



## ● Bay-Delta Management Report

### Summary

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

### Purpose

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Informational

### Detailed Report

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#### Long-Term Delta Actions

##### California WaterFix

On November 8, the Delta Stewardship Council (DSC) issued a Staff Report and Staff Draft Determination regarding the appeals of Certification of Consistency with the Delta Plan for the California WaterFix project submitted by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR). The staff report concludes that substantial evidence does not exist in the record to support the DWR findings that the California WaterFix project is consistent with the Delta Plan, and staff recommends that the DSC remand the matter to DWR for reconsideration. Concerns raised by DSC staff addressed climate change, reduced reliance on Delta water supplies, compliance with Delta water quality objectives, and conflicts with Delta land uses. The DSC held a public workshop on November 15 and 16 to receive comments on the staff draft documents prior to the release of the final report and DSC action scheduled for December 20-21, 2018. Staff participated in the DSC workshop and provided oral comments in support of the California WaterFix project and DWR's Certification of Consistency. At the end of the first day of the workshop, DSC Chair Randy Fiorini encouraged DWR to consider withdrawing the certification of consistency. Public comment concluded on November 16, and Chair Fiorini asked staff to refine the draft determination in light of public comments received. Comments on the staff draft were due on Monday, November 19.

The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) proceedings for the California WaterFix petition for additional point of diversion are continuing. The sur-rebuttal phase for Part 2 of the hearings, which consider the effects of the proposed project on fish and wildlife, concluded on October 1, 2018. The SWRCB has not yet scheduled closing briefs for the Part 2 hearings. Staff is coordinating with other State Water Project contractor agencies to participate in the hearings.

##### Joint Powers Authorities

The Delta Conveyance Design and Construction Authority (DCA) held a meeting on November 15. At the meeting, the DCA adopted a Conflict of Interest Code and authorized executing an agreement for Engineering Design Management Services. Two presentations on alternative design/construction delivery methods were also provided, which highlighted the risks and advantages of various project delivery methods. The Delta Conveyance Finance Authority (Finance Authority) also held a meeting on November 15 and adopted agency Bylaws. Both agencies also held closed sessions where potential project litigation risks were discussed. The next regularly scheduled meetings of the DCA and Finance Authority will be December 14, 2018.

#### Near-Term Delta Actions

##### State Water Resources Control Board

The SWRCB process to consider proposed amendments to the Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan (WQCP) for the Lower San Joaquin River and Southern Delta is continuing. The proposed WQCP amendments would update water flow objectives in the Lower San Joaquin River and its major tributaries, the Stanislaus, Tuolumne, and Merced Rivers, and would amend southern Delta salinity objectives. On October 24, 2018, the SWRCB released a response to oral comments received at the August 21-22, 2018 SWRCB meeting to consider the proposed

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WQCP amendments. The SWRCB was scheduled to consider adoption of the proposed WQCP amendments on November 7, but in response to a letter from Governor Jerry Brown and Lieutenant Governor Gavin Newsom requesting a delay, the SWRCB voted to postpone further consideration of the proposed WQCP amendments for the Lower San Joaquin River and Southern Delta until December 11, 2018 to allow more time for voluntary settlement agreement talks to yield results.

### Science Activities

On November 4-8, staff attended and gave a presentation at the North American Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry 39<sup>th</sup> Annual meeting in Sacramento. The meeting covers the current research on contaminant effects and management of contaminants. Staff collaborated with researchers from UC Davis and state and federal fish agencies to conduct a study investigating factors that affect Delta smelt health and reproductive condition. The conference presentation, titled “Multiple stressor impacts from the San Francisco Estuary on the reproductive health of the threatened Delta smelt, *Hypomesus transpacificus*,” reported that poor nutrition and health status of Delta smelt resulted in poor reproductive status. Study results also indicated that actions that would improve prey and reduce contaminants would significantly benefit Delta smelt.

Staff, in collaboration with researchers from the U.S. Geological Survey, ICF, RMA and San Francisco State University, is conducting an intensive field sampling for longfin smelt. The objective of the study is to quantify the stratification of longfin smelt due to water clarity. The results of the field study are expected early next year, and may explain the survey bias identified by researchers such as Dr. James Patterson at Oregon State University.

Staff is working with Tetra Tech to characterize the Delta outflow and salinity intrusion conditions in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, in comparison with the conditions prior to when the Central Valley Project and State Water Project were built. This effort relies on the C&H Sugar Company barge travel data and the Delta monthly inflow data published in early DWR bulletins. Re-constructed June through September Delta outflow, when normalized to unimpaired spring runoff conditions, was found to be systematically higher than subsequent pre-Shasta Dam (i.e. pre-project) summer outflow. Given known anthropogenic changes that were occurring during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, including upstream irrigation development (particularly rice cultivation) and reservoir construction, increased summer water use is a reasonable explanation for this observed difference. However, this explanation was found to be incomplete and this observed difference can be partially attributed to other hydrologic drivers. This work was unable to detect a change in the system’s flow-salinity response during this period; therefore, resulting trends in seawater intrusion are attributed primarily to changes in hydrology.

Staff continued participating in the Collaborative Science and Adaptive Management Program (CSAMP), including participation on the Collaborative Adaptive Management Team (CAMT). In November, CAMT considered options for developing a salmon science plan and a list of recommended salmon actions for CSAMP engagement. CAMT also received an update on the development of a Delta Smelt Science Plan.

### **Delta Emergency Preparedness**

#### Delta Flood Emergency Management Plan

In recent months, DWR has completed all planned rock deliveries to major DWR storage facilities at Stockton and Rio Vista. In addition to these stockpiles, DWR is placing containerized flood fight materials at Brannon Island near the central Delta, and is considering dispersing materials to other Delta locations. DWR has issued grants for local remedial stockpiles in the Delta through counties in coordination with reclamation districts. Communications for flood fighting operations have been facilitated by installation of a communication tower at Twitchell Island.

The Delta Flood Emergency Management Plan is undergoing final internal and executive level review at DWR prior to completion.