



## ● Bay-Delta Management Report

### Summary

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This report provides a summary of activities related to the Bay-Delta for May 2022.

### Purpose

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Informational

### Detailed Report

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#### Long-Term Delta Actions

##### Delta Conveyance

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) is continuing to develop a public Draft Environmental Impact Report under the California Environmental Quality Act for the Delta Conveyance Project (DCP). The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), as part of its permitting review under the Clean Water Act and Rivers and Harbors Act, is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act. DWR and USACE are planning to release draft environmental documents for public review in summer 2022.

##### Joint Powers Authorities

The Delta Conveyance Design and Construction Authority (DCA) Board of Directors met on May 19. The DCA proposed draft budget for fiscal year (FY) 2022/23 was presented for discussion. The planned technical work for next FY focuses on support for DWR on permitting activities and engineering aspects of the DCP, continued implementation of the geotechnical program to better understand conditions across the Delta, and consideration of a range of engineering concepts and procurement and contracting strategies. The final budget for FY 2022/23 will be presented for board approval at the June meeting.

The Delta Conveyance Finance Authority Board of Directors also met on May 19 and considered a proposed budget for FY 2022/23.

##### Sites Reservoir

At their May meetings, the Sites Project Authority Board and the Sites Reservoir Committee amended the Sites Project Authority Real Estate and Land Management Policy creating additional flexibility in establishing the price and terms of purchase option agreements. They also approved issuing a sole-source contract with the University of California Santa Cruz to perform modeling services using the Winter-Run Chinook Salmon Lifecycle Model for evaluating the proposed project and operations.

#### Near-Term Delta Actions

##### Regulatory Activities

Staff continued to participate in the collaborative groups called for in the 2019 Biological Opinions for the State Water Project (SWP) and Central Valley Project, and in the 2020 Incidental Take Permit for long-term operation of the SWP, to address science needs and inform management and operation of the water projects. In May, staff continued collaboration with state and federal agencies to develop a monitoring program for steelhead populations within the San Joaquin Basin. Efforts in May focused on developing a list of directed science studies that are needed to develop an estimate of juvenile steelhead production.

##### Science Activities

Staff continued participating in the Collaborative Science and Adaptive Management Program (CSAMP), including participation on the Collaborative Adaptive Management Team (CAMT). In May, CAMT received

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briefings on the status and findings of science studies, including the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's Directed Outflow Program, which is a collaborative study to improve ecological understanding of Delta smelt, and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Six Agency Monitoring Design Review report. CAMT also continued discussions on the CAMT monitoring assessment effort.

Staff continued collaboration with non-government environmental organizations and public water agencies on Phase 2 of the CSAMP Salmon Recovery Initiative, which is focused on soliciting actions planned to aid in salmon recovery. In May, the project team conducted planning for outreach workshops that will be held in June. The June workshops will invite interested parties to a series of "story telling" workshops in which participants will share their values related to salmon recovery and develop those values into objectives that will be included in the decision-making process of selecting actions to recover salmon.

Staff continued work on the Delta Smelt and Native Species Preservation Project, which will utilize Delta island properties currently owned by Metropolitan to evaluate opportunities to support Delta smelt supplementation efforts. The U.S. Geological Survey continued work to monitor the impoundments on the Delta islands to determine their current suitability for Delta smelt supplementation research, and study findings suggest that fall 2022 would be an appropriate time to conduct a pilot study using hatchery Delta smelt for mesocosm studies in support of state and federal agencies' Delta smelt supplementation efforts. Staff is working with CDFW and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to obtain the appropriate permits for the study this fall, and in May staff submitted the permit request package to USFWS and CDFW to conduct the Impoundment Propagation Study. The study will introduce Delta smelt into impoundments on the Delta islands. Staff also provided a briefing to the Interagency Ecological Program Stakeholder group on the Delta Smelt and Native Species Preservation Project.

### **Delta Emergency Preparedness**

DWR completed an After-Action Report for a Tabletop Exercise conducted in 2021, which analyzed the restoration of freshwater export operations from the Delta after multiple levee failures resulting from a major earthquake in the region that would curtail export operations. The exercise evaluated the effectiveness of the Delta Flood Emergency Management Plan (DFEMP) completed by DWR in 2018, which is designed to guide the restoration of freshwater conveyance and export operations following such an event. The After-Action Report concludes that the DFEMP is the appropriate tool for restoring water project operations under these types of emergency conditions and that related DWR emergency operations procedures should continue to be modified to support the DFEMP. Findings from the After-Action Report will be incorporated into a revised DFEMP to be published in 2023.