



• Bay-Delta Management Report

Summary

This report provides a summary of activities related to the Bay-Delta for February 2018.

Purpose

Informational

Detailed Report

Long-Term Delta Actions

California WaterFix

On February 7, the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) communicated that it is considering a staged implementation approach for the California WaterFix (CA WaterFix) project. As outlined in DWR's February 7 memo to Public Water Agencies participating in CA WaterFix, DWR is pursuing CA WaterFix as planned, and would take actions that would allow construction to be implemented in stages. Under this approach, Stage 1 of the project would include two intakes with a total capacity of 6,000 cubic-feet per second (cfs), one main tunnel, one intermediate forebay, and one pumping station. The second stage would consist of a third intake with 3,000 cfs capacity, a second tunnel, and a second pumping station, which would bring the total project capacity to the planned 9,000 cfs. Having the option to implement CA WaterFix in stages aligns the urgent statewide need for action with the project's current funding support. Staff is evaluating DWR's potential proposed staged approach and will be updating Metropolitan's Board over the next several weeks of board committee meetings. As directed by the Board, staff is also evaluating an approach where Metropolitan would finance the remaining 3,000 cfs portion of the 9000 cfs project, avoiding the need for staging construction of the project.

On February 13, DWR released a cost-benefit analysis for CA WaterFix that compares the costs and benefits of constructing and operating Stage 1 facilities in relation to what would likely occur if CA WaterFix were not built. The report prepared by Dr. David Sunding, a professor of natural resource economics at UC Berkeley, concluded that the first stage of the project could bring billions of dollars in benefits to both urban and agricultural water users, and is more affordable for consumers than local supply alternatives such as desalination and recycling. Benefits attributed to implementing Stage 1 of CA Waterfix include improved water quality, more reliable water supplies, and enhanced disaster preparedness. The complete cost-benefit report is available on the CA WaterFix website. (https://www.californiawaterfix.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/WaterFixEconomicAnalysis_Final.pdf)

The CA WaterFix Petition proceedings before the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) are ongoing. Part 2 of the hearings address the effects of the proposed project on fish and wildlife. Opening briefs for Part 2 were submitted to the SWRCB on November 30, 2017. Part 2 of the CA WaterFix hearing resumed on February 8 with presentation of oral policy statements from hearing participants and members of the public. The SWRCB cancelled hearing dates in mid-February to give the parties and the SWRCB time to consider motions requesting a stay. On February 21, the SWRCB issued a ruling that it is denying all outstanding requests to stay the proceeding, and the Part 2 hearing resumed on February 22.

Near-Term Delta Actions

Science Activities

Staff continued participation in the Collaborative Science and Adaptive Management Program, including participation on the Collaborative Adaptive Management Team (CAMT). February activities focused on review of draft technical work products and development of CAMT projects for 2018. Staff also provided input to

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development of CAMT workplan items for 2018. With funding contributions from the State Water Contractors, CAMT initiated a project to develop a long-term monitoring and science plan to assess the effects of ambient conditions and management actions on Delta smelt habitat quality and vital rates. CAMT is also discussing potential salmon projects addressing the effects of water project operations on salmon survival and identification of Delta rearing habitats for salmon.

On February 14, staff participated in the Interagency Ecological Program (IEP) stakeholder meeting to receive updates on IEP science activities and discuss strategies to provide input to the IEP workplan for future years. Staff provided input to the Incidental Take Limit for winter-run Chinook salmon developed by the IEP winter-run project work team. Staff also provided input to the Bureau of Reclamation Directed Outflow Project for 2018, which is proposed to monitor Delta Smelt habitat factors throughout the spring to fall 2018 period. Staff is also participating in the Longfin Smelt Management Analysis and Synthesis Team to help develop the overall conceptual model and report describing the biology and ecology of longfin smelt in the San Francisco estuary.

On February 2, staff participated in the Delta Independent Science Board meeting to provide comments on the Draft report titled “Water Quality Science in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, Part 1: Chemical Contaminants and Nutrients”. The report included a review of current water quality monitoring programs in the Delta and an evaluation of how the monitoring information is used in management decisions.

Staff attended and provided a presentation at the Gordon Research Conference on Predator-Prey Interactions in late January 2018. The conference brings together speakers from a range of disciplines to address both the underlying mechanisms and emergent impacts of the predator-prey dynamic. Staff presented their planned research to better understand if modification or elimination of predator contact points results in increased juvenile salmonid survival. Contact points are manmade structures associated with increased predation mortality of juvenile salmonids (e.g. diversions, scour holes, pilings).

California WaterFix 2017 Program Budget and Commitments

As reported last month, with completion of the planning phase in 2017, the Bay Delta Conservation Plan Expenditures report that was a regular section in the monthly Bay Delta Management Report was closed out in October 2017 and will no longer be included. In its place, the California WaterFix 2017 Program Budget and Commitments (Program Budget) was established and reports were included in this monthly Board Report from the month of November 2017. The commitments and expenditures following the completion of the planning phase in 2017 have been for post-Environmental Impact Report work not classified as planning. Expenditures under this 2017 Program Budget were lower than estimated, and most of the 2017 Budget was carried forward into the 2018 Program Budget. The funding is being provided by DWR and none of the State funds are State General Funds. The 2018 Program Budget table below shows the budget and commitments as of the end of January 2018:

California WaterFix Program Budget & Commitments (in millions)		
2018 Budget	Commitments	Remaining
\$ 133.69	\$ 4.87	\$ 128.82