



- Bay-Delta Management Report

Summary

This report provides a summary of activities related to the Bay-Delta for September 2016.

Purpose

Informational

Detailed Report

Near-Term Delta Actions

State Water Resources Control Board

In September, the California WaterFix Petition hearings before the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) continued. Part 1 of the hearings addresses the effects of the project on legal users of water. The first segment (Part 1A) is the presentation of the proposed project by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) and the Bureau of Reclamation (USBR), with all parties having the opportunity to cross examine DWR and USBR witnesses. DWR and USBR have five panels of witnesses to describe the proposed project. The project description, engineering, operations, and modeling panels are finished. The remaining panel presented evidence regarding water rights which began on September 22. The second segment of the hearings (Part 1B), which is scheduled to begin at the end of October, is the presentation of evidence by all protestants regarding alleged injury resulting from the proposed project. DWR and USBR will have the opportunity to cross-examine the evidence presented by the protestants. Metropolitan is participating in the hearings in collaboration with other public water agencies, and staff is currently reviewing the testimony submitted by the protestants submitted for Part 1B.

On September 15, the SWRCB released a draft proposal for the Phase 1 update of the Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan (WQCP) requirements for salinity in the southern Delta and San Joaquin River flows. The new flow requirements are proposed for the protection of fish and wildlife, and the revised salinity requirements are to protect Delta agricultural water use. Staff is reviewing the draft documents. Staff anticipates that the SWRCB will release technical documents pertaining to Phase 2 of the WQCP update process within the next one to two months. Phase 2 will address other potential changes to the WQCP, such as Delta outflows and Sacramento River inflows.

Habitat Restoration

On September 19, the California Natural Resources Agency held a groundbreaking ceremony for the Tule Red Restoration Project, which is a joint effort of the State and Federal Contractors Water Agency (SFCWA) and DWR. Metropolitan is a member of SFCWA and participated in the development of the project. The Tule Red project, located in Solano County's Grizzly Bay region of Suisun Marsh, will restore more than 400 acres of tidal wetlands, which is important habitat for native fish such as Delta smelt, and for enhancing production of food for native fish. Prior to being diked off to create freshwater habitat for a duck hunting club, this property was estuarine tidal habitat. The Tule Red project will involve breaching a natural berm to allow full tidal exchange through the project site. Westervelt Ecological Services is assisting SFCWA in the management, design, and restoration of the site. The project is consistent with the Draft Suisun Marsh Management Plan of the Suisun Marsh Resource Conservation District, the local government entity that manages the marsh. The last major permits have been received from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission. With project construction beginning in 2016, it is expected to be completed in 2019. While some construction will occur in 2016, the majority of the construction will be in the summer of 2017.

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Delta Smelt Resiliency Strategy

DWR is continuing to develop the actions identified in the state's Delta Smelt Resiliency Strategy (Strategy), which includes near-term actions to improve conditions for Delta smelt. The Strategy will be implemented in 2016-2018, with a focus on creating better habitat, enhancing the food web, and reducing levels of aquatic weeds, predators and harmful algal blooms that are detrimental to Delta smelt. In July 2016, DWR worked with a group of partner agencies to implement the North Delta Food Web action, which is included in the Strategy. The action involved augmenting flow in the Yolo Bypass in the summer to promote phytoplankton production, which is an important component of the Delta food web. On August 31, 2016, DWR announced that early monitoring results indicate that the action was effective in boosting phytoplankton. DWR is planning to implement similar actions in 2017 and 2018. Staff continues to coordinate with DWR and other state and federal agencies to provide input regarding the development and implementation of key Strategy actions and the design of a structured framework to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Strategy actions.

Delta Emergency Preparedness

Delta Flood Emergency Management Plan

USACE indicated that their approach for deploying emergency contract services during flood emergencies of the type following a major earthquake in the Delta is to solicit contracts through verbal proposals with work start up within a day of the emergency event. USACE also maintains nationwide emergency contracts that can be further deployed in short timeframes. These processes are effective in deploying emergency services to proper locations and at adequate resource levels.

DWR calibration and validation of the Emergency Response Tool (ERT) for purposes of estimating real time repair and response to levee failure scenarios in the Delta has been delayed. After conducting representative ERT runs to validate times of repair and initiation of emergency freshwater pathway operations, the DWR Flood Emergency Management Office advises that the Delta Flood Emergency Management Plan will be able to be finalized by January 2017.

California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) reported that the draft Northern California Flood Catastrophic Response Plan will be released several months after a unified federal review. As part of this process, Cal OES performed a water security evaluation to confirm adequate water depths and channel geometry for transit of various types of emergency vessels.

Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) Expenditures

Overall

The table below shows the funding and commitments based on: (1) funding agreements between DWR and the state and federal water contractors; (2) funding from the USBR under a Federal Funding Agreement; and (3) funds made available by DWR. The funding agreements between DWR and the water contractors are the December 2008 Delta Habitat Conservation and Conveyance Program (DHCCP) Funding Agreement and July 2010 Supplemental Funding Agreement. Prior to these two funding agreements, an additional \$13.5 million was expended under the November 2006 BDCP Cooperative Cost-Share Agreement for startup costs related to development and review of the BDCP and consulting resources necessary to prepare the BDCP. In addition to these funding agreements, DWR and the USBR have provided additional planning funds. None of the state funds are state general fund dollars. To date, \$14.1 million of additional funds have been received and made available to the budget and are reflected in the table below.

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Metropolitan's Share. Metropolitan's commitment under this program remains at \$63 million.

| Funding Agreements | Total Project (in millions) as of August 2016 | | |
|--|--|-------------------|------------------|
| | Budget | Commitment | Remaining |
| Dec 2008 – DHCCP Funding Agreement | \$ 139.6 | \$ 139.6 | \$ 0 |
| Jul 2010 – Supplemental Funding Agreement | \$ 100.0 | \$ 100.0 | \$ 0 |
| USBR Federal Funding Agreement/DWR State Water Project Funding | \$ 14.1 | \$ 15.4 | (\$1.3) |
| TOTAL | \$ 253.7 | \$ 255.0 | (\$ 1.3) |

* November 2006 BDCP Cooperative Cost-Share Agreement totaling \$13.5 million is not included in the above table.