Two-Gates Fish Protection Demonstration Project: Metropolitan continues to work with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR), the state and federal water contractors, and the fisheries agencies to resolve issues related to

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the Two-Gates Fish Protection Project and develop a work plan for moving forward. Metropolitan has completed a review and response to USBR, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service comments on the Biological Assessment, and has documented a constructive process to address issues moving forward. Staff is continuing to move forward on forecasting turbidity/smelt movement in the Delta through model development and field testing. Real-time modeling efforts are being conducted in coordination with state and federal agencies, and augmented by a new network of water quality sensors in the Delta to assist in monitoring of Delta smelt, turbidity, conductivity, and water temperature. Through coordination by USBR, the California Department of Boating and Waterways is now conducting their annual recreational boating survey and safety study to include survey points at the Two-Gates project locations. The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers would utilize the survey in conjunction with any further processing of a 404 permit. The survey work will be conducted through the period of proposed gate operations in late-June and would also extend into the fall months.

### **State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Issues**

In June, the SWRCB continued its process to develop flow criteria for the Delta ecosystem necessary to protect public trust resources in compliance with Senate Bill No. 1 of the 2009-2010 Seventh Extraordinary Session. Metropolitan continues to work with the state and federal water contractors to participate in this process. Closing statements were filed April 14, 2010. The water contractors' statement argued that no evidence was provided to support flow criteria beyond those stated in D-1641. The statement further argues that habitat and food supply impacts should be addressed before additional flow measures should be considered, because additional flows alone would not benefit the Bay-Delta fishery resources. In June, the water contractors continued to meet with the SWRCB to discuss and clarify our written arguments. The water contractors also submitted updated documents as requested by the SWRCB. Legislation requires the SWRCB to submit new flow criteria in August 2010. Draft flow criteria are anticipated to be released in mid-July 2010.