



Advisory

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DWR Releases Water Delivery Impact Estimates Following Wanger Decision

Sacramento – The Department of Water Resources (DWR) has completed its revised operational model to determine water supply impacts from a recent federal court decision on Delta pumping.

The model provides a range of impacts on water exports, depending on Delta smelt migration patterns and precipitation. If 2008 is a dry year, State Water Project customers will receive seven to 22 percent less Delta water than would have been available without the court decision. If 2008 is an average water year, exports will be reduced 22 to 30 percent.

The current State Water Project allocations of 25 percent of requested water supply are based on dry year conditions and already account for these reductions. Those allocations may increase depending on precipitation, but will not increase as much as they have in past years due to the court ruling.

Federal Court Judge Wanger's final ruling, issued on December 14, curtails Delta pumping to protect the threatened Delta smelt. The decision underscores that the Delta is at risk, both environmentally and as a source of water for most of California's people, industry and agriculture.

This range is consistent with earlier estimates made by DWR following the court's initial ruling in August. Following Judge Wanger's final ruling, DWR performed additional modeling and analysis on the impacts.

The order will primarily affect export pumping between January and June, when juvenile Delta smelt are at greatest risk of entrainment in pumps. The actual impact on water supply will depend on a number of factors including the locations where adult smelt spawn and offspring hatch, levels of precipitation for the year, and water temperatures affecting how quickly the fish migrate.

The impacts on water supplies could be offset somewhat by water from the Environmental Water Account to the extent those water supplies are available this year.

DWR delivers water through the Delta to 25 million Californians and 750,000 acres of irrigated farmland.

The Department of Water Resources operates and maintains the State Water Project, provides dam safety and flood control and inspection services, assists local water districts in water management and water conservation planning, and plans for future statewide water needs.