

CALFED OPERATIONS COORDINATION GROUP
June 28, 2000 MEETING NOTES AND ACTION ITEMS

Review of May 24 meeting notes

No revisions were made to the May 24, 2000 CALFED Ops meeting notes.

Announcements

Paul Fujitani is now Chief of Water Operations at the Bureau's Central Valley Operations Office.

The CALFED Operations Discussion List (Reflector) Group currently has 44 subscribed members. Those who have not yet subscribed are encouraged to do so.

The following handouts were provided at the meeting:

1. VAMP 2000 Operations Summary, USBR, Tom Morstein-Marx
2. VAMP 2000 Operations Summary, MBK Engineers, Mike Archer
3. VAMP – Fish Monitoring, DFG, Jim Starr
4. San Joaquin River Agreement, June 2000, USBR, Tom Morstein-Marx
5. SWP Operations Package (includes 2000 Operations Plan Update for Water Operations Management Team), June 28, 2000, DWR, Curtis Creel
6. DOI b(2) Accounting, USBR, Chet Bowling
7. News Release dated 6/20/00, Protective Measures Announced for Salmon and Steelhead Populations, NMFS, Gary Stern
8. West Coast ESA 4(d) Rules Overview, NMFS, Gary Stern
9. Questions and Answers, 4(d) Rules to Protect Threatened Salmon & Steelhead, 6/20/00, NMFS, Gary Stern
10. Map, Final 4(d) Rule for 14 Salmon and Steelhead ESUs, NMFS, Gary Stern

SWRCB

The SWRCB notified interested parties on June 23, 2000, that Phase 8 of the Bay/Delta Water Rights Hearing has been postponed in response to a request by the Department of Water Resources. The postponement will provide an opportunity for the DWR and the USBR to negotiate with upstream Sacramento River water users, and potentially effect the availability of water that could be used to implement the Governor's drought contingency plan as outlined in the CALFED Framework for Action. If these negotiations are successful, significant Phase 8 issues may not need to be addressed. Phase 8 will not reconvene until after December 2000. The SWRCB will provide further notice.

Others items reported:

The SWRCB released a draft water right order addressing the Bay/Delta settlement agreement between the DWR, South Sutter Water District and the Camp Far West Irrigation District. The order conditionally approved the long-term transfer of 4,400 acre-feet of water per year from SSWD to DWR and acknowledges that the agreement satisfies any obligation that water right holders in the Bear River watershed may have toward implementation of the water Quality Control plan flow objectives. The order may be viewed at:

<http://www.waterrights.ca.gov/baydelta/Notices>

Water right holders with Term 91 in their permits were notified on June 28, 2000, that water was no longer available for diversion under their water rights and that they must use alternate supplies. SWRCB staff will make unannounced compliance inspections this summer to enforce the curtailment.

The SWRCB received a petition from DWR for temporary change in place of use. Approval of the petition would allow the Kern Water Bank Authority to transfer up to 75,000 acre-feet of water to the USBR for use by any of its contractors located south of the Delta. The petition was noticed to the public on May 23, 2000. No objections were received by the June 23 deadline. An order approving the temporary change will be issued by July 3, 2000.

The SWRCB received a letter from the DWR and the USBR giving notice of intent to export up to 40 percent of inflow between June 15 and the end of the month. The SWRCB chose to remain silent on this matter and has no objections.

On May 22, 2000, the DWR and the USBR notified the SWRCB of their intent to use Stage 1 Joint Point of Diversion (JPOD) pursuant to Decision 1641. The action would allow shifting of pumping from Banks to Tracy and vice versa to reduce take of delta smelt at the pumps. This proposed plan of operation would have no effect on X2 position or water quality, nor would it increase the total amount of water pumped. A condition of approving such a request is for DWR and Reclamation to develop a response plan to address potential water level problems in the South Delta. Since the current water level response plan does not consider shifting pumping from Banks to Tracy, the request was denied by the SWRCB.

The SWRCB expects to receive a multi-year Stage 2 JPOD request from the USBR to allow water deliveries to be made to the Tracy Golf Course from the California Aqueduct. The request will include letters of support from the resource agencies and is consistent with the current water level response plan.

VAMP

Upstream Operations:

High Vernalis flows nearly delayed the installation of a temporary barrier at the head of Old River, which could have resulted in delaying the beginning of the VAMP study. However, a window of opportunity occurred and installation of the barrier proceeded. The barrier was completed by April 13 on time for the April 15 to May 15 nominal VAMP schedule.

Early forecasts indicated a 7,000 cfs flow target for the VAMP; this was confirmed by measured Vernalis flow. On April 13, the USGS re-rated the Vernalis gage, which indicated that the actual flow was about 1,000 cfs less than that being reported. Thus the projected base flow had to be reevaluated. The new target flow was set to 5,700 cfs. However, releases were already on their way to meet the earlier target of 7,000 cfs. On April 17, an unexpected storm dropped near record rainfall amounts in the San Joaquin basin causing an anticipated 1,000 cfs increase in Vernalis flow. The storm peaked close to the crest of the barrier causing concern about the operational safety (about the same time, the USGS's latest re-rating indicated that this flow was 7,100 cfs, about 700 cfs higher than previously thought). Therefore, upstream river releases were reduced. The average Vernalis flow from April 15 through May 15 was about 5,900 cfs.

HOR Barrier:

The size and the base of the barrier were increased this year so the barrier could handle higher San Joaquin River flow. The levee sections downstream of the barrier were also armored to prevent damage under high flow conditions. The barrier was designed with a filled notch. This would allow DWR to quickly breach the barrier in the event additional water must be passed through it during a high flow event. Removal of the barrier began May 16 and was completed by May 19.

Fish Monitoring:

A constant and heavy debris load was present at the fish screened culverts.

Summary of the fish caught in the nets:

Number (Average Size)	Species Caught
353	Unmarked Salmon
504	Tagged Salmon
1 (76 mm)	Delta Smelt
5 (237.6 mm)	Splittail

South Delta Dredging

DWR reported on its plan to dredge areas near marinas in the South Delta.

Upcoming Important Dates:

July 19, 2000 – Bid opening

August 4, 2000 – Water Quality Control Board Meeting, vote on waste discharge permit for dredging in and around Del's Marina,

Mid-August – Notice to begin work,

October 14, 2000 – Last day to work in the water at the Islands and Del's Marina,

November 30, 2000 – Last day to work at Tracy Oasis Marina and in Grant Line Canal.

Permit Process:

Notice of Determination files on June 14,2000,

Wetlands delineation to be completed and faxed to USCOE and USBR by Friday, June 29,2000,

NMFS issuing Letter of No Impact,

USFWS Biologic Opinion is being routed for approval,

Corps to issue Nationwide Permits 16 and 35 and a Section 10 Permit (Rivers and Harbors) after review of the Service Biologic Opinion and the Wetlands Delineation,

Section 401 Water Quality Waivers have been received for Tracy Oasis and the Islands. Waste Discharge Permit in review process,

Fish and Game Section 1601 Streambed Alteration Permit is being routed through Fish and Game for final signatures,

County Encroach Permit has been applied for and has preliminary approval from the county.

Reclamation will provide a site to be used for deposition of spoils.

OPERATIONS

WY 2000 b(2) Accounting:

A handout was distributed showing the CVO website for preliminary b(2) accounting as of May 31.

CVP/SWP Operations Status:

The current State and Federal reservoir levels and export rates were presented as per the SWP Operations Package handout.

Fishery Status

4(d) Rules to Protect Threatened Salmon & Steelhead:

Protective measures were announced for salmon and steelhead populations in a NOAA Fisheries Service news release.

Salmon:

There was concern over the depletion of cold water storage used to protect fish spawning between Bend Bridge and Jelly's Ferry. More fish are being found than last year. The CVP reservoirs are running 2 degrees warmer. Cold water could run out in September.

Splittail: Nothing to report.

Delta Smelt:

A large population of delta smelt are around the confluence. The density of delta smelt is one third of the previous values and heading towards zero.

NNG and DAT Update

Discussed delta smelt and Delta Cross Channel Gate operation at the last conference call. At the next conference call meeting, the Grant Line Canal barrier and the 500 cfs increase will be discussed.

Agenda items for Next Meeting . . . July 26, 2000