



- Bay-Delta Management Report

Summary

This report provides a summary of activities related to the Bay-Delta for February 2017.

Purpose

Informational

Detailed Report

Long-Term Delta Actions

California WaterFix

As reported last month, the Delta Science Program staff convened a phased independent scientific peer review process to review and evaluate the methods and scientific information used in developing the California WaterFix (CWF) Biological Opinions. Staff is reviewing the National Marine Fisheries Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service draft Biological Opinions and attended the science review held on January 23 and 24, 2017. The panel presented initial findings at the meeting in which they generally approved of the analytical framework, but they also identified places in the effects analyses where discussions of assumptions and sources of uncertainty were not included. The science panel is expected to release their report in early March 2017.

Near-Term Delta Actions

State Water Resources Control Board

The CWF Petition proceedings before the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) are ongoing. Part 1 of the hearings addresses the effects of the proposed project on legal users of water. Staff is preparing for the rebuttal phase of Part 1 in collaboration with the State Water Contractors (SWC) and the California Department of Water Resources (DWR). On February 21, the SWRCB released a notice that presents a ruling on evidentiary objections to admission of testimony and exhibits into evidence, establishes a deadline for rebuttal testimony and exhibits, and provides a notice of rebuttal hearing dates. The deadline for submitting rebuttal testimony is March 23, 2017, and the hearing for the Part 1 rebuttal will start on April 25, 2017. Part 2 of the hearings, which are scheduled to begin once the Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement is approved and Endangered Species Act permits are approved, will consider the effects of the proposed project on fish and wildlife and review “appropriate flow” criteria.

As reported in previous months, staff continues to participate in several aspects of the SWRCB Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan (WQCP) update process in collaboration with the SWC. The Phase 1 update of the WQCP addresses requirements for salinity in the southern Delta and San Joaquin River flows. The deadline for written comments on the Phase 1 document was extended to March 17, 2017. Phase 2 of the WQCP update addresses other comprehensive changes, such as requirements for Delta outflows, Sacramento River flows and interior Delta operations. For Phase 2, the SWRCB released a draft technical document for review, entitled *Working Draft Scientific Basis Report Supporting Potential Changes to the Bay-Delta Plan*. As reported previously, staff collaborated with the State Water Contractors to submit written comments on the draft report in December 2016. The Delta Independent Science Board (DISB) conducted a review of the draft technical document. On February 16, the DISB finalized their written comments on the draft technical document. The DISB comments recommend further scientific justification of the proposed use of percent unimpaired flow as a basis for establishing flow requirements, and recommend presenting a deeper analysis of non-flow stressors, additional consideration of near-term responses to climate change, and more detail on how regulations can be adaptively managed to improve scientific understanding of environmental flows.

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Science Activities

Staff continues to participate in the Collaborative Science and Adaptive Management Program, providing input on current salmon and Delta smelt studies and plans for future studies. In February, the Collaborative Adaptive Management Team (CAMT) released the final report prepared by the Salmon Scoping Team, titled *Effects of Water Project Operations on Juvenile Salmonid Migration and Survival in the South Delta*. The report, prepared through an extensive process of literature and data review and collaborative analysis, presents key findings and data gaps concerning South Delta salmon survival, areas of technical disagreement and recommendations. The report will be used to develop a CAMT salmon workplan. For 2017, CAMT is planning to continue current Delta smelt studies addressing entrainment and effects of fall outflow, continue involvement in key Delta Smelt Resiliency Strategy actions, and initiate new salmon studies. Staff is also participating in the CAMT Delta Smelt Scoping Team Outflow group and the Flow Alteration Project Work Team. The CAMT Outflow Group is developing an adaptive management plan for potential summer and/or fall flow actions. The actions consist of using augmented flows for the purposes of enhancing Delta smelt survival by increasing flows in either the mainstem Sacramento River and/or in the Yolo Bypass. The Flow Alteration Project Work Team met in February to start development of the conceptual model and general research questions that would be important for promoting survival of Delta smelt.

Delta Emergency Preparedness

Delta Flood Emergency Management Plan

DWR has advised that there will be a separate appendix to the Delta Flood Emergency Management Plan (DFEMP) to address representative results of the Emergency Management Tool, including implementation timelines and resources for development of the freshwater pathway. The U.S. Army Corps (Corps) of Engineers and DWR are also in the process of completing a Delta Emergency Operations Integration Plan, which facilitates linkages between DWR and the Corps during Delta emergency operations.

The potential threat of multiple island failures under a severe seismic event has been the principal concern to water interests reliant on the Delta in recent years. However, most recent flood operations have indicated that both Folsom Dam and Shasta Dam flood releases have been coordinated to reduce to some extent the timing of peak flows through the Delta and the threat to Delta levees. Reservoir release coordination would be employed in the event of a major seismic emergency to facilitate delivery of freshwater to the Delta to mitigate effects of salt water intrusion and facilitate the operation of the freshwater pathway.

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 U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (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, \$14.0 million of additional funds have been received and made available to the budget and are reflected in the table below.

Board Report (Bay-Delta Management Report)

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

Funding Agreements	Total Project (in millions) as of January 2017		
	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	\$ 14.0 **	\$ 18.7	(\$4.7)
TOTAL	\$ 253.6	\$ 258.3	(\$ 4.7)

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

** Rounding off adjustment from \$14.1 million in previous reports