

**California Bay-Delta Public Advisory Committee
Water Supply Subcommittee July 13, 2005 Meeting Summary
650 Capitol Mall, 5th Floor**

Delta Room

9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

(This meeting was in part a joint meeting with the BDPAC Ecosystem Restoration Subcommittee.)

Introductions

For the Water Supply Subcommittee meeting, the following subcommittee members and alternates attended: Steve Hall, Jerry Meral, Dave Briggs, Dan Nelson, Gary Bobker, Alan Zepp, and Ron Jacobsma

The WSS meeting focused on the following agenda item:
Surface Storage Progress Report

Discussion of Agenda Item

Steve Roberts reported that staff was asked to take the San Luis Low Point off this meeting's agenda because participants and stakeholders are not ready to present. Dan Nelson said that he will check with participants and stakeholders for their readiness to present at future meetings. This item is currently in flux, and this delay will allow for a more thorough report. There were questions and concerns from several members of the audience representing bass fishing and fly fishing interests about being involved and being "left in"; Mr. Nelson agreed and stated that he believed that the process is at its "front end". A member of the audience questioned who is representing the State's public trust; Mr. Roberts answered that a member of his staff is working with participant agencies. Reclamation's Al Candlish reported on the history of this project. Reclamation has received feasibility authority to study the San Luis Low Point project. However, Reclamation is waiting for funding in next year's federal budget to begin the feasibility study. Interested parties will have an opportunity to provide input during the feasibility study phase.

Surface Storage Progress Report -- Presenter: Steve Roberts (DWR)

At Co-chair Meral's request, Mr. Roberts began by explaining the subcommittee's role in reviewing Progress Report Number 2. In future Progress Reports, the subcommittee would be invited to periodically review the draft versions of the report prior to the report being finalized and released. He then reported that the report was completed in May and is available at DWR's website at www.storage.water.ca.gov. Fifty copies were also passed out at the meeting to attendees. This report was supported by results of the Common Assumptions Progress Report Common Model Package, and the report's intent is to provide information to potential project participants to help them assess their interest in the storage projects and to assist responsible agencies with decisions about future steps in the storage investigations. The presentation (see the presentation) covered the content of the report, including potential primary benefits, considerations common to all projects, and the role of Common Assumptions. The presentation next covered project specific considerations for the five surface storage projects. Mr. Roberts reported that funding for the new fiscal year is being finalized and will help re-focus the program's work. Next steps included in the presentation are to: identify broad public benefits that will be evaluated in more detailed studies,

continue to work with potential project participants to assess their needs and interests in the specific projects, complete the Plan Formulation Common Model Package, and work with agencies and stakeholders to resolve project issues and considerations.

Comments:

Members of the audience and staff clarified potential improvements for water temperature for fish in the Sacramento River resulting from North-of-the-Delta Offstream Storage and Shasta Lake enlargement; there will be benefits at locations in addition to those listed in the report. A member of the subcommittee asked if Common Assumptions would provide a robust model to make comparisons across all projects. Another member of the subcommittee commented that the report should include potential impacts of the storage projects. Co-chair Hall stated that storage is only a tool and that we need to determine what we want to do with this tool. Co-chair Meral requested that costs per acre-foot be displayed; Mr. Roberts responded that he would not compute the cost per acre-foot at this time because it would be a useless exercise. Since the storage projects could provide multiple benefits, some of which are not easily quantifiable, it is misleading to compute the cost per acre-foot based solely on water supply yield. Co-chair Hall pointed out that there will be benefits other than supply and that the subcommittee's role will be to report on the tools now in hand and to use them to make decisions as directed by policymakers.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Public Comment

There was no additional public comment.

Next Meeting

The next BDPAC Water Supply Subcommittee meeting has been tentatively scheduled for September 14.

Introductions for Joint Meeting

For the WSS and Ecosystem Restoration Subcommittee joint meeting, the following members and alternates attended: Steve Hall, Jerry Meral, Dave Briggs, Gary Bobker, Dan Nelson, Alan Zepp, and Ron Jacobsma

The joint WSS and ERS meeting focused on the following agenda item:
Delta Fisheries Status

Delta Fisheries Status -- Presenter: Chuck Armor (Department of Fish and Game)

This presentation (see the presentation) began by discussing two methods for counting species populations; the presentation used the method of indices. The data collected shows declines in the population of several Delta pelagic fish species: delta smelt, striped bass, threadfin shad and longfin smelt. The presentation then covered work done to study potential causes of these population declines. There are three areas of concern: toxics, food web, and Delta exports. Within those three areas specific studies will include, but not be limited to, evaluation of mycrocystus algae growth, pesticide contamination (pyrethroids), causes for the decline in "good" zooplankton,

and Delta exports (both timing and amount of exports). Mr. Armor also presented work with other CALFED studies and covered the next steps which include a work plan for studying the Delta fish decline to be submitted for Science Review in November 2005. The presentation finally covered the most recent fish surveys taken during the spring.

Comments:

A member of the audience asked about the contributions of the current mini-El Nino and its cyclical nature; staff responded that this was not their expertise because of the complexity of currents and other warm-water events. In response to several questions and concerns, DFG staff emphasized that this study is collaborative and is being adaptively managed. Members of the subcommittees commented that no one should assume that there is one smoking gun. Further, staff stated that perhaps agencies have been too focused on pumping in recent years and that no one should jump to judgments. Also, the constant changing dynamics of the Delta adds complicating factors to this work, and it could take time to determine the cause(s) of the pelagic fish decline. In addition, members of the subcommittees, members of the audience, and staff had significant discussion regarding sampling methods. Staff stated that they will need to balance the management of smelt and the management of salmon. It was mentioned that while the delta smelt numbers have declined, salmon numbers have improved significantly over the past few years. Members of the audience commented that agencies need to move from the current triage mode to the proactive CALFED mode; staff reported that agency directors are taking the decline in Delta fish species very seriously. A member of the subcommittee finally commented that the South Delta Improvements Package can provide the flexibility that is needed to manage these declines; staff responded that the public perception that the SWP would consider increasing export levels before they knew if or how the projects were contributing to the decline of pelagic fish populations may be inappropriate. Most felt that more study is needed before export levels should be increased.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Public Comment

There was no additional public comment.