

CALFED OPERATIONS COORDINATION GROUP  
March 28, 2001 MEETING NOTES AND ACTION ITEMS

**Review of February 21 meeting notes**

The following revisions were made to the February 21, 2001, CALFED Ops meeting notes:

Alternative methods for meeting the 150 mg/l chloride water quality standard at Rock Slough were discussed. One possible approach is to move the compliance point to another location. At the present time, when the standard is exceeded, it is considered a violation of the SWP and CVP water right permits, though the executive Director of the SWRCB may elect not to pursue enforcement action when a violation occurs. SWRCB staff believes that moving the compliance location can only be accomplished through the triennial review process.

**Announcements**

The following handouts were provided at the meeting:

1. VAMP 2001 Daily Operation Plans (500, 700 & 1,000 cfs ungaged flow at Vernalis), March 23, 2001, SJRG, Mike Archer
2. DLYSWEQ.20010301 (03/03/01 0745) and DLYSWEQ.20010328 (03/28/01 0857), March 28, 2001, SJRG, Mike Archer
3. 1999-2001 San Joaquin River SJRA Hydrology, March 28, 2001, SJRG, Dan Steiner
4. CALFED Operations Briefing Package, March 28, 2001, DWR, John Leahigh
5. (b)(2) Expenditure Summary Water Year 2001 and WY 2001 B2 Accounting Based on March 1 - 90% and 50% Exceedence, March 28, 2001, USBR, Paul Fujitani (currently under revision)
6. Winter-run Chinook Salmon, Steelhead, and Spring-run Chinook Update, March 28, 2001, NMFS, Bruce Oppenheim
7. Winter Run & Older Juvenile Chinook Loss at the Delta Fish Facilities (10/1/00 – 3/25/01), March 27, 2001, DWR, Sheila Greene
8. Spring Midwater Trawl Delta Smelt Distribution, DFG, Scott Cotter

**SWRCB**

A revised draft of an order to stay Phase 8 of the Bay-Delta water Rights Hearing was sent to parties on March 23. The draft order will be considered at the April 4 Board meeting. The Board will also consider at that meeting a draft resolution finding that a project titled "Planning Investigation for Implementation of the Phase 8 Settlement Agreement" is consistent with the Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan and with the provisions of Proposition 204. Under the proposal, 1.635 million

dollars of Prop 204 funds would be transferred from DWR to the Northern California Water Association to carry out the planning investigation.

On March 7, the DWR and the USBR made a request for use of Joint Point of Diversion. Under the request pumping would have been moved from Banks to Tracy in order to reduce fish losses at Banks. Use of Joint Point of Diversion is subject to compliance with the water level response plan. The request was not consistent with the water level response plan and was therefore denied.

The Division of Water Rights sent a letter to Westlands Water District rejecting their petition for reassignment of the state filed water right application used to build the Friant project. Westlands may petition Board for reconsideration of this decision. The letter also indicated that the Westlands application to appropriate water under watershed protection theory would soon be noticed to the public.

The Board adopted the Lower Yuba River Decision, D-1644, on March 1. This decision establishes new long-term instream flow requirements for the Yuba. A number of petitions for reconsideration are anticipated. The decision is available on the internet at: <http://www.waterrights.ca.gov/Decisions/>. The Division also approved on March 9 a petition for temporary change permitting the transfer of up to 50,000 af of water from the Yuba County Water Agency to the EWA. The transferred water will be in addition to the minimum flows required in D-1644.

Two petitions for reconsideration were received on the Delta Wetlands Decision (D-1643). In addition, the SWRCB has been sued on CEQA grounds. Unless a new Board member is appointed by the time that the SWRCB must act on the petitions, the petitions will be statutorily denied.

### **Delta Cross Channel Gate Experiment Update**

The final results are being prepared for a presentation on May 24, 2001, possibly in the Cortland auditorium. A draft of the results will be available by May 24<sup>th</sup>. These results are also targeted for the summer issue of the Interagency Ecological Program newsletter. Preliminary results were presented the IEP workshop at Asilomar on March 1<sup>st</sup>. This pilot experiment was a success because the multi-agency effort worked and the equipment worked. For fish and water quality protection, the Delta Cross Channel Gates are driven by the tides. In August, more hydro-acoustic data will be gathered at the DCC gates and in November, additional DCCG experiments will be scheduled to look at localized questions. Future studies will look at the Head of Old River barrier using hydroacoustic gear, as well as, radio tracking of fish and predation experiments in the south Delta.

## **VAMP**

The USBR and the SJR group presented a number of overheads showing river flows on the San Joaquin, Merced, and Tuolumne, as well as reservoir operations of New Exchequer, New Don Pedro, and New Melones comparing 1999, 2000, and 2001 data. The conclusion of the presentation was that VAMP releases during 2000 had not appreciable impact on downstream conditions.

Handouts of the VAMP 2001 Daily Operation Plan for ungaged flows of 500, 700, and 1,000 cfs at Vernalis were discussed. Also discussed was a handout summarizing of snow pack data for northern, central, and southern California on March 6 and 28, 2001.

## **Temporary Barriers**

The Head of Old River Barrier and the two of 3 temporary barriers are scheduled to be in by April 15, 2001. Some important permits still need to be secured; they may be acquired by next week. Entry permits are in place. Given the current forecast, the target flow is 3200 cfs with a standard barrier.

## **Environmental Water Account Implementation**

The EWA Operations summaries distributed in the CALFED Ops Group Operations Briefing package were discussed. These summaries are updated regularly and posted on the CALFED Ops web page under the 2001 Operations section.

## **OFF and DAT Update**

A handout of the Winter Run & Older Juvenile Chinook Loss at the Delta Fish Facilities (10/1/00 to 3/25/01) was discussed. Winter run size Chinook began appearing in significant numbers by the facilities on February 15<sup>th</sup>. Losses as high as this year's have never been seen before now; nor has the red light level been exceeded so rapidly before this.

## **OPERATIONS**

### CVP/SWP Operations Status:

The current State and Federal reservoir levels and export rates were presented as per the CALFED Operations Briefing Package handout. Precipitation is 54% of

average for northern California, 55% of average for the water year, and would be the third driest year on record if it does not rain anymore this water year.

Delta Operations Criteria:

Bay-Delta Standards for the month of April were discussed.

Operations Plan:

The USBR distributed and discussed tables of (b)(2) Expenditure Summary WY 2001 and WY 2001 B2 Accounting Based on March 1 for 90% and 50% Exceedence. [These (b)(2) sheets are currently under revision.]

**Fishery Status**

Salmon: NMFS distributed and discussed its update of winter-run, steelhead, and spring-run Chinook status. NMFS is trying to get a better handle on juvenile production to protect 1% and 2% levels for next year. NMFS is also trying to resolve institutional roadblock issues, such as joint point of diversion and water response plan. Genetic results show that this year we are seeing the biggest concentration of winter run since 1996. After March 31, no more real time analyses can be carried out due to contract problems with the UC lab.

Splittail: The comment period is for 45 days.

Delta Smelt: The Delta Smelt Working Group met this morning. The Spring Midwater Trawl Delta Smelt Distribution was handed out.

**Agenda items for Next Meeting . . . April 25, 2001**

VAMP Update  
Contingency Plans due to Power Shortages for this Summer