



● Bay-Delta Management Report

Summary

This report provides a summary of activities related to the Bay-Delta for June 2020.

Purpose

Informational

Detailed Report

Long-Term Delta Actions

Delta Conveyance

On June 15, the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) submitted a revised permit application pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act (Section 404 permit application) to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to request authorization for the proposed Delta Conveyance project activities in the waters of the United States. DWR is submitting the Section 404 permit application now in order to formally engage USACE in early coordination with DWR's California Environmental Quality Act process regarding environmental review under USACE's process for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, as well as Clean Water Act and Rivers and Harbors Act. The USACE permit process will not be concluded until National Environmental Policy Act and all other relevant environmental compliance efforts are complete.

DWR is reviewing comments received during the public scoping period for the proposed Delta Conveyance project, which started with the release of the Notice of Preparation on January 15, 2020. DWR is using the information received to formulate alternatives to the proposed project and identify methods to assess potential environmental impacts. DWR is drafting a Scoping Summary Report to document the comments received.

Joint Powers Authorities

To comply with public health recommendations regarding public meetings and social distancing efforts, the Delta Conveyance Design and Construction Authority's (DCA) regularly scheduled meeting on June 18 was held online via conference line and video. The DCA Board considered adoption of the budget for Fiscal Year 2020/21 and a resolution to adopt the Allowable Travel Expense Policy. The results of the Independent Technical Review Report of the Intakes were also presented. The June 18 Delta Conveyance Finance Authority Board Meeting was cancelled. The June 24 Stakeholder Engagement Committee (SEC) meeting focused on soils transportation and balance, a follow-up on the SEC comments and an update on the tribal outreach efforts by DWR.

Near-Term Delta Actions

Habitat Restoration

The Tule Red Tidal Restoration Project is a joint effort by the State and Federal Contractors Water Agency and DWR to open more than 400 acres of wetlands to daily tides in the southern Suisun Marsh to benefit native fish species. The project construction and levee breach were completed in fall 2019. In June, monitoring crews reported finding dozens of the state-listed juvenile longfin smelt inside and outside the 420-acre tidal wetland restoration site in Grizzly Bay. This is a promising start for the Tule Red project. The State Water Contractors Science Program is funding a study to continue to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the restoration.

Board Report (Bay-Delta Management Report)

Science Activities

Staff participated in the Spring Run Steering Committee for the spring run chinook salmon population estimate workshop which will be held in September 2020. The impetus for this workshop is to produce a science/monitoring plan for spring run based on best available science. The workshop will review the “state of the science” for spring run and include sessions on life history, tools for identifying spring run (genetics, length at date, other probabilistic methods), existing monitoring, and approaches to develop a juvenile production estimate.

Staff continued participating in the Collaborative Science and Adaptive Management Program (CSAMP), including participation on the Collaborative Adaptive Management Team (CAMT). The June 16 CAMT meeting included a brain-storming discussion of CSAMP priorities for 2021/22, a status update on the Interagency Ecological Program monitoring survey design review, and discussion of next steps for Delta Smelt Science Plan implementation. Staff participated in a survey that will inform the development of the Coordinated Salmonid Science Plan (CSSP) for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, an initiative of the CAMT Salmonid Scoping Team. The objective of the CSSP is to use the best available information to integrate and logically prioritize applied science, monitoring, and management activities in the Delta region dedicated to salmonid conservation and recovery for all runs of Chinook salmon and steelhead. This work differs from past efforts in its focus on integrative synthesis and a commitment to distill the diverse list of previously proposed activities into a set of clear, actionable priorities for decision-makers. The focus of the survey was to sort a list of activities that are to be prioritized. Preliminary results of the survey will be shared next month and included in a final report due at the end of the year.

Staff continued to participate in forums to contribute to the development of up-to-date science and collaboration. In June, the State Water Contractors Board approved a contract for a new science study evaluating relative environmental risk of contaminants in the Delta to Delta smelt and Chinook salmon. Staff is participating on the advisory committee for this study. In June, staff also participated in collaborative Delta science forums to provide input to workplans and developing studies, including the Delta Independent Science Board, the Delta Regional Monitoring Program, the Interagency Ecological Program project work teams and the Delta Science Program Science Needs Assessment Workshop.

Delta Emergency Preparedness

Delta Flood Emergency Management Plan

In May, the Sacramento Joint Flood Operations Center conducted a flood emergency exercise addressing flood effects to San Joaquin River levees both within and outside the Delta region. Flood flows and response measures of the exercise provided informative data beneficial to development of the emergency freshwater pathway. The exercise included the use of a Flood Emergency Response Information Exchange online data sharing system developed by DWR to improve flood emergency preparedness, response and recovery through a real-time GIS interface.

In April, DWR awarded a contract to Nucor Skyline for the acquisition of large pipe pile and sheet pile used in combination for closure of deep levee breaches for development of the freshwater pathway.