



● Bay-Delta Management Report

Summary

This report provides a summary of the activities related to the Bay-Delta for January 2012.

Detailed Report

Long-Term Delta Actions

Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP)

The United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) completed amendments to the first amended *Memorandum Of Agreement Regarding Collaboration On The Planning, Preliminary Design And Environmental Compliance For The Delta Habitat Conservation And Conveyance Program In Connection With The Development Of The Bay Delta Conservation Plan* (MOA) following its public process. The Department of Water Resources (DWR) and the participating Public Water Agencies (PWA) have executed the amended MOA. Metropolitan executed the MOA and the associated Funding Agreement on January 11.

In response to public comment, this month DWR and the federal lead agencies posted a series of preliminary draft BDCP documents to the BDCP website for public review. These draft documents included seven chapters of the BDCP Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan, eight Effects Analysis appendices, and 21 chapters of the Environmental Impact Report/Study. These documents are preliminary working drafts and are subject to revisions prior to the release of the draft documents for formal public comment, scheduled for June 27, 2012. No responses will be provided to any written comments submitted on these preliminary draft chapters. Metropolitan staff is reviewing the available chapters and working collaboratively with representatives of other PWAs.

Delta Habitat Conservation and Conveyance Program (DHCCP)

In January the DWR and DHCCP consultant's staff completed the laboratory work for samples collected as part of the initial field geotechnical work on accessible public lands. This work was completed on schedule. For additional geotechnical investigations on private lands, DWR is continuing with the eminent domain process by notifying affected property owners of the process, obtaining Resolutions of Necessity from the California Water Commission and preparing the necessary background documents for the next steps in the process. DWR will continue to work with the property owners to gain access for the investigations, however, DWR could proceed with the eminent domain process, if necessary. Private property access affects geotechnical work at 30 locations, representing approximately 40 percent of field geotechnical work planned for this phase

Delta Stewardship Council (Council)

On November 4, 2011, the Council released a draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for its fifth staff draft Delta Plan. Comments on the draft EIR are due February 2, 2012. In coordination with other water agencies, staff is reviewing the draft EIR and preparing to file written comments. 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 draft EIR evaluates the environmental consequences of the Draft Plan's 12 regulatory policies and 61 non-binding recommendations, along with five other project alternatives. The Council has held seven public hearings across the state to take comments on the draft EIR. For the San Diego and Pasadena public hearings, Metropolitan staff and the member agencies coordinated to both attend and provide comment.

Board Report (Bay-Delta Management Report)

Near-Term Delta Actions

Habitat Restoration

Work continued in January on the Lower Yolo Bypass tidal marsh restoration project. The regulatory crediting prospectus for the project is nearing completion. The draft prospectus provides technical justification for over 1,000 acres of both salmon and delta smelt credits to meet the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service requirements in their respective Biological Opinions. In addition, Metropolitan and State and Federal Contractors Water Agency (SFCWA) staff and consultants are making adjustments to the alternative designs for the project to cover the modified hydrodynamics and to maximize tidal habitat with the existing available land. With final concurrence of the land owner and SFCWA Board, the crediting prospectus will be ready for regulatory agency review and the draft EIR will be ready for public comment this spring. The goal remains to maximize habitat credits and biological benefits in the most cost-effective manner.

State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board)

On January 24, the State Water Board issued a Supplemental Notice of Preparation and Notice of Scoping Meeting regarding the Comprehensive Review of the 2006 Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary (Bay-Delta Plan). The scoping meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 16, 2012, and written comments are due April 25, 2012. The State Water Board is currently reviewing objectives related to southern Delta salinity and San Joaquin River flows. This scoping process involves the comprehensive review of other elements of the Bay-Delta Plan, potentially including Sacramento River basin flows and Delta outflow. In addition, the State Water Board provided notice of a planned informational item at the State Water Board's regularly scheduled board meeting on February 21, 2012, to receive public comments on the State Water Board's overall schedule of Bay-Delta Plan actions and the relationship of these actions to the BDCP. Staff is coordinating with state and federal water contractors to develop a strategy and comments for participating in this process.

Staff, through SFCWA, continues to participate in meetings with state and federal water contractors, upstream water users, and power utilities to quantify impacts to water supply, power generation, and environmental compliance if the flow criteria developed in the State Water Board's 2010 flow criteria report are considered in the regulatory proceeding described above. Also, the same parties are coordinating on outreach efforts.

Delta Emergency Preparedness

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

DWR is expected to issue an administrative draft of the Delta Flood Emergency Preparedness, Response and Recovery Program for executive review in the first quarter 2012, for agency review in the second quarter and as a final document in the fourth quarter.

Metropolitan representatives toured levee improvements providing protections to the Mokelumne Aqueducts, consisting of landside slope work, toe berms and setback levees at Woodward Island, Upper Jones Tract and Lower Jones Tract. These improvements, funded by Prop 1E and East Bay Municipal Utility District, partially overlap and help meet levee improvement needs of the emergency freshwater pathway at Woodward Island (west Middle River levee) and at Upper and Lower Jones Tracts (east Middle River levee), and can help reduce levee slumping during major seismic events.

DWR conducted meetings with the State Water Contractors to assess emergency preparedness and response capabilities of State Water Project features south of the export pumps under severe emergency seismic or other conditions.