

NORTH BAY AQUEDUCT ALTERNATE INTAKE PROJECT

questions and answers

What is the North Bay Aqueduct Alternate Intake Project (NBA AIP)?

The North Bay Aqueduct (NBA) Alternate Intake Project (AIP) (NBA AIP or proposed project) proposes to construct and operate an alternate intake on the Sacramento River which would be operated in conjunction with the existing NBA intake at Barker Slough. The proposed alternate intake would be located generally upstream of the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant and would connect to the existing NBA system by a new segment of pipeline.

What is the purpose of the NBA AIP?

The purpose of the NBA AIP is to provide long-term water quality improvements and to provide reliable deliveries of State Water Project water to the NBA water contractors: Solano County Water Agency (SCWA) and the Napa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (Napa County FC&WCD). The proposed project would also provide operational flexibility to reduce effects on listed species and critical habitat in Barker Slough and at the location of the proposed alternate intake.

What is the problem you're trying to solve?

SCWA and Napa County FC&WCD anticipate that by 2021 they will need to rely on the NBA for delivery of their total water supply of 131,181 acre-feet per year (AFY). To meet these future demands, required peak flow through the NBA is estimated at 240 cubic feet per second (cfs). Capacity of the NBA is currently limited to 140 cfs due to hydraulic limitations and withdrawal being limited to 71,000 AFY from Barker Slough due to measures imposed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Game.

In addition to capacity and pumping limitations, Barker Slough has degraded water quality which presents water treatment difficulties, and the Cache Slough complex has been identified as prime restoration area for the recovery of Delta fisheries. Enhanced fisheries in the Cache Slough complex have the potential to further restrict pumping from the Barker Slough Pumping Plant in the future.

An alternate NBA intake on the Sacramento River would provide future water supply reliability and improved water quality.

Why does the NBA AIP need an EIR?

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR), as the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), is preparing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to evaluate potential environmental impacts associated

with the construction and operation of the proposed project.

Under CEQA, a lead agency must prepare an EIR when there is substantial evidence that a project might have a significant effect on the environment. Preliminary review of the proposed project included in the Notice of Preparation, published in November 2009, identified that the construction and operation of the NBA AIP could result in potentially significant environmental impacts in the following resource areas: water resources and water quality, Delta fisheries and aquatic resources, biological resources, agricultural resources, climate change, and growth-inducement.

What is the purpose of the EIR?

The EIR will:

- Fulfill the requirements of CEQA
- Describe the proposed project, evaluate its environmental impacts, and identify feasible mitigation measures
- Evaluate a reasonable range of alternatives that reduce or eliminate potentially significant impacts of the proposed project
- Facilitate public comment on the scope and adequacy of the environmental analysis
- Inform decision-makers when considering future regulatory actions or approvals

How might the EIR relate to me as a landowner?

To support preparation of a the EIR, the lead agency will research existing information and conduct field studies throughout the study area to gather environmental and engineering data. Where the existing information is not sufficient, they may need to contact individual landowners and seek access to their property to gather additional information.

What is a Temporary Entry Permit?

A Temporary Entry Permit (TEP) allows staff to enter private properties, as needed, to conduct the surveys noted above. DWR will be seeking TEPs only in those cases where existing site-specific data is not sufficient to support the EIR or the engineering design of the project. The TEP will be valid for approximately three years to support preparation of the EIR and collection of engineering data.

Why do you need to access my property?

Access to your property may be necessary in order for engineers, surveyors, biologists and other environmental resource experts to conduct the appropriate surveys for the EIR. If your property is

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located in the study area, you may receive a request from DWR to sign a TEP, which will allow staff to enter your property and gather data for the EIR.

Why is it necessary to have a three-year TEP?
Residents are being asked to sign a three-year TEP because, for planning and scheduling reasons, it is more efficient to obtain needed permits once. If staff do need to survey your property, it may not be necessary for them to return during the three-year period. Adequate notice will be provided if and when additional surveys are needed on your property.

Will you require constant access to my property during this three-year period?
No. Access to your property will only be needed periodically during the three-year period and the TEP limits DWR's access to a total of sixty (60) days for the entire period. As an example, some wildlife may be seasonal inhabitants that require study at specific times of the year. Access may be required only during these times to address these special needs. After an initial survey of the property, a better estimate of timing for various surveys should be available.

How many times will my property be accessed?
It is unknown at this time how many times each property will need to be surveyed. Further determinations will be made once the information from the first site visit has been evaluated. You will receive proper notice for all site visits from a DWR representative.

When will these surveys begin?
The surveys are expected to begin in late 2010. Once a TEP is in place, DWR will make every effort to provide notice to landowners two to three weeks in advance of surveys. At the very least, DWR will provide residents with a minimum five (5) days verbal notification before accessing properties.

What if I am not available when you want to access my property?
If you anticipate a scheduling conflict that will prohibit you or a representative from being on the property during a scheduled visit, you should notify DWR, which will make every effort to access your property at a time that is convenient.

Will surveys be conducted at night?
Because survey times are dependent upon the type of species being evaluated, it is

possible that staff may need to conduct wildlife surveys on your property at night. Staff will make reasonable accommodations to ensure that your privacy and safety are not impacted in any way during evaluations.

I am a farmer. Will I need to move any of my equipment or will my harvest schedule be impacted in any way?

Staff will make every effort to work with landowners to access property during a time that will eliminate or minimize potential conflicts to businesses. If you are aware of potential scheduling conflicts please notify DWR so plans can be arranged to accommodate your specific needs. DWR may request your cooperation in moving farm equipment if it is located on or blocking access to a required survey site.

Will research equipment be placed on my property?
Biological monitoring equipment may be placed on some properties. Staff may need to install monitoring wells on some properties. They will make every effort to avoid drilling in operating fields. If you have such fields, it will be important to provide DWR with a general map of your property and indicate which areas are operating. Any holes in the soil created by staff will be backfilled and the soil compacted as near as possible to the original condition.

Will I be compensated if damage is done to my property during these assessments?
Yes. If for some reason your property is damaged as a result of surveys associated with the TEP, DWR will work with landowners to assess and resolve the issue. If warranted, you will be compensated for the damage. If you disagree with our assessment, there is an established process with the State Victim Compensation and Government Claims Board should this occur. More information on filing a claim can be found at: <http://www.boc.ca.gov/claims/howtofile.aspx>

How can I stay informed about the EIR process and the status of the project?
To provide ongoing project updates to the public, a project website has been created. The website can be accessed at <http://www.doe.water.ca.gov/Projects/Current/NBA/index.cfm>. In addition, if you would like to receive future notifications by mail, you can request to be added to the project mailing list by sending an email to NBAAIP@water.ca.gov.

For more information about the NBA AIP and the EIR process, visit:
<http://www.water.ca.gov/engineering/Projects/Current/NBA/>

If you have additional questions or comments, please send an email to NBAAIP@water.ca.gov.