



● Bay-Delta Management Report

Summary

This report provides a summary of the activities related to the Bay-Delta for August 20

Detailed Report

Long-Term Delta Actions

Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP)

On August 11, the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), U.S. Department of Commerce, and the California Natural Resources Agency announced reaching two significant milestones for BDCP. The federal and state agencies have agreed on a schedule for completing a draft environmental impact report/environmental impact statement (EIR/S) as part of the BDCP by June 2012. The agencies have also agreed to a range of alternatives for conveyance facilities and habitat restoration that are being evaluated to identify a proposed project that will serve as the basis for federal and state permit applications and environmental review.

On August 11, the California Natural Resources Agency held a public meeting on the BDCP. This was one of a series of meetings and is a key element of the Brown Administration's commitment to provide greater opportunities for public input into the BDCP planning process. The objectives of the meetings are to promote stakeholder engagement, describe the structure of the public work groups and how stakeholders can participate, share technical updates from work groups currently underway, and allow for public feedback on BDCP issues. The meeting was chaired by Dr. Jerry Meral, Deputy Secretary, California Natural Resources Agency, and included question and answer sessions.

A presentation of the Tule Red project was provided at the August 24 meeting of the BDCP Management Committee. The Tule Red project is a 350 acre intertidal restoration effort that is being developed through participation of State and Federal Contractors Water Agency (SFCWA). The Metropolitan Board took action in June 2011 to approve entering into an activity agreement to support the Tule Red planning effort.

Delta Stewardship Council (Council)

On August 2, Council staff released a Fifth Draft Delta Plan. The accompanying draft EIR is expected to be released in early to mid-September. Metropolitan staff is planning a comprehensive review of the Fifth Draft Delta Plan and draft EIR, and will coordinate with other water contractors to prepare comments. Comments on the Draft Plan are due September 30 and comments on the EIR will be due 45 days after it is released. The purpose of the Delta Plan is to coordinate and guide state and local agencies to take actions to achieve the coequal goals of providing a more reliable water supply for California and protecting, restoring, and enhancing the Delta ecosystem. The Council held a public meeting on August 26 to discuss the Fifth Draft Plan, the State Parks' Recreation Proposal for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and Suisun Marsh, and a financial matrix to support discussions on how to fund implementation of the Delta Plan.

Near-term Actions

Habitat Restoration

Progress continued in July and August on the Lower Yolo Bypass tidal marsh restoration project. The 1,100 acre tidal marsh restoration project is located in the lower Yolo Bypass just to the north of Liberty Island. With support from Metropolitan staff, SFCWA consultants are continuing to finalize the administrative draft EIR. A public draft EIR is currently scheduled to be completed this fall. Concurrently, the SFCWA and Metropolitan staff continue to investigate other habitat opportunities, including potential habitat restoration in the Suisun Marsh to comply with the Endangered Species Act biological opinion to develop 8,000 acres of intertidal habitat for Delta smelt. The Department of Water Resources (DWR), as

Board Report (Bay-Delta Management Report)

operator of the State Water Project, has the ultimate obligation for restoring the Delta smelt habitat and SFCWA is working cooperatively with DWR to achieve this result in a timely and cost effective manner.

State Water Resources Control Board (State Board)

Staff, through SFCWA, continues to participate with the San Joaquin River Group and several interested power utilities to develop modeling tools that will be used to evaluate the impact of proposed State Board flow criteria on hydropower generation. An initial evaluation of impacts downstream of major reservoirs has commenced.

Delta Emergency Preparedness

Delta Flood Emergency Preparedness, Response and Recovery Program (EPRRP)

DWR remains committed to the completion of an Administrative Draft of their Delta Flood Emergency Preparedness, Response and Recovery Program in 2011, and have advised it would be available for public review in early 2012. Securing a small remaining increment of local funding under a Federal Cost Sharing Agreement (FCSA) for Bacon Island pathway levee improvements remains a priority with DWR and the water contractors. DWR is continuing studies to model a range of water quality target start-up scenarios for resumption of exports at the pumps following a major levee failure emergency.

A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and DWR has enabled joint initiatives for flood contingency mapping and emergency response planning for the Delta region. The Corps conducted a Delta Modeling Workshop in August to review its new hydrodynamic and sediment transport models to evaluate effects of alternative flow management scenarios and levee breaches. These initiatives could complement DWR's water quality analysis and emergency response models for assessment of emergency response scenarios.