



● Bay-Delta Management Report

Summary

This report provides a summary of the activities related to the Bay-Delta for April 2013.

Purpose

Informational

Detailed Report

Long-Term Delta Actions

Bay Delta Conservation Plan

April was an active month for the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP). In late March 2013, three additional chapters of the second administrative draft of the BDCP were posted on the website—Chapter 5: Effects Analysis, Chapter 6: Plan Implementation, and Chapter 7: Governance. A public meeting was held on April 4, where the California Natural Resources Agency provided a progress update on BDCP and a preliminary review of draft BDCP chapters 3-7. Formal presentations were made by Deputy Secretary Jerry Meral and representatives from ICF International. A workshop forum was provided concurrent with the public meeting with project staff available to discuss each chapter and to answer specific questions on an individual basis.

In early April, the federal Lead Agencies (U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service [USFWS], and the National Marine Fisheries Service [NMFS]) and Department of Water Resources (DWR) transmitted the administrative draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) to officially designated Cooperating Agencies and Responsible Agencies for consideration. Metropolitan is a Responsible Agency pursuant to CEQA and is represented by the State and Federal Contractors Water Agency (SFCWA) as a designated Non-federal Cooperating Agency under the National Environmental Policy Act. It is anticipated that the state and federal agencies will make the administrative draft EIR/EIS available to the public, via the BDCP website, during May 2013. Review of both administrative drafts, the BDCP, and EIR/EIS will continue over the next several months. Federal review of the administrative draft EIR/EIS is expected to be complete by July 2013 and the public review draft is expected to be released later this year.

Delta Stewardship Council

The Delta Stewardship Council (Council) held public meetings on March 28 and 29, 2013, where staff presented to the Council a review of public comments on all draft documents, including the Final Draft Plan, the draft EIR, and the draft rule-making package. The Council approved a limited number of amendments and directed staff to make the changes and to release the amended regulations for a 15-day comment period ending April 22. With these changes, the Council expects to certify its EIR and approve the Final Delta Plan at its May 16 and 17, 2013 meeting. The Office of Administrative Law would then have 30 days to approve or disapprove of the Council's proposed regulations. Under this schedule, the Council could start implementing the Delta Plan and hearing appeals of "covered actions" as early as July 1, 2013. Staff worked with state and federal water contractors to prepare and submit comments to the Council on April 22, addressing remaining concerns with the Delta Plan draft regulations, including concerns about how the draft regulations address the issues of reduced reliance, one-year water transfers, and BDCP.

Near-Term Delta Actions

Habitat Restoration

Planning for the Lower Yolo Bypass tidal marsh restoration project proceeded in April, which could create over 1,500 acres of both salmon and Delta smelt habitat to meet the USFWS and NMFS requirements in their respective biological opinions for Delta smelt and salmon. On April 22, SFCWA released the Lower Yolo

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Restoration Project Draft EIR for a 45-day public comment period. Certification of the Final EIR by SFCWA is scheduled for July 2013. SFCWA continues to develop final design documents, crediting documents, and permits. The 50 percent design drawings for the project are complete. The new designs, discussed previously, are expected to yield significantly more Operating Criteria & Plan credits than prior estimates. ICF International, the consulting firm hired to assist SFCWA with the preparation of regulatory permits for the project, filed many of the regulatory applications in mid-April.

State Water Resources Control Board

The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) held an informational item at its April 9 meeting on the next steps related to the Comprehensive (Phase 2) Review and Update to the Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan, and on the draft summary report prepared by the facilitator for the recent science and technical workshops. At the meeting, the Delta Science Program Lead Scientist Dr. Peter Goodwin recommended that the Delta Independent Science Board (ISB) have a role in reviewing areas of scientific uncertainty. Staff worked with the State Water Contractors to prepare and submit written comments on April 23 regarding the proposed ISB review.

Delta Emergency Preparedness

DWR continues to make progress on the Delta Emergency, Preparedness, Response and Recovery Plan (EPRRP), and anticipates completion of the final draft report in the fourth quarter of 2013. DWR has indicated they will consider a major earthquake event in formulating conditions for a multiagency emergency response drill pursuant to their draft Delta EPRRP. DWR and the U.S. Army Corps of engineers recently agreed to coordinate their available funds to better prepare coordinated emergency response tactics consistent with the EPRRP in the event of a major flood or earthquake emergency.

A Mitigated Negative Declaration is scheduled to be completed by July 2013 in support of acquisition, facility improvements, and stockpiling at sites in the north and central Delta. This will allow continued emergency materials stockpiling later this calendar year.