

CALFED OPERATIONS COORDINATION GROUP

MEETING NOTES AND ACTION ITEMS

April 23, 2003

Handouts

- 1) CALFED OPS GROUP Operations Briefing Package, dated April 23, 2003; John Leahigh, DWR.

Announcements

Review of April 2nd meeting notes

Comments to be given to Tracy Pettit.

February Reservoir Operations Chronology Handout

This topic will be discussed during the (B)(2) accounting.

SWRCB Activities

Update on SWRCB activities

- The Board is currently holding a hearing on a petition for long-term change from the San Joaquin River Group Authority agencies to provide an additional amount of water (about 47 TAF) to support the VAMP. The South Delta Water Agency, the Central Delta Water Agency and the Stockton East Water District are opposing parties.
- A board workshop on progress toward meeting the Narrative Salmon Objection is currently scheduled for June 3, 2003. The SWRCB will send out notices by the end of next week. The workshop could be delayed depending on the wishes of the various parties. The issues could also be considered in the context of triennial review. The SWRCB is currently considering whether to initiate a periodic review of the Water Quality Control Plan.
- The SWRCB has been directed by the Senate Budget Committee and the Legislative Analysts Office to propose a system of water user fees. At the present time, the General Fund finances the Division of Water Rights. In fiscal year 2003-04, Division staff has been cut by 20 percent and the overall budget by 30 percent. The goal would be to make the Division entirely fee based. The current proposal is to base fees on the face value of water right permits and licenses. A question arose regarding whether these fees should be charged to Pre-1914 or Riparian users.

On-Going Activities Related to the Ops Group

Status of Response Plans

Water Level Response Plan - Coordination has occurred between the Project Agencies and South Delta Water Agency. The target is to present the Plan to the SWRCB by next month. The Plan expires June 6th and is needed for all stages of Joint Point of Diversion.

Water Quality Response Plan – is being coordinated with Contra Costa Water District, Reclamation and DWR. The Plan will be sent to the SWRCB next week. This Plan is needed for all stages of Joint Point of Diversion.

Fish Protection Plan – A rough draft, developed by the CDFG, has been furnished to the SWRCB and USBR. This Plan is required for Stage 2 of Joint Point of Diversion.

Temporary Barriers

The flap gates at the Delta Mendota Canal and Old Middle River barriers are operating. The flap gates at the Grant Line Canal barrier are tied open; the center weir section remains open. Three of the six culverts at the Head of Old River barrier are operating. The monitoring of real-time data is available on CDEC. If modeling shows that the water level drops below zero, then the flap gates at the Delta Mendota Canal and Old Middle River barriers will remain operating.

Fishery Status

Status of Sacramento River Monitoring

There is not much movement of fish from upstream.

Steelhead, Winter-Run and Spring-Run Chinook Salmon

The loss rate at the salvage facilities for older juvenile Winter-run Chinook salmon is flat. The total Winter-run seasonal loss is 6,793. The take limit is about 47,000. There is young of the year Chinook at the salvage facilities.

Unmarked and non-adclipped Coleman and Mokelumne Fall-run Chinook Hatchery fish arrived at the salvage facility. The re-consultation level for the three Late Fall-run releases at Battle Creek was exceeded. Reclamation initiated re-consultation with NMFS document the results of the actions taken. Also, fish were released at Durham and Mossdale. An analysis of how surrogates are used and how VAMP affects fish will be performed.

No comment was made about steelhead.

Splittail

No comment was made.

Delta Smelt

The salvage at the fish facilities is low. There is a distribution of adult fish in the North Delta (at Cache Creek and Montezuma Slough). The 20-mm survey is conducted every other week. Larvae and young smelt are being observed. The 2nd 20-mm survey indicated a distribution in the South Delta. Samples are being processed in the 3rd 20-mm survey.

Work Group Activities

OFF Update

Nothing new to report.

DAT Update

There have been routine weekly DAT calls.

Operations Status

CVP/SWP Operations Status

The CALFED Ops Group Operations Briefing package was discussed.

Exports at both facilities were reduced on April 15th. The Delta is still in excess conditions. April has been the second most productive month regarding precipitation (with December being the most). This April is among the top 10% of historic Aprils which have had rainfall of about 8 inches. A normal April has rainfall of less than 4 inches. The flow from the Feather River is still at minimum at 1,050 cfs. In the base case, the storage in the state share of San Luis Reservoir would have filled by April 13th. The SWP increased allocations to 70%. About 58 TAF of water was made available for Article 21 during a six-day period - 50 TAF in March and 8 TAF in April. The average demand was about 6,000 cfs. The 50% hydrology is showing an above normal year.

The upstream CVP storage facilities are closer to filling. Releases at Keswick are at 15,000 cfs. Folsom Lake is encroached in flood control. The flow out of Trinity increased since April 21st. However, the CVP wants to delay any additional increases, although the possibility of spilling may occur if the delay is too long. The flow at Vernalis peaked around 3,500 cfs on April 22nd and may go flat.

Delta Operations Criteria

The requirements for Roe Island will not be triggered for May. There are some carryover days to be used. Page 3 shows the 7-day average.

2003 Operations Plan

The CVP is finalizing the forecast and evaluating the amount of water available. The 50% hydrology is more applicable than the 90% hydrology. Reclamation wants to use San Luis Reservoir in a more efficient manner and maintain a minimum pool of 200 to 300 TAF of storage for better water quality for SCVWD.

In an above normal water year, the Delta standards increase and extend to August 15th, rather than June. Vernalis flows increase from 1,140 cfs. The standards are tied to X2.

The CVP will post the April 1st 90% and 50% forecasts and will make a final allocation announcement.

EWA Operations

EWA Operations were discussed. The ESA Commitments (EWA Functionality) letters went out on April 8th. The EWA expenditures for a wet and dry year are 240 TAF and 210 TAF, respectively. Water purchase contracts are in place. A discussion followed regarding the water stored upstream and whether it can be moved.

(B)(2)/EWA Accounting Presentation

A workshop presenting information on the (B)(2)/EWA Accounting was given.

Action Items

- February Reservoir Operations Chronology Handout
- Presentation on Delta Cross Channel Gate Operations