



News for Immediate Release

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State and Federal Agencies Release Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement on the Environmental Water Account

SACRAMENTO - The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) and the US Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) announced that a Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) has been released by DWR, Reclamation, California Department of Fish and Game (DFG), US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) covering the operation of the CALFED Environmental Water Account Program. Public comment on the draft document is being sought.

The Environmental Water Account (EWA) is a cooperative CALFED management program to protect the native fish species of the Bay-Delta estuary through environmentally beneficial changes in the federal Central Valley Project (CVP) and the State Water Project (SWP) operations at no uncompensated water cost to the CVP/SWP water users.

The draft report describes the operation of the EWA, the environmental impacts it may have, and mitigation measures to reduce the impacts to less than significant levels.

Five Federal and State agencies are involved in administering the EWA. DWR and Reclamation, the "Project Agencies," are responsible for acquiring water assets and for storing and conveying the assets through use of the SWP and CVP facilities. The three "Management Agencies," DFG, USFWS, and NOAA Fisheries, manage the EWA assets to protect and restore fish populations. All five EWA agencies are responsible for the day-to-day program management.

The EWA consists of two primary elements: (1) assisting in fish population protection and recovery for at-risk native fish species; and (2) increasing water supply reliability by reducing uncertainty associated with fish protection and recovery actions. The EWA enables timely reductions in export pumping at the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta pumps, operated by DWR and Reclamation, to improve survival of and reduce injury to at-risk native fish

species. The EWA acquires water to replace the supplies that would have otherwise been diverted by the SWP and CVP so that water supplies delivered to their contractors are not interrupted or reduced because of the Delta export pumping changes.

Public workshops will be held to discuss the purpose and content of the Draft EIR/EIS and answer questions as follows:

- Wednesday, July 16, 2003, San Diego, 6:00 pm
- Monday July 21, 2003, Red Bluff, 6:00 pm
- Tuesday July 22, 2003, Fresno, 6:00 pm
- Wednesday July 23, 2003, Tracy, 6:00 pm
- Tuesday July 29, 2003, Sacramento, 10:00 am

Public hearings will be held to provide the public an opportunity to orally comment on the Draft EIR/EIS as follows:

- Monday August 25, 2003 Sacramento 10:00 am
- Tuesday August 26, 2003, Red Bluff, 6:00 pm
- Thursday August 28, 2003, Fresno, CA 6:00 pm

Addresses for workshops and hearings:

- **San Diego:** Hyatt Regency Islandia, 1441 Quivera Road, Islands Ballroom A
- **Red Bluff:** Community and Senior Center, 1500 South Jackson Road
- **Fresno:** Ramada University Inn, 324 East Shaw Avenue, Ballroom Shaw A
- **Tracy:** Veterans of Foreign Wars, 430 West Grant Line Road
- **Sacramento:** Best Western Expo Inn, 1413 Howe Avenue, Expo Room

Written comments may be submitted to: Delores Brown, Chief, Mitigation and Restoration Branch, Department of Water Resources, 3251 S Street, Sacramento, CA 95816, email delores@water.ca.gov, or to Ms. Sammie Cervantes, Bureau of Reclamation, 2800 Cottage Way MP-720, Sacramento, CA 95825, email scervantes@mp.usbr.gov.

Comments must be received no later than September 15, 2003.

Copies of the documents are available for public review at: DWR, 3251 S Street, Sacramento, CA 95816; Bureau of Reclamation, 2800 Cottage Way, Sacramento, CA 95825; California Bay-Delta Authority, 650 Capitol Mall, 5th floor, Sacramento, CA 95814; Bureau of Reclamation, Denver Office Library, Building 67, Room 167, Denver Federal Center, 6th and Kipling, Denver, CO 80225; Natural Resources Library, US Department of Interior, 1849 C Street NW, Main Interior Building, Washington, DC 20240; and at various city and county libraries: contact Ms. Sammie Cervantes at the address below for specific locations.

Copies of the Draft EIR/EIS, in compact disk form or in three published volumes (1,500 pages), may be obtained by contacting Ms. Sammie Cervantes, US Bureau of Reclamation,

2800 Cottage Way, Sacramento, CA 95825; by calling 916-978-5104, TDD 916-978-5608; or by email at scervantes@mp.usbr.gov.

A copy of the Draft EIR/EIS can be found at <http://www.usbr.gov/mp/EWA/Index.htm>.

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.

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