

California Bay-Delta Public Advisory Committee (BDPAC)
Water Supply Subcommittee (WSS)
Wednesday, June 6, 2007
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon
The Bonderson Building
901 P Street, Hearing Room 102-A
Sacramento, California

Meeting Summary

Introductions

The following BDPAC members and alternates attended the meeting: Jerry Meral, Marguerite Naillon, Ron Jacobsma, and Steve Macaulay.

The meeting focused on the following agenda items:

1. South Delta Improvement Program Status
2. Through Delta Facilities / Franks Tract Status
3. North Delta Flood Control / Habitat Status
4. Bay Delta Conservation Plan
5. Delta Emergency Operations Program
6. Delta Risk Management Strategy
7. Delta Vision
8. Envisioning Futures for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (PPIC)
9. Contra Costa Water District Future Conveyance Facilities

Kathy Kelly, DWR, opened the Water Supply Subcommittee meeting by welcoming those attending and reviewing the meeting agenda. This meeting focused on the status of state and federal conveyance and planning for the future of the Delta. She noted that some of the presentations may be presented out of order from the agenda due to meeting conflicts (*this summary presents the speakers as listed on the agenda*).

The summary below provides an overview of the presentations at the meeting and comments and questions received from the subcommittee and meeting participants.

1. South Delta Improvement Program Status – Presenter: Kathy Kelly (DWR)

Kathy Kelly provided an overview of the South Delta Improvement Program (SDIP) – to implement a series of actions to improve water quality and protect salmon in the South Delta. She reviewed the various structures proposed to control fish movement into the South Delta and how they would operate. She reviewed the cost to implement the project and funding that has been allocated.

Questions / Comments:

The subcommittee asked about the recent ruling by the State Board and the need for an updated Biological Opinion. Would it be possible to implement the SDIP actions in phases to implement the less controversial elements? It was noted that an updated Biological Opinion is needed for DWR diversions in the Delta. The operation of the project would be

difficult using a combination of temporary barriers and permanent gates – optimal to implement as one whole project.

The subcommittee also asked how passage for bottom dwellers, such as sturgeon, would be accommodated at the gates. Modifications to the gates are included to allow bottom dwellers to pass by the gates.

2. Through Delta Facilities / Franks Tract Status – Presenter: Ajay Goyal (DWR)

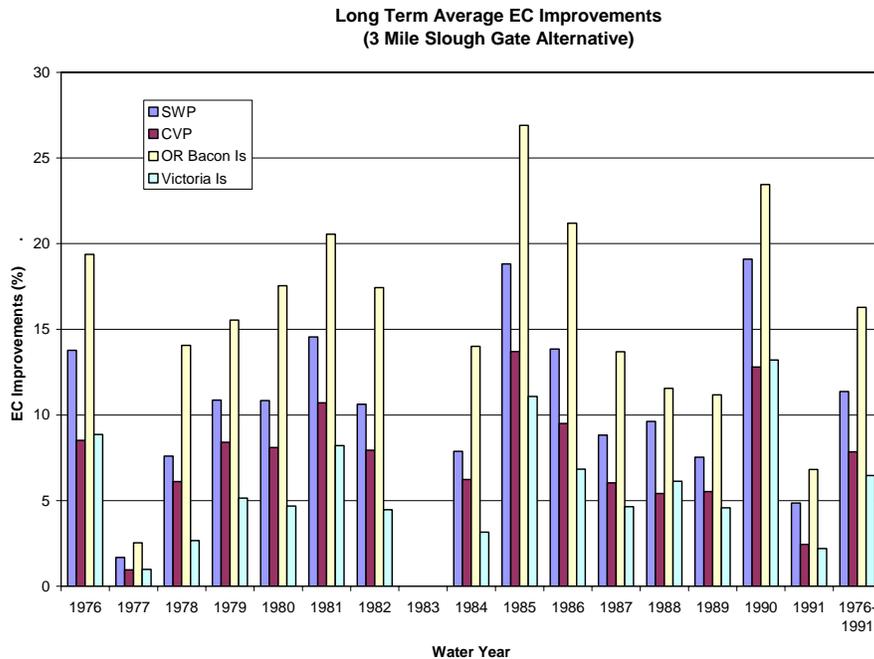
Ajay Goyal presented an update on the evaluations being completed at Franks Tract including options to improve water quality, decrease saltwater intrusion and provide benefits for fish. He also reported on model runs evaluating water electrical conductivity (EC) at different locations in the Delta and fish studies completed. The official environmental evaluation begins in July 2007 and the Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/S) will expand upon modeling and studies completed and evaluate two alternatives.

Questions / Comments:

The subcommittee asked about the status of the Through Delta Facilities evaluation and when the subcommittee might see a presentation about the impacts. The project team is working on the cost/benefit estimates and evaluating potential impacts to fish. The hydrodynamics and EC evaluations are in process, but the project team will need the fish studies to complete the studies; fish studies will be completed next year.

The subcommittee asked when public scoping meetings will be scheduled for the Franks Tract project. For the next two months, the project team is completing information on fish impacts and migration and water quality benefits. Following those evaluations, public scoping meetings will be scheduled.

A participant asked for clarification with the improvements (at State Water Project) in EC presented in different types of water year for the Three Mile Slough alternative. Following chart shows EC Improvements vary considerable from year to year depending on flow levels and exports, but when averaged over several water years happens to be in the order of 11-12% regardless of the year type (dry, critical, wet, etc.).



3. North Delta Flood Control / Habitat Status – Presenter: Matt Reeve (DWR)

Matt Reeve provided background on flood events in the North Delta leading up to the CALFED evaluation this flood control project. He provided an overview of the different scenarios and flood control options under evaluation including: Group I – McCormack-Williamson Tract / Grizzly Slough Property / Dredging Lower Mokelumne and Group II – Staten Island / Dredging Lower Mokelumne River. He also noted some of the key issues with this project include the presence of prime agricultural land, need for a long-term owner and future funding. Agency managers are currently working to resolving these and other issues. The Administrative Draft environmental document is in the screen check phase, but a public release date has not been identified.

Questions / Comments:

The subcommittee asked for more clarification on DWR and CALFED’s commitment to moving this project forward. The Delta Protection Commission is interested in releasing the Draft environmental document for public review which could resolve some of the land issues. Internal discussions are taking place to determine policy for land use mitigation and social issues.

The subcommittee asked what the soil composition of the islands under evaluation were, and does the evaluation include storm events considering global warming. McCormack-Williamson Tract is primarily mineral while Staten Island is peat soil and below sea level. The evaluation has not included water levels with global warming yet.

A participant asked what mitigation options are included for agricultural land. There are several options available that will be directed by agency policy. Options may include no

mitigation or a progressive approach with easements with the understanding of flood control priority. Agricultural representatives are part of the land-use mitigation discussions.

4. Bay Delta Conservation Plan – Presenter: Barbara McDonnell (DWR)

Barbara McDonnell provided an overview of the Bay-Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) noting that it is an applicant-driven effort providing for the conservation and management of aquatic species (listed species and other species under consideration). Evaluations and options are concentrated in the legal Delta. The options under consideration include: 1) Operational flexibility, 2) Armored island conveyance, 3) Dual facilities – armored island and isolated facility and 4) Isolated facility. She reviewed the habitat conservation opportunities related to each option. The generalized impact analysis is the next step with a draft framework scheduled for October 2007. The evaluation will include ongoing public outreach including an NOI and open steering committee meetings.

Questions / Comments:

The subcommittee asked how the evaluation will account for species that travel in and out of the Delta. The BDCP is focused on the legal Delta for facilities, but conservation can be located outside.

The subcommittee commented that the BDCP needs to be coordinated with Delta Vision and Delta Risk Management Strategy (DRMS) as they are all related.

A participant requested clarification on the evaluation of the existing facilities operation and the new conservation; seems they are separate efforts. Currently, they are separate, but the evaluation could combine both the existing operations and conservation strategies.

5. Delta Emergency Operations Program – Presenter: Art Hinojosa (DWR)

Art Hinojosa provided an overview of the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) that DWR is developing to respond to major events. The first phase was developing a “tool kit” cataloguing what DWR is prepared to do now in response to an event in the Delta (e.g., flood, levee failure, and earthquake). DWR needs to develop a more detailed EOP identifying what to do in preparation for and in response to a major event, and who is responsible. The EOP will have to consider life and property, not just water supply, which will require coordination and agreements with water agencies.

Questions / Comments:

A subcommittee member noted the importance of coordinating with water agencies such as Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MET) to ensure response plan work together. MET is part of the planning process and plans are being updated.

6. Delta Risk Management Strategy – Presenter: Sean Bagheban (DWR)

Sean Bagheban presented background information that lead to the Delta Risk Management Strategy (DRMS) project noting the physical attributes of the Delta and the services it supports (e.g., water supply for 22 million Californians, homes, highways, pipelines, rail, ports). Phase I of DRMS was initiated to evaluate impacts of major events in the Delta including subsidence, earthquakes, flood and/or climate change. It was noted that the economic impacts include only the direct costs and those vary on the time of year. The range

of economic impacts will be used to help legislators decide how much funding to allocate now to implement measures to avoid future risks. The public draft of the Risk Assessment Report will be available mid-June 2007. Phase II will include the development of recommendations for risk reduction measures and long-term management strategies.

Questions / Comments:

The subcommittee noted that this evaluation needs to consider climate change to account for changes in water level. The team is working with other agencies to include information about climate change and other parameters that need to be considered and evaluated.

A participant asked why the costs presented were a magnitude higher than cost to repair Jones Tract. Cost estimates included, represent the worst case scenario and the resources that would be available to address a major event. This includes repairing miles of levees and potentially rebuilding whole islands.

7. Delta Vision – Presenter: Keith Coolidge (CBDA)

Keith Coolidge provided an overview of the Delta Vision process and participants noting that all the programs presented at this meeting are part of the Delta Vision. The groups involved make up the Delta Vision Commission, Blue Ribbon Task Force, Science Advisors and Stakeholder Coordination Group; all groups are part of developing and providing input to the Vision and Strategic Plan. The groups will be responsible for providing new policies to the governor for approval and implementation. Legislators are anxiously awaiting the direction provided by the Delta Vision process; Vision by January 2008 and Strategic Plan by December 2008.

Questions / Comments:

A participant questioned how the accelerated schedule presented will allow the process to include information from other efforts that will not be complete. The Delta Vision groups are coordinating with other efforts to ensure the latest information is included. For future studies/projects, the Delta Vision would be in place to help give direction.

8. Envisioning Futures for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (PPIC) – Presenter: Ellen Hanak, Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC)

Ellen Hanak reviewed concepts included in the Envisioning Futures for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta report developed by the PPIC. She presented updated assumptions about the Delta and noted there needs to be a concentrated technical effort accompanied by a policy effort to develop long-term solutions for the Delta. The report proposes two potential alternatives that could allow for more variable flows: 1) New export conveyance alternatives or 2) Reduced-exports alternatives. She then presented strategies to improving the Delta including short-, medium- and long-term solutions. She noted that the next steps to developing the solutions need to be coordinated with the other agencies and organizations working on Delta projects.

Questions / Comments:

The subcommittee asked when institutional changes in programs will be evaluated. Institutional changes will be evaluated and should be developed as part of the future coordinated efforts.

The subcommittee asked about the inclusion of surface storage projects and considerations for storage in the north and south Delta areas. Near Delta storage projects would be most beneficial (e.g. Los Vaqueros, Delta Islands). North and south Delta storage possibilities need to be further evaluated, specifically the economics.

9. Contra Costa Water District Future Conveyance Facilities – Presenter: David Briggs, Contra Costa Water District (CCWD)

David Briggs provided an overview of a Delta management strategy developed by CCWD to stage improvement projects to provide the most benefit. The strategy provides for immediate actions to protect levees and restore habitat. The strategies to strengthen the levee system will require further design specification to address seismic risks and water level rise – amongst other issues. This staged strategy allows time for the detailed evaluation needed to evaluate an isolated facility in order to ensure that the investment would be most beneficial for the Delta system and users.

Questions / Comments:

A participant asked why the timeframe for the isolated facility is so far in the future and not compressed into the next few years to provide immediate benefits for Delta smelt while they are still here. An isolated facility is a significant investment that requires more detailed planning to determine alignment, construction specifications, operations, impact review, and partner agreements.

10. Collaboration Efforts for All Perspective Programs – Jerry Johns (DWR)

Because of time limitations, this discussion was tabled until the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 12:20 pm.