



## ● Bay-Delta Management Report

### Summary

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

### Purpose

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Informational

### Detailed Report

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#### Long-Term Delta Actions

##### Delta Conveyance

As part of the effort to formally engage the U.S Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in the Delta Conveyance Project, the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) recently submitted a permit application to USACE for Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act. During the federal National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) scoping period, stakeholders including the public will have an opportunity to comment on the permit application and EIS. Additionally, DWR is required to get a permit from USACE to identify and address potential impacts to federal flood control projects. To initiate this process, DWR requested and received approval from the Central Valley Flood Protection Board (CVFPB). This approval allows DWR to engage in early coordination with USACE and the CVFPB during development of the environmental documents. DWR expects decisions on the permit after the CEQA and NEPA processes are complete and the design process has progressed.

DWR adopted the Final Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for soil investigations in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta on July 9, 2020. Soil investigation will include data collection, soil samples and surveys in support of DWR's efforts to better understand the region's geology to support the evaluation of the proposed Delta Conveyance Project. On August 10, the Central Delta Water Agency, the South Delta Water Agency, and the Local Agencies of the North Delta filed a lawsuit in California's Superior Court, Sacramento County against DWR challenging DWR's adoption of the MND.

##### Joint Powers Authorities

The Delta Conveyance Design and Construction Authority (DCA) approved the Biennial Board of Director Officer Appointments and Resolution Updating the Bylaws Regarding Officer Terms, and then appointed officers by motion, at its regularly scheduled meeting on July 16, 2020. The results of the Tunnel Independent Technical Review No. 2 and DCA responses to the review were also presented. The next DCA meeting was held on August 20 where the DCA Board was presented a preliminary cost assessment on the proposed Delta Conveyance Project. The cost information developed at this early stage in the planning process will be refined over time as planning and environmental review proceeds and more precise design and engineering are available, based on industry standard methodology. Early planning cost assessments such as the above include large allowances to account for unknown factors that will have greater definition later in the process. The DCA Board also approved Amendment #3 to the Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement. This amendment generally relates to the DCA's budget process. Other informational items provided to the DCA board included the DCA Monthly report, updates on the Stakeholder Engagement Committee (SEC), and DCA leadership spotlight which allows DCA team members to be introduced and describe the work they perform.

The Delta Conveyance Finance Authority (DCFA) approved changes to the DCFA's investment policy at its regularly scheduled board meeting on July 16, 2020. The DCFA regularly scheduled August 20 board meeting was cancelled.

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The August 26 SEC meeting focused on updated traffic histograms, updates on intake designs, and a briefing regarding a new Delta Conveyance alternative.

### Sites Reservoir

On July 28, 2020, Governor Newsom released a final version of the Water Resilience Portfolio, the Administration's blueprint for equipping California to cope with more extreme droughts and floods, rising temperatures, declining fish populations, over-reliance on groundwater and other challenges. Fast-tracking the construction of Sites Reservoir, the off-stream storage facility, was among the elements of the final portfolio.

A Strategic Planning Session Workshop was held on August 13 to engage the Authority Board and the Reservoir Committee on various strategic elements, and to identify and discuss the significant opportunities, challenges and activities that will guide and direct the achievement of the mission and goals. Future work after the workshop will align the activities and milestones, strengthen the organization, and describe process reporting and performance measures. A draft Strategic Plan is scheduled to be delivered in September 2020.

### **Near-Term Delta Actions**

#### Regulatory Activities

Staff continues to participate in the newly formed groups called for in the 2019 Biological Opinion for the State Water Project (SWP) and Central Valley Project (CVP), and the 2020 Incidental Take Permit (ITP) for Long-term Operation of the SWP, to address science needs for management and operation of the water projects. The Delta Coordination Group is to coordinate the CVP and SWP management for listed species and is currently focused on Delta smelt summer/fall actions. The Longfin smelt Science Program is the new cooperative science technical team to inform the management of Longfin smelt under the 2020 ITP.

#### Science Activities

Staff continued participating in the Collaborative Science and Adaptive Management Program, including participation on the Collaborative Adaptive Management Team (CAMT). The August 18 CAMT meeting included an update on the Suisun Marsh Salinity Control Gates action, which is a project to provide increased low salinity habitat for Delta smelt. The presentation included results from 2019 gate operations and the proposed monitoring and assessment workplan for 2020. CAMT also received an update on the Delta smelt Structured Decision Making project and discussed a proposal to develop a Delta smelt adaptive management framework.

Staff continued to participate in the State Water Contractors (SWC) science program. On August 11, the SWC released the "SWC Annual Science Report 2019-2020" ([https://swc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Report\\_2019-2020-Annual-Science-Report\\_8.10.20\\_FINAL.pdf](https://swc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Report_2019-2020-Annual-Science-Report_8.10.20_FINAL.pdf)). The report highlights the importance of investing in science and research to provide a more reliable water supply for California, and to protect, restore and enhance the Delta ecosystem. The report also highlights accomplishments and areas of scientific research. The SWC invested more than \$2.7 million in science and research efforts in FY 2019/20 which will help develop new management approaches to managing protected species and water supply.

Staff also participated in other collaborative Delta science forums to provide input to workplans and studies, including the Delta Independent Science Board, the Delta Regional Monitoring Program, the Interagency Ecological Program Stakeholder meeting and the Delta Science Program Science Needs Assessment Workshop.

### **Delta Emergency Preparedness**

#### Delta Flood Emergency Management Plan

DWR is conducting emergency response exercises to train personnel, test response effectiveness and upgrade Delta emergency preparedness plans. A large-scale emergency exercise is planned in the spring 2021 involving multiple-island failures requiring robust response measures of the Delta Flood Emergency Management Plan (DFEMP), including the emergency freshwater pathway. It is planned as a tabletop exercise requiring preliminary testing in fall 2020 to prepare for a more comprehensive exercise in the spring. DWR is preparing input materials and manuals for the exercise and will use findings to prepare an after-action report and update the DFEMP. In

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connection with these processes, DWR conducts monthly meetings to review DWR and USACE emergency stockpile inventories and local emergency supplies and machinery for levee breach repairs.