



Advisory

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DWR and USBR Issue Biological Assessment on Delta Pumping

Contacts

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SACRAMENTO – The Department of Water Resources (DWR) and the United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) issued Biological Assessments today on their respective water projects, particularly as they relate to Delta pumping and the effects on endangered fish species.

The assessments are posted on the Bureau of Reclamation's Mid-Pacific Region Web site at <http://www.usbr.gov/mp/>

The assessments are part of what's identified as the State Water Project (SWP) and Central Valley Project (CVP) joint *Operations Criteria and Plan*.

Operational requirements are spelled out in permits known as Biological Opinions Issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS).

Recent court decisions conclude that current permits do not adequately protect certain fish species. That means the federal fish agencies must develop new Biological Opinions regarding SWP and CVP operations.

The court has ordered development of new, more protective, biological opinions by mid-September 2008. This process is known as federal Endangered Species Act re-consultation.

The Biological Assessment (BA) is a starting point in the consultation process. A considerable amount of new science on the Delta and additional fish protection measures will need to be integrated into project operations. DWR and the Bureau will be working with the federal fish agencies to assist them to develop this information.

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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.

Contact the DWR Public Affairs Office for more information about DWR's water activities.