

CALFED OPERATIONS COORDINATION GROUP
MEETING NOTES AND ACTION ITEMS
October 23, 2002

Announcements

Review of September 25 meeting notes:

Any comments are to be sent to Curtis Creel or Tracy Pettit.

Effective November 1, 2002, security at the Resources Building will be increased and visitors will be asked to provide picture ID.

Handouts:

- 1) Draft "Term 91 Water Diversion Curtailments" information sheet; updated August 21, 2000; Nick Wilcox; SWRCB
- 2) CALFED OPS GROUP Operations Briefing, dated October 23, 2002; Curtis Creel, DWR

SWRCB Activities

Update on SWRCB activities

- SWRCB last week adopted the order extending the dismissal date of Phase 8 from October 26, 2002 to January 31, 2003. Involved parties are close to a negotiated settlement.
- Term 91 was invoked, and tentatively may run from October 10 to November 1, 2002. This is the first time that Term 91 has been reinvoked. Participants voiced some concerns over the Term 91 methodology. Copies of the Term 91 information sheet were distributed (which is the same information that is available from the SWRCB's website).
- The Oroville-Wyandotte Irrigation District order was postponed to approximately November 23, 2002.
- A workshop was held to discuss and gather comments regarding the Imperial Irrigation District transfer to San Diego County Water Authority. On October 28, there will be another meeting to adopt the order.
- A short term extension for the Water Level Response Plan for Stage 2 Joint Point was approved based upon concurrence from fishery agencies and Contra Costa Water District. The SWRCB's letter stated that this was the last time a short term extension would be granted without the fishery protection and water quality response plans in place. If the CVP switches its exports to the SWP at Banks to accommodate repair work at Tracy Pumping Plant, it would be viewed as Stage 1 Joint Point. The only concern would be a water quality response plan.
- The water quality standard at Contra Costa Pumping Plant No. 1 exceeded 250 mg/l.
- The SWRCB and other agencies are currently working on a Stage 2 Joint Point response plan.
- The workshop on the Narrative Salmon Doubling was postponed to either February 4 or February 5, 2003. The topics at this workshop will address the differences in state and federal requirements and definitions.

On-Going Activities Related to Ops Group

Delta Cross Channel Gate Experiment

Reclamation reported that on October 19, 2002, DCC gate No. 2 failed during operation. Damages were extensive, but there were no injuries. Currently DCC gate No. 2 must remain in the closed position until the damage is assessed and repairs are made. DCC gate 2 will be out for at least a week and probably longer. U.S.G.S. staff inspected the DCC gate for signs of undercutting (which none were observed) and will continue to monitor. The current gate configuration (one gate open - one gate closed) may pose some navigational difficulty for boaters.

Final non-radio telemetered fish release will be made on October 24 and 25, 2002. Initially, the test called for the DCC gates to be in the full open position, however, the experiment will continue with the current gate configuration. CALFED may have contract for radio tag portion of the experiment

Refinement of (B)(2) Actions and Accounting

The Project and Management Agencies are working on the November (B)(2) accounting and the 2003 Operations Plan. There was a discussion regarding having a one-day meeting which covered both topics. After much deliberation, it was determined that each topic is sufficiently complex to require separate meetings.

It was requested that the daily accounting baselines be distributed sooner. The U.S.B.R and U.S.F.W.S. agreed to work towards getting the baselines finished and disseminated earlier; however, accounting for COA operations, transfers, and other daily operations still will make the timely daily accounting a challenge. A preliminary 90% (B)(2) study is currently posted on Reclamation's web site. Additional studies and updates will be completed for the December meeting.

Status of Water Level Response Plan

When the current plan expires, either a new plan must be developed or the existing plan must be reapproved. Modeling has been regular and complete. Temporary pumps appear to have worked well and now are being removed since they are no longer needed this season. Ideally a long term response plan (greater than one year) would be desired. Also refer Update on SWRCB activities.

2003 Operations Plan

An official 2003 draft policy is still being reviewed in Washington, D.C. The mid-October deadline for that policy has been missed and no new deadline has been set. U.S.F.W.S. and U.S.B.R. will continue to formulate plans based on the latest and best guidance that is available to them.

Fishery Status

Status of Sacramento River Monitoring

Upper Sacramento is seeing the peak of the downstream diversion of winter-run chinook frye. The number of juvenile salmon at GCID is declining as usual. All appears normal in the Sacramento River.

Steelhead, Winter-Run and Spring-Run Chinook Salmon

Refer to the Status of Sacramento River Monitoring section.

Splittail

Nothing to report in this section.

Delta Smelt

A Delta Smelt presentation will be given at the next CALFED Ops meeting. The preliminary project recovery index is approximately 33 (the fifth lowest since 1967), but the criteria can still be met. A status review will be initiated.

Other

A "fish kill" in the lower Klamath River sparked a discussion regarding the current scope of the CALFED Ops coordination group meeting. Currently the Trinity/Klamath systems are not addressed by this group. Looking at possibly expanding the scope of issues addressed by this group was discussed. Reclamation will look into the implications of looking at new watersheds. Other agencies were invited to do the same. This issue may be revisited at a future meeting.

Work Group Updates

OFF Update

The Delta Cross Channel Gate operations were discussed at the last meeting.

DAT Update

The Delta Cross Channel Gate operations were discussed at the last meeting. The next DAT call is scheduled for October 29, 2002, at 10 a.m.

Operations Status

CVP/SWP Operations Status

The CVP and SWP are operating to an monthly outflow standard of 4,000 cfs. The depletions in the Sacramento River are very high when compared to historic levels. Additional information will be furnished to the SWRCB by the SWP. High depletions may be partially attributable to rice field flooding. An alternative to rice straw decomposition which converts the rice straw into some kind of composite building boards was discussed. The SWP is moving about 500 cfs through Banks for Joint Point. The CVP reports that Tracy Pumping Plant has several holes in its primary louvers. Preliminary efficiency tests indicate that the louvers are diverting approximately 60% to 70% of the fish away from the pumps at Tracy Pumping Plant. The CVP is planning on implementing a temporary fix to the louvers. It is anticipated that Banks will export some Stage 1 water for the CVP while repairs are underway. A permanent fix is scheduled for Summer 2004. Some diverters are subject to Term 91 restrictions but there are other diverters who are not affected by the declaration of Term 91 limits. The Folsom power bypass to meet temperature requirements on the American River, downstream of Nimbus Dam, was discussed. EWA funding would be used to reimburse WAPA for forgone power generation. The SWP share of San Luis Reservoir is decreasing due to the low pumping at Banks Pumping Plant. This is a new trend for this time of year.

Delta Operations Criteria

The Operations Briefing package was discussed. The 250 mg/l standard at Contra Costa Pumping Plant No. 1 was exceeded on October 7, 2002. Possible factors were discussed which may have contributed to the initial and continuing high salinity reading at Contra Costa Pumping Plant No. 1 including low Contra Costa Water District exports as well as Project operations. Contra Costa Water District recommended that the compliance point be shifted to the Delta Road Bridge location. SWRCB will continue to monitor the situation and will respond as necessary. SWRCB will make a final assessment after all the data is collected and analyzed.

EWA Operations

The EWA's December end-of-month balance is as follows: 11 TAF stored in San Luis Reservoir, 20 TAF stored in Lake Oroville and 37 TAF in groundwater. The draft EWA Acquisition strategy is currently being reviewed/refined. The general strategy is to favor upstream of the Delta purchases in dry years, while favoring south of the Delta purchases in wet years. The Oroville-Wyandotte Irrigation District and Yuba County Water Agency contracts are in progress. The EWA would like more federal partners south of the Delta. The EWA would also like to coordinate with Level 4 refuge purchases.

Action Items

- A presentation on Delta Smelt Recovery will be given at the next CALFED Ops meeting.
- A presentation on the Trinity issues will be given.