

DRAFT
South Delta Fish Facilities Forum

Meeting Summary and Action Items
January 29, 2003, 3:00 - 5:00 PM
Resources Building Rm. 1131
Sacramento, California 95814

Attendees

Kirk Rodgers USBR (Forum Co-Chair)
Tim Quinn..... MWDSC (Forum Co-Chair)
Diana Jacobs DFG (Forum Co-Chair)
Ron Ott, Wendy Halverson-Martin, John Andrew, Darryl HayesCBDA
Michael Aceituno, Miles Croom, Dan Odenweller.....NMFS
Steve Macaulay, Kathy Kelly, Don Kurosaka.....DWR
Perry Herrgesell, Jerry Morinaka, Bob Fugimura.....DFG
Dave Harlow, Ryan Olah.....USFWS
Dan NelsonSLDMWA
Alex Hildebrand.....SDWA
Tina Swanson Bay Institute
Serge BirkCVPWA
Laura King Moon.....SWC
Dennis Majors, Rick SittsMWDSC
David ForkelDelta Wetlands
Ron Silva, Chet Bowling..... USBR

Agenda

Introduction Ron Ott
South Delta Fish Facilities..... Jerry Morinaka
South Delta Fish Facility Issues Ron Ott
SDFF Forum Process Ron Ott
SWP Clifton Court Forebay Alternatives Don Kurosaka
USBR Tracy Alternatives Ron Silva
SDFF Forum Recommendations Ron Ott
Next Meeting

Introduction

Ron Ott introduced the first meeting of the SDFF Forum that is co-led by Kirk Rodgers, USBR, Diana Jacobs, DFG, and Tim Quinn, MWDSC. The purpose of the meeting was to brief the Forum on South Delta Fish Facility issues and to make recommendations on several facility alternatives. A PowerPoint presentation and several handouts were included with the meeting packet.

South Delta Fish Facilities

Jerry Morinaka, DFG, presented an overview of the fish salvage operation processes at the Tracy and Skinner Fish Facilities.

South Delta Fish Facility Issues

Ron Ott discussed on-going problems with the South Delta fish facility operations. The primary concern with both existing and proposed facilities is debris. Debris impacts both fish salvage and pumping operations. The fish losses at the louver screens and in the gravity tank fish collection system are also significant and could be reduced with state-of-the-art technology. Regulatory agencies and the ROD require that new positive barrier screens be installed on new intake facilities in the Delta. New screens will concentrate more debris and fish into the fish holding and transportation facilities. The feasibility of implementing new fish salvage technologies in the south Delta is uncertain due to the significant impacts that debris and other operational issues have on current salvaging facilities.

Discussion Items:

There was consensus that there was a problem with existing facility operations. How the existing losses compared to the indirect losses was unknown.

It was noted that Boating and Waterway's spraying program has been effective at controlling *Hyacinth*, but that the *Egaria Densa* problem is worsening. *Egaria* is more problematic at existing facilities.

SDFF Forum Decision Process

A South Delta fish facilities decision process involving an integrated Agency/stakeholder/science review was presented to the Forum. Ron Ott described the relationship of the various groups, their goals and objectives, and dispute resolution processes. This process had been worked out prior to this meeting.

Discussion Items:

It was suggested that cost effectiveness be a goal in every step of the process.

Some noted that the SDFF decision process is labor intensive and could take significant time to work issues. An identified point person and schedule was needed.

It was noted that the SDFF Forum must be task oriented with a defined end point.

The SDFF Forum is charged with a narrower focus and will primarily work on the direct loss and fish "take" issues, but will identify potential indirect issues for others to resolve.

This process was developed because engineers and scientists working on facility design developments want to focus on viable alternatives with management support. Resource limitations, primarily staff and budget, are also limited.

There was concern that the OCAP and SDIP relationship was missing in this process. Agency staff responded that the agencies are more concerned with a long term commitment and plan than with specific implementation dates. This will be factored into agency decisions on OCAP and SDIP.

Action Items:

- **Ron Ott was designated to be on-point to work various options or issues through the process. CALFED will be the “Keeper of the Process.” Ron will work with the implementing agencies to keep projects on track.**
- **A set/defined schedule for SDF Forum resolution on TTF and CCF will be developed.**

SWP CCF Alternatives

Don Kurosaka described a number of the Delta CALFED Conveyance actions and their relationship to the South Delta Fish Facilities. The ROD calls for new fish screens in the South Delta. Various strategies of implementing new facilities are being investigated. A new intake and fish salvaging facility was previously planned for the northwest corner of Clifton Court Forebay. This would be a staged facility built at the head of CCF. The current plan was to build the Tracy Fish Test Facility and develop three years of test data to assist in the design of the new fish facility for CCF. Based on this sequence, a new intake and fish facility would not be operational until 2014. However, in an effort to reduce the high predation of the forebay and improve delivery capability sooner, about 30 potential alternatives have recently been developed to utilize the existing Skinner Fish Facility. These alternatives essentially re-plumb the CCF by utilizing the existing fish facilities, followed by replacement screens in two future phases. This option could be operation by about 2010. Both options are designed to potentially reduce the CCF predation, currently assessed at a 75% loss.

Conceptual construction cost estimates for full development of the Northwest and the Skinner Sites are \$620 and \$580 Million respectively.

Discussion Items:

The timing and early realization of fishery benefits should be considered in implementation. Benefits must be evaluated over time for a comparison of alternatives. Phased implementation could reduce costs as we learn from a progression of actions.

It was suggested that there be more opportunity for Stakeholder technical experts to be involved and available throughout the process. The response was that technical teams and the IEP already have stakeholder representation, but that the Teams could be open to more participation.

There was general concern over how CALFED will determine benefits of these and other South Delta actions. It will be difficult at best to determine indirect effects of actions. A conceptual model needs to be developed showing all assumptions that feed into it.

It was noted that operations costs and alternative facility sizes (based on operations assumptions such as to reduce on-peak pumping) be factored into the discussion to understand the cost implications.

It was questioned if new facilities would forego a single (CVP/SWP) JPOD or multiple diversion point. The response was that this was not precluded in any of the options presented. A separate decision process will be investigated on these alternatives.

Estimating fish population level impacts (i.e. pumping effect on indirect losses) will be very difficult to determine. We may not even be able to determine detectable levels much less with precision. For instance, determining potential cost effectiveness of new facilities or other delta actions will be difficult.

There was a concern raised about conducting expensive research without some level of potential benefit identified early in the process.

The Sdff Forum said that Science should be involved in future meetings to describe how they fit into the process.

An alternative fish circulation and flow scheme was suggested. Essentially water could be lifted over the proposed South Delta barriers using "fish friendly pumps," keeping a significant proportion of fish and debris away from the SWP/CVP Pumps.

Action Items:

- ***Provide a briefing from Science at the next meeting to determine if there is any new information that would affect the current positive fish screen strategy and its program objective of improving water supply reliability.***
- ***Before pursuing alternatives to specified facility actions identified in the ROD, Management should be aware so they understand potential policy and regulatory actions.***
- ***Alex H. will investigate an alternative circulation concept and discuss merits with Ron Ott for future consideration.***

USBR Tracy Alternatives

Ron Silva described the Tracy Fish Test Facility developments to date. In Mid-2002, the Tracy Technical Advisory Team had agreed to a test facility that could meet almost all agency expectations for testing objectives. The facility's high cost at \$138 million prompted another look at facility alternatives to reduce costs. Six alternatives, including the "piece-wise" approach currently underway, are now under consideration. These alternatives differ primarily by scale, facility depth, screen length, and limited collection facilities. Some testing objectives could be impacted by scaling the facilities including: fish screen exposure, fish bypass configurations, debris management, fish friendly pumping, and hydraulic flexibility. Alternative costs range from \$49 to \$138 million. Due to possible testing compromises and cost differences, the USBR is awaiting a decision on how to proceed.

Discussion Items:

It was desired to have all agencies and stakeholders rank the TFTF alternatives. The response was that a preferred alternative was presented...and it was rejected because it was too expensive – thus this process is needed.

Some questioned if all options have been explored. Response: Many options have been explored, but the teams are still open to suggestions and variations of alternatives.

The CVPIA relationship was questioned. The response was that the processes are related and compatible.

Stranded costs of TFTF facilities should be considered. It was desired to see the USBR show how portions of the test facilities could be incorporated into the full buildout.

NMFS and others said that regardless of South Delta options, a test facility must be developed to reduce uncertainty of benefits if new facilities are being considered. These actions are identified in the ROD as part of Stage 1 conveyance actions.

Some noted that a TFTF is the only way to quantify direct losses and benefits or facility uncertainty will remain. This would be consistent with Science objectives.

Action Items:

- ***The USBR will develop a seventh alternative showing how some test facility components could be incorporated into a full buildout.***
- ***Ron Ott will work with agencies to provide additional detail on the benefits of the TFTF and CCF respective alternatives by next meeting date***
- ***Agencies and Stakeholders will describe their position on alternatives at the next meeting***
- ***Presenters (including agency representatives) should clarify impact issues at the next meeting. Tim Q., Kirk R., and Diana J. will meet with Ron O. to discuss an agenda and items to clarify or discuss.***

Next Meetings

February 18, 2003, 1-4 PM

March 19, 2003, 9-12 AM

Resources Building, Room 1131