



● Bay-Delta Management Report

Summary

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

Detailed Report

Long-Term Delta Actions

Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP)

On May 3, California Natural Resources Agency Secretary John Laird sent a letter to Department of the Interior Deputy Secretary David Hayes regarding the progress of ongoing planning efforts for the BDCP and the preparation of the associated environmental review documents. In the letter, the state reconfirmed its commitment to developing the BDCP that reflects a workable plan based on sound science. The letter indicated that there would be a delay in the release of the public review draft of the Environmental Impact Report/ Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/S) (previously scheduled for the end of June 2012) but stressed that the Governor and Secretary Salazar still intend to announce the key elements of a framework for the proposed project in July 2012. No new date has been officially announced for the release of the Draft EIR/S.

Delta Stewardship Council (Council)

On May 14, the Council released the sixth draft of the Delta Plan. Comments on the draft are due June 13, 2012. Metropolitan staff is reviewing the draft and working with other water agencies to develop comments by the deadline. The sixth staff draft Delta Plan includes many improvements over the previous draft. The draft includes 14 regulatory policies implemented through the covered actions consistency process and 68 non-regulatory recommendations. Staff is developing comments addressing key remaining issues of concern including water supply reliability and reducing reliance on the Delta, incorporating the BDCP into the Delta Plan, Delta flows and prioritization of Delta levee investments.

At the May 24 Council meeting, Council reviewed the latest draft focusing on the parts of the Delta plan that changed between the fifth draft released last August and now. The Council is expected to review and discuss the draft in greater detail at its June 14-15, 2012 meeting, and provide direction on preparation of the final draft Delta Plan at their second meeting in June (scheduled for June 28-29). The final draft Delta Plan will be the basis for environmental review, and the Council anticipates circulating a supplemental EIR addressing the final draft Delta Plan this summer.

Near-Term Delta Actions

State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board)

The State Water Board is continuing its phased review and update of the 2006 Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary (Bay-Delta WQCP). The State Water Board held a scoping meeting on May 16 regarding the comprehensive review of the Bay-Delta WQCP, which may include issues such as net Delta outflow objectives, export/inflow objectives, and net flow objectives for other areas such as for Old and Middle River. Staff worked with the State Water Contractors to provide written and oral comments for the scoping meeting.

The State Water Board will hold a series of workshops to provide an update of the Bay-Delta WQCP. The workshops will be organized to facilitate expert scientific input on the selected topics. A consultant for the State Water Board will organize and manage the workshops. Each workshop will include a panel of independent experts who will respond to technical questions concerning each topic. The workshop topics include:

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- August 22, 2012: Ecosystem Changes and the Low Salinity Zone – including the effects of the low salinity zone on various estuarine species, the interaction of salinity with non-flow related factors, and the identification of modeling or other tools that can be used to measure and reasonably protect estuarine habitat;
- September 5, 2012: Salmonids – including flow, cold water pool, habitat, and water project operational constraints needed to reasonably protect Central Valley steelhead, Sacramento River winter-run, Central Valley spring-run, Central Valley fall-run, and Central Valley late fall-run Chinook salmon and the interaction of these issues with non-flow related factors;
- September 6, 2012: Pelagic Organisms – including flow, habitat, and water project operational constraints needed to reasonably protect pelagic species (including Delta smelt and longfin smelt) and the interaction of these flows with non-flow related factors; and
- October 1-2, 2012: Analytical Tools for Evaluating the Water Supply, Hydrodynamic, and Hydropower Effects of the Bay-Delta Plan – including the CalSim II water supply model, DSM2 and RMA2 hydrodynamic models, Plexus hydropower model, and others as applicable, together with results from applying these models to various scenarios.

Staff is working with the state and federal water contractors to develop a technical presentation to State Water Board staff on issues related to south Delta water levels and circulation

Delta Emergency Preparedness

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

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) has released an updated schedule for issuance and review of the Delta Flood Emergency Preparedness, Response and Recovery Plan. A draft EPRRP document will be completed in September 2012 and a final document is scheduled for June 2013. DWR released their draft Delta Emergency Channel Closure Location Study in April, which is an interim report describing analyses to determine suitable material stockpiles and channel closure methods to support implementation of the emergency freshwater pathway.

East Bay Municipal Utility District levee improvements to protect the Mokelumne Aqueducts in the south Delta are nearing completion, a portion of which provides improvements to the eastern levee of the emergency freshwater pathway. URS consultants are analyzing the levee improvements with accompanying geotechnical data to determine their performance under severe seismic conditions. Meetings are being conducted with representatives of Reclamation District 2028 at Bacon Island to review funding, construction and design of levee improvements to the western levee of the emergency freshwater pathway. Construction of toe berm levee improvements to the Bacon Island western pathway levee under the DWR Delta Levees Program is expected to begin in summer 2012.