



● Bay-Delta Management Report

Summary

This report provides a summary of activities related to the Bay-Delta for June 2021.

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 (CEQA). DWR is planning four technical webinars to inform the public and interested stakeholders about the current progress related to preparation of the Draft EIR. Each webinar will feature presentations from technical staff about the approaches, methodologies and assumptions to be used in conducting impact analyses in the Draft EIR. Information about impact findings and specific mitigation measures is not available at this time but will be included in future outreach efforts following publication of the public Draft EIR.

DWR conducted a survey in November and December 2020 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 report documenting the survey results has been posted on DWR's website: https://water.ca.gov/-/media/DWR-Website/Web-Pages/Programs/Delta-Conveyance/Public-Information/DCP_EJ-Survey-Report-5-28-2021_Final_508.pdf.

Joint Powers Authorities

During the June 17, Delta Conveyance Design and Construction Authority (DCA) Board of Directors Meeting, the board approved the \$21.5 million budget for fiscal year (FY) 2021/22. There is currently an underspend of approximately \$2 million for the current FY which is anticipated to roll over into the budget for next year following the closeout of the current FY in August 2021. If the DCA Board subsequently approves this added roll over amount, it would increase the overall budget for FY 2021/22 by about \$2 million. Planned technical work in the upcoming year will largely be focused on studies to support preparation of the Draft CEQA documents, continued execution of the geotechnical program, and consideration of a range of project refinements to be further evaluated during final design.

The DCA Stakeholder Engagement Committee (SEC) met on June 23 where an update on DCA design changes and an update on DWR's efforts regarding the Community Benefits Program were presented. DWR also presented the results of the recent Environmental Justice survey.

The Delta Conveyance Finance Authority regularly scheduled June meeting was cancelled.

Sites Reservoir

In the joint Sites Project Authority Board (Authority Board) and the Sites Reservoir Committee (Reservoir Committee) meeting on June 23, the Authority Board and Reservoir Committee accepted the updated Sites Reservoir Project cost estimate. The updated feasibility-level cost estimate is for the "right sized" project and is intended to provide potential participants with a higher degree of certainty for project affordability. The feasibility cost estimate for a 1.5-million-acre-foot reservoir (Alternative 1) is estimated at approximately \$3.93 billion (2021 dollars) and the feasibility cost estimate for a 1.3-million-acre-foot reservoir (Alternative 2) is estimated at approximately \$3.87 billion (2021 dollars).

Board Report (Bay-Delta Management Report)

Near-Term Delta Actions

Habitat Restoration

Staff continues to participate on the Fisheries and Engineering Technical Team for the Yolo Bypass Salmonid Habitat and Adult Passage (Fremont Weir Notch) project. The purpose of the project is to remove barriers to migration for salmonids and sturgeon between the Sacramento River and the Yolo Bypass. DWR proposes to install operable gates in the concrete Fremont Weir to provide access to 17,000 acres of floodplain rearing habitat for out-migrating juvenile salmon and allow passage and prevent stranding of adult salmonids and sturgeon at flows below crest height of the weir. DWR has obtained permits from the State Water Resources Control Board (Section 401 Water Quality Certification), and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) (draft ITP and Section 1600 Streambed Alteration Agreement). Moving forward, DWR will continue efforts to obtain necessary permits for the project and complete final design. Project construction is scheduled to begin May 2022, and operations are expected to commence in 2023.

Regulatory Activities

Staff continued to participate in the collaborative groups called for in the 2019 Biological Opinions (BiOp) for the State Water Project (SWP) and Central Valley Project, and in the 2020 Incidental Take Permit (ITP) for Long-term Operation of the SWP, to address science needs and inform management and operation of the water projects. In June, staff worked with state and federal agencies to develop a Juvenile Production Estimate (JPE) for Spring-run Chinook salmon, a requirement of the ITP. The JPE would be the basis for managing take levels at the export.

Science Activities

Staff continued participating in the Collaborative Science and Adaptive Management Program (CSAMP), including participation on the Collaborative Adaptive Management Team (CAMT). At the June 15 meeting, CAMT received a detailed update from CDFW staff on near-term actions to benefit salmon, including information on the status of implementation. The near-term salmon actions discussed included habitat restoration, fish food enhancement, removal of barriers to fish passage, screening of water diversions, salmon rearing projects, and projects to improve survival of out-migrating salmon. CAMT discussed a potential role to help analyze or implement near-term actions and will continue the discussion at a future meeting. CAMT also discussed the CSAMP Organizational Framework for Delta Smelt and received a presentation from U.S. Bureau of Reclamation on the Water Year 2020 Seasonal Report for Old and Middle River Flow Management.

Staff is leading a CSAMP effort to collaboratively develop a scientific definition of salmon recovery, expressed as a suite of clear, measurable objectives and landscape level quantitative targets. Staff is planning and participating in a series of technical workshops to develop this definition. The first set of workshops, which are currently underway, are focused on the following tasks: (1) exploring different case studies and examples for structuring and defining salmon recovery, (2) working toward consensus on a draft framework and key elements needed for a definition of salmon recovery, (3) exploring and framing measurable draft objective(s) for salmon recovery, and (4) discussing the approach(es) for defining quantitative landscape targets and thresholds. After the first workshop, the facilitators for this effort (Compass and Kearns and West) will review and organize the key elements, measurable draft objective(s) and approaches for defining quantitative landscape targets and thresholds into a draft framework to be presented to workshop participants in the late fall for review. This effort includes the participation of state and federal resource agencies, public water agencies, and non-governmental organizations.

On June 24, the Delta Stewardship Council approved the 2021 Delta Science Proposal Solicitation Awards for 16 proposals selected through a competitive process. One of the proposals selected for funding is the proposal submitted by Trout Unlimited titled *Developing an Inclusive, Landscape Scale Process for Central Valley Salmonids*. The funding awarded to this proposal will support phases 2 and 3 of the CSAMP Salmon Recovery Project (Project). Phase 1 of the Project is funded by the State Water Contractors Science Program.