



● Bay-Delta Management Report

Summary

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

Purpose

Informational

Detailed Report

Long-Term Delta Actions

Delta Conveyance

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) is continuing to develop an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) under the California Environmental Quality Act. Current work is focused on formulation of alternatives to be analyzed in the EIR, descriptions of the existing conditions, and development of methods to analyze potential impacts on environmental resources. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) initiated compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act by issuing a Notice of Intent to develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The EIS scoping period closed on October 20, 2020, and the USACE received about 90 comment letters and emails.

DWR completed soil investigation activities in the Delta that were a part of previous efforts over the summer. DWR and the Delta Conveyance Design and Construction Authority (DCA) have started soil investigations under the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration for Soil Investigations in the Delta that was adopted on July 9, 2020. The DCA completed geophysical surveys and soil borings on Bouldin Island that started on October 5, 2020. Soil borings and cone penetration tests have started on a limited subset of sites on public rights of way. Additionally, DWR and the DCA are working to obtain temporary entry on private lands. A Streambed Alteration Agreement, per Fish and Game Code (Section 1602), has been executed and DWR is continuing to pursue permits for sites that fall under the jurisdiction of the Rivers and Harbors Act (Section 408). Those sites are not included in the near-term efforts. Investigations at any given site will not occur until property owners have been notified and required permits and approvals for that site have been obtained.

On November 16, DWR released a survey to collect information on how low-income, minority, and other underserved communities rely on resources in the Delta. This information will help assess potential impacts and benefits to these communities. The survey is available in English, Spanish and Chinese at www.YourDeltaYourVoice.org. The survey period has been extended from November 30 to December 11, 2020.

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DWR is developing a conceptual approach for forming a Community Benefits Program and will be bringing ideas to the community, including the DCA's Stakeholder Engagement Committee, in December 2020. The objective is to work collaboratively with the community in the development of the program, and the first step will be to create a framework.

Beginning January 2021, funding for the Delta Conveyance Project (DCP) planning is anticipated to occur with the execution of several Funding Agreements between DWR and DCP participating Public Water Agencies (PWA). These agreements are currently advancing to their respective PWA governing boards for action within the month of November and early December 2020.

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Joint Powers Authorities

In response to the current economic conditions, the DCA board approved the reduction of the existing fiscal year (FY) 2020/21 budget by \$7 million at the November DCA board meeting. The originally adopted FY 2020/21 budget of \$34 million was reduced to \$27 million. The DCA will continue to provide necessary technical analysis, geotechnical work and continue to advance stakeholder outreach. The DCA will scale back, and in some cases, defer organizational management functions, engineering deliverables, and field services.

The focus of the November DCA Stakeholder Engagement Committee (SEC) meeting centered on DCA responding to various outstanding SEC questions that were deferred to future meetings. The logistics of the Bethany Alternative, including traffic routes to each of the four main work sites and how the pipelines would be installed from the pumping plant to the Bethany Reservoir was presented to the SEC. DCA also proposed continuing to work with the SEC through the end of 2021 to finalize the Bethany Alternative and to discuss a community benefits framework, geotechnical studies, and potential design changes to address impacts.

The November regular meeting of the Delta Conveyance Finance Authority Board of Directors was cancelled.

Sites Reservoir

In their November meetings, the Sites Project Authority Board (Authority Board) and the Sites Reservoir Committee (Reservoir Committee) approved the Permitting Action Plan which will guide implementation of the project's permitting efforts throughout the Amendment 2 Work Plan efforts. The Authority Board approved the Authority budget for FY 2021, which occurs between January 1, 2021 and December 31, 2021. The Authority Board and Reservoir Committee were also given the opportunity to review and comment on the key parameters for the Sites Project Authority's water right application to the State Water Resources Control Board, the approach for updates to the Sites Water Storage Policy, the proposed 2020 Delegation of Authority Matrix, and the preliminary draft project schedule through construction completion.

Near-Term Delta Actions

Regulatory Activities

Staff continued to participate in the collaborative group process called for in the 2019 Biological Opinion (BiOp) for the State Water Project (SWP) and Central Valley Project, and the 2020 Incidental Take Permit (ITP) for Long-term Operation of the SWP, to address science needs to inform management and operation of the water projects. In November, staff collaborated with others to review and provide input to the BiOp/ITP mandated Summer/Fall Action plan and the Monitoring and Science Plan, the Juvenile Production Estimate monitoring plan for spring-run Chinook salmon, steelhead monitoring plan for the San Joaquin Basin and the ITP-mandated Longfin smelt Science Plan.

Science Activities

Staff continued participating in the Collaborative Science and Adaptive Management Program (CSAMP), including participation on the Collaborative Adaptive Management Team (CAMT). The November 17 CAMT meeting included discussion of several salmon science topics. CAMT received a presentation on the efforts to develop a Winter Run Life Cycle Model (WRLCM). Development of the WRLCM is of interest to Metropolitan due to its use in informing management decisions. CAMT also received a briefing on the recently completed *Coordinated Salmonid Science Planning Assessment* report and proposed next steps. Staff participated in the technical workgroup for this project and provided input to the project report. CAMT also discussed potential approaches for a new CSAMP initiative addressing salmon recovery.

Staff continued to participate in forums to ensure good science and collaboration. In November, staff participated in the Interagency Ecological Program (IEP) Stakeholder meeting and reviewed and provided comments on the *Interagency Ecological Program Long-term Monitoring Element Review: Pilot Approach and Methods Development (2020)* report. This report is the product of a pilot effort to review three long-term IEP monitoring surveys and their capacity to monitor the fish community of the San Francisco Estuary. Staff also participated in

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the November 13 Delta Independent Science Board meeting, which focused on the impacts of non-native species in the Delta and the need to develop a food web model for the Delta.