



- Bay-Delta Management Report

Summary

This report provides a summary of activities related to the Bay-Delta for February 2014.

Purpose

Informational

Detailed Report

Long-Term Delta Actions

Bay Delta Conservation Plan

The Draft Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) and its corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) were released in December for a 120-day public review period. On February 21, the comment period was extended by 60 days, for a total 180-day review. The final four public open house meetings on the Draft BDCP and EIR/EIS were held in February. Three meetings were conducted in Southern California—Los Angeles, Ontario, and San Diego. Staff is continuing its review of the Draft BDCP and EIR/EIS, in coordination with other state and federal participating public water agencies, to submit comments by the close of the comment period on June 13, 2014.

Near-Term Delta Actions

State Water Resources Control Board

The Delta Science Program hosted a workshop on February 10-11 to identify the best available science to inform the State Water Resources Control Board's (State Board) decisions regarding Delta outflow requirements included in the Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan (WQCP). Delta outflow requirements include both flow objectives and measures that should be included in the program of implementation. The independent panel assembled by the Delta Science Program was provided key scientific papers, reports, and presentations to respond to the following questions:

- What are the key studies that should be relied on in making a decision on Delta outflow requirements?
- Should X2 continue to be used as a regulatory metric? What other metrics could be used?
- What scales of outflow change are needed to produce measureable changes in ecosystem health?
- How are other factors that affect the ecosystem likely to interact with outflow requirements?
- How should outflow be measured and managed?

The panel heard presentations from several invited local experts supported on the panel discussion by Metropolitan staff, David Fullerton and Paul Hutton. The key points made were as follows:

- Outflow regulations should be considered as part of a comprehensive set of actions intended to restore ecosystem functions;
- Reasonable certainty is needed that additional outflow would provide targeted ecosystem functions given the highly altered system and limited availability of water resources serving competing beneficial uses; and
- Aspects of the science regarding outflow are uncertain and in dispute. Significant resources are being invested in science to reduce uncertainties, resolve disagreements, and identify future conservation measures.

The panel will summarize their findings in a written report to the Delta Science Program and State Board. The report will be one piece of information that informs the State Board's update to the Bay-Delta WQCP. The panel

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solicited additional information from local experts to assist in their deliberations. Staff is collaborating with the Public Water Agencies to assemble this information and provide it to the panel.

Operating Criteria and Plan Biological Opinions

As part of a judge-ordered process to develop a robust science and adaptive management program to inform the development and implementation of the OCAP biological opinions, Metropolitan has been collaborating with scientists and experts from the state and federal agencies, the public water agencies, and the non-governmental organization (NGO) community, in a process called the Collaborative Science and Adaptive Management Process (CSAMP). The CSAMP and its work team, the Collaborative Adaptive Management Team (CAMT), is charged with developing a work plan to address how updated science and analysis will be incorporated into the biological opinions for Delta smelt and salmonids. Based on progress that has been made by the CAMT, on February 18, the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) and the federal and state agencies filed a brief with the court requesting that the process continue another year and that the deadlines for completing the smelt and salmonid biological opinions be extended another year. The other parties to the litigation, including Metropolitan, have not opposed that request, but submitted additional comments on the progress to date. The court will determine if enough progress has been made to justify that the CSAMP should continue and whether to add another one-year extension or less to the deadlines for the new biological opinions.

Turbidity Forecasting

Staff continued to participate in Delta Conditions Team (DCT) meetings in February. In spite of recent storms in Northern California, dry conditions continue to result in low turbidity in the Delta. As a result, conditions are not raising concerns about adult Delta smelt migration into the south Delta.

Delta Emergency Preparedness

DWR has prepared a draft plan for Delta Flood Emergency Preparedness, Response and Recovery Program. DWR is expected to provide a status update later in February on the Plan. DWR continues to make progress stockpiling flood preparedness materials at their three new stockpile sites in the Delta.

Metropolitan and DWR representatives have completed several meetings to review the readiness of DWR's recently developed Emergency Response and Recovery (ERT) model, their real time tactical modeling tool to guide flood fighting operations. Metropolitan's purpose has been to test responsiveness of the model under catastrophic multiple inland failure conditions from earthquake events that would severely disrupt export water supplies. The ERT model generally confirms earlier Delta Risk Management Strategy findings that without emergency freshwater pathway development, several years would be required to resume exports. The model is functional, but DWR acknowledges a number of modifications are required to refine its usefulness.