

State Water Board Update

1) San Joaquin River Flow and South Delta Salinity

a) The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) held a workshop regarding its Draft Technical Report on the Scientific Basis for Alternative San Joaquin River Flow and Southern Delta Salinity Objectives (draft Technical Report) on January 6-7, 2011. Information related to the workshop is available on our website at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/bay_delta/bay_delta_plan/water_quality_control_planning/index.shtml.

Based on written comments received prior to the workshop and oral comments received at the workshop, the State Water Board is in the process of making any necessary changes to the draft Technical Report. Once those changes are made, the State Water Board will submit the final Technical Report for independent scientific peer review. The peer review comments and comments from the workshop and other information will inform the State Water Board's review and potential amendment of the San Joaquin River flow and southern Delta salinity objectives.

For further information on the Technical Report, contact Mark Gowdy at 916-341-5432 or mgowdy@waterboards.ca.gov or Diane Riddle at 916-341-5297 or driddle@waterboards.ca.gov.

b) As a follow up to the notice for the workshop mentioned above, the State Water Board released an additional notice of opportunity to provide information that was not submitted related to the Draft Technical Report on the review of and potential modifications to the San Joaquin River flow and southern Delta salinity objectives and the program of implementation for those objectives included in the 2006 Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary. Per the notice, written comments and other information related to the review of and potential amendments were due by 12 noon on February 8, 2011.

The notice, along with other information concerning the State Water Board's review of the San Joaquin River flow and southern Delta salinity objectives is posted on the State Water Board's website at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/bay_delta/bay_delta_plan/water_quality_control_planning/

Questions concerning this notice may be directed to Kari Kyler at 916-445-5987 or kk Tyler@waterboards.ca.gov.

c) On October 6, 2010, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) submitted the Delta-Mendota Canal Recirculation Feasibility Study - Plan Formulation Report (PFR), January 2010 (Updated September 2010). The State Water Board, as part of Revised Water Right Decision 1641 (D-1641), required Reclamation to evaluate the feasibility and impacts of recirculating water from the Delta-Mendota Canal into the lower San Joaquin River as a method for meeting and/or augmenting the Vernalis objectives and San Joaquin water quality objectives.

The State Water Board had an informational item on the agenda at the Board meeting on March 15, 2011 on the Bureau of Reclamation's Delta-Mendota Canal Recirculation Feasibility Study – Plan Formulation Report (PFR). Reclamation made a presentation on the PFR and previous pilot studies.

For further information on the PFR, contact Patricia Fernandez at 916-319-9141 or pfernandez@waterboards.ca.gov.

2) Modeling

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) and Reclamation are providing modeling assistance to the State Water Board in the following areas:

a) DWR has developed a plan to address our request for improvements to the salinity simulation performance of the DSM2 model in the southern Delta. The request was made as a follow-up to the recent CDO adopted by the Board in January (WR 2010-0002). We are evaluating the proposed plan and work has not started yet.

b) DWR is providing modeling runs to evaluate potential improvements to flows and salinity in the southern Delta associated with proposed changes to the temporary ag barriers down there (adding height and changing flap-gate operations). This is being done as part of the coordination effort between DWR and the South Delta Water Agency we requested as part of approving an emergency change petition back in the summer of 2008.

c) Reclamation is working on a scope of work to provide us with some CALSIM modeling that would evaluate possible alternative flow objectives for the San Joaquin River at Vernalis. Like item a) above this modeling support was requested as part of Order WR 2010-0002. The scope of work is still in development with Reclamation and work has not started.

d) DWR and Reclamation have received conditional approval from the State Water Board on their Feasibility Study Plan. The Feasibility Study Plan will evaluate the installation of low lift pumps at one or more of the temporary barriers and the feasibility of increasing flows in the San Joaquin River to ensure compliance with the interior southern Delta salinity objective. A report describing the study was due to the State Water Board by March 20, 2011. DWR requested a 3-week extension to complete the report due to staffing issues. The study is now due by April 11, 2011.

For further information on Modeling, contact Mark Gowdy at 916-341-5432 or mgowdy@waterboards.ca.gov

3) Water Transfer Petitions

2/19/11, Notice issued for temporary transfer of 10,000 acre-feet of water from DWR to areas within the Westlands Water District. The petitioner requests the changes be effective from April 1, 2011 to March 31, 2012. The comment period ended on March 21, 2011. Comments were received from California Fisheries and Water Unlimited. Staff are preparing an Order.

Due to the protest received regarding the long-term transfer notice of 9/28/10, which is for a transfer of 10,000 af/yr of water from DWR to areas within the Westlands Water District from 2011 to 2027, a hearing will potentially be scheduled in the next few months. The State Water Board sent a letter on February 16, 2011 to the protestants clarifying our understanding of the issues regarding the proposed long-term transfer. The 30-day response deadline for the February 16, 2011 letter was extended until April 4, 2011 due to a mailing error. The long-term transfer order is on hold pending a potential hearing.

The notice and protest for the long-term transfer and the notice for the temporary transfer is available for viewing online at:
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/applications/transfers_tu_notices/

3/2/11, Petition received for a temporary transfer/exchange of 800 af of water from DWR to areas within Musco Olive Products Company, who contracts with Byron Bethany Irrigation District, a CVP contractor. Under the proposed exchange, DWR would provide SWP water pumped at Banks directly to Musco in exchange for an equivalent amount of CVP water pumped at the Jones Pumping Plant and delivered to the SWP at O'Neill Forebay. The petitioner requests the changes be effective from April 15, 2011 to April 14, 2012. Staff are preparing a notice.

For further information on Water Transfers, contact Patricia Fernandez at 916-319-9141 or pfernandez@waterboards.ca.gov.