

# California Bay-Delta Public Advisory Committee Water Supply Subcommittee January 21, 2004 Meeting Summary

Bonderson Building Hearing Room  
9:00 a.m. to noon

## Welcome and Introductions -9:10 am

The following subcommittee members and alternates attended the meeting:  
Jerry Meral, Greg Gartrell, Alan Zepp, and Randall Neudeck.

### ***The meeting focused on the following agenda items:***

1. Environmental Water Account Briefing
2. South Delta Improvement and Bay-Delta Program Update
3. CALSIM II Science Review Report Briefing
4. Update on the Los Vaqueros Expansion Project
5. In addition, there was a request from the public for information concerning the San Luis Reservoir Low Point Project.

## Agenda Items and Discussions

### **1. Environmental Water Account (EWA) Briefing (Presenter-Jerry Johns)**

A brief history of the EWA as discussed in the CALFED ROD and current operation was presented. See attached slides. The last three years has taught the agencies how to operate the EWA. Through recent gaming, the agencies know how much water they need in each water year. Now the question is how to finance the program. A water banking arrangement with Westland's, Santa Clara Water district and Pajaro is being discussed. The ROD anticipated a 4-year program and now there is a 10-year plan being prepared. A recent science review recommended that the EWA program take more fish actions upstream of the Delta and not just at the Delta pumps.

#### **Comments:**

There were several comments about EWA operations and especially in coordination with the proposed South Delta Improvements, Los Vaqueros, and Sites Reservoir projects.

Generally, North of Delta water is cheaper but constrained by the ability to convey it through the delta pumps. The 8500 cfs South Delta Improvements Project will allow more water to be transferred and reduce program costs. The Los Vaqueros Expansion project could store some of the needed EWA water and provide additional flexibility to the system. Essentially, LVE could relieve the SWP delta pumps of some delivery commitments to the South Bay Aqueduct. The sites Reservoir project has not yet completed studies on what EWA benefits it could provide.

#### **Action Items:**

1. Post the slides on the WSS web page.

## **2. South Delta Improvement and Bay-Delta Program Update (Presenter - Tom Glover)**

The South Delta Improvement Project (SDIP) consists of three basic components: supply reliability, water quality improvement and the Environmental Water Account (EWA). In November, the plan was to have a Draft EIR and Biological Assessment for the SDIP, EWA, and OCAP prepared by January 2004. However, a group of Delta water users have been conducting meetings at the University of the Pacific to develop a CBDA Water Quality Plan for the Delta. The plan hopes to address a full range of water quality parameters including impacts to existing contaminant distribution. The timeframe to complete this process and the form of an ultimate agreement is uncertain, but thought to either come together or not very soon. This WQ plan development process is delaying the overall SDIP schedule.

### **Comments:**

There were concerns that existing contaminants may be distributed even further with the changes in project hydrology. Contaminant distribution effects are discussed in the Draft EIR for the SDIP.

### **Action Items:**

1. Continue to give monthly updates on SDIP project status.

## **3. CALSIM II Science Review Report Briefing (Presenters - Francis Chung and Sushil Arora)**

The purpose of these presentations was for DWR to respond to public comments made at the December 2003 CBDA Board Meeting. Presentation materials are posted on the WSS web site.

### **Response to CALSIM II Science Review (Presenter –Francis Chung, DWR Modeling Section Chief)**

A description of the study design, participants, major study findings, and recommendations were discussed. The study consisted of a panel of primarily college professors that surveyed stakeholders and released a report compiling the comments. The report was overwhelmingly positive of the state of the art CALSIM II program and the collaborative way it was developed. The report had a strong flavor of an academic perspective that did not reflect the challenges encountered in practice. The majority of the recommendations suggested improvements that should be made over the long term – during the next ten years. On the whole, Francis Chung is satisfied with the report in that it is a confirmation that work completed so far and DWR/USBR future improvement plans are mostly on the right track.

### **Response to Two Key Issues Raised in the CALSIM II Review Report (Presenter –Sushil Arora)**

Two criticisms of the CALSIM II modeling program were voiced at the December CBDA meeting that the CBDA Board wanted a response:

1. Groundwater resources are assumed infinite, i.e., there is no limit to groundwater pumping allowed in the program, and
2. The program over estimates water deliveries to the SWP and CVP contractors.

The CALSIM II program simulations do limit assumed groundwater supplies through a combination of demand limits, availability of surface supplies, natural and artificial recharge, and physical and operational constraints of the system to store and convey water. Groundwater is only used to meet demands of overlying areas after surface supplies are exhausted. There are no exports of groundwater.

The CALSIM II model team has conducted long-term simulation studies using the best data available from 1974 to 1998 for both the SWP and CVP. The studies compare actual and simulated South of Delta deliveries on a long-term average, dry year average, and individual year basis. An analysis of the drought of the years 1987 through 1992 was also presented. The analyses show that any one year's estimate may vary from actual deliveries. However, on the average, the differences are insignificant.

**Comments/Action Items: -None**

#### **4. Public Discussion of the San Luis Low point Project by the Federation of Fly fishermen (Scott Miller, Bill Johnson, Doug Level)**

The group came to make comments and ask questions about the San Luis Reservoir Low Point study funded by Prop 13. The group has been actively involved in the project and has related their concerns at several public meetings to the project team, but feel they have been ignored. In essence, their concern is the San Luis reservoir was partly funded to provide fishery (recreation) benefits and has become a world-class fishery for several species. Drawing down the reservoir from 300 TAF to the 70 TAF level, which is the objective of the Low Point project, will kill fish. Once this happens it may take five or more years for the reservoir fish population to recover. They want the WSS to assist them in being heard and responded to by the project team.

#### **Comments/Action Items**

1. The WSS members suggested that the group send a letter to the WSS members and to Steve Roberts that asked specific questions to be addressed.
2. That the WSS will ask for a briefing by the Low Point project team that addresses their issues.
3. The project purpose will be explained to the group.
4. A DFG and/or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service representative will be asked to attend that can explain their role in protecting the fisheries at San Luis reservoir.
5. The project team will be asked to explain how the direct impacts to San Luis Reservoir fisheries will be studied and reflected in the EIR/S, and
6. What are the cumulative effects of the project on the Delta?

#### **5. Update on Los Vaqueros Reservoir Expansion Project (Presenter - Greg Gartrell)**

The presentation was given to brief the WSS on recent studies and the impending advisory vote for the project. The presentation stressed the extensive environmental review completed, the public outreach to convey to stakeholders study results and address CCWD Board participation principles, and the purpose of the March 2, 2004 advisory vote. See the attached presentation materials. Three years of site-specific studies have shown an expansion project could meet both CALFED and CCWD participation principles. Subsequently the CCWD Board passed resolutions to place the expansion issue before customer voters in the March 2, 2004 election. A positive vote *does not authorize funding or construction of a project*, it allows studies to go

forward that must meet CCWD assurances to their customers. Project authorization and funding would come from state and federal legislation and other project partners. A “no” vote would have the practical effect of stopping the CALFED expansion project.

During the public outreach process, questions were frequently asked about the objectives of the project, the benefits to the CCWD customers, and the environmental impacts and mitigation. The project would be designed to increase drinking water quality, drought year and emergency supply reliability to CCWD and other Bay Area water user partners. Use of state of the art fish screens on Delta intake structures and operation for the benefit of the Environmental Water Account (EWA) would also meet the project objective to protect and restore Delta fisheries.

**Comments:**

There were several questions concerning how the project could provide environmental benefits and improve Delta water quality. LVE could relieve state and federal pumping commitments to the South Bay Aqueduct and credited to the EWA for use to payback SWP and CVP pumping curtailments. If this project benefited the EWA, beneficiaries including south of the delta contractors would be expected to share in the costs according to the CALFED beneficiaries pay principle. There would be no net increase in water exports from the Delta due to this project. Delta water quality may be improved by filling the reservoir with plentiful winter rain flows rather than drawing in the summer and fall which could further degrade water quality.

WSS member Jerry Meral announced that opponents to the project were invited to the presentation to voice their issues, but declined. However, Member Meral did speak with the opponent’s representative and summed up their concerns as they thought the vote was premature.

**Action items: -None.**

**Future Meeting Dates**

Jerry Meral announced that the next meeting date was not set, but when determined, will be posted on the CBDA web site.

The meeting was adjourned at 12 pm.