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A look at Corps activities and other news affecting the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta

In the News

2009 another bad year for Delta ecosystem

By Mike Taugher
Contra Costa Times— January 6, 2010

The latest survey of Delta fish populations shows another ominous dip.

Despite ramped-up regulations meant to protect Delta smelt, the imperiled fish that has come to symbolize the conflict between the Delta ecosystem and state-wide water demands fell to a record low, beating out the previous year's record low.

But the survey numbers, posted late Tuesday, show the problems are not restricted to Delta smelt, which some biologists believe are dangerously close to extinction.

http://www.contracostatimes.com/top-stories/ci_14134243?nclick_check=1

Feds take on bigger role in Delta protection

By Matt Weiser
Sacramento Bee— December 23, 2009

The Sacramento– San Joaquin Delta stands to draw a lot more attention from the federal government in 2010 under an “action plan” released Tuesday by the U.S. Department of Interior.

The plan is the result of a September agreement among federal agencies to help California deal with water problems and environmental decline in the Delta.

The plan promises to reverse years of neglect the Delta suffered during the Bush administration when the federal government failed to meet funding and resource commitments in a number of important partnerships with the state.

<http://www.sacbee.com/1268/story/2416096.html>

No resolution in Delta land access dispute

By Alex Breitler
Recordnet— January 7, 2010

STOCKTON - Attorney Thomas Keeling says there'll never be another case like this:

Owners of about 170 Delta properties refuse to allow state officials onto their land to survey for a possible peripheral canal.

And nearly one year after the first court actions were filed, the issue does not appear close to resolution.

http://www.recordnet.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20100107/A_NEWS/1070331

National science group to study delta water

By David Perlman
SFGate— December 19th, 2009

The National Research Council has decided to wade into the controversial issues plaguing the troubled Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta, appointing an expert committee Friday to study its water supply, fish protection, pollution and other issues.

The council, an arm of the National Academy of Sciences, is the nation's foremost nongovernmental advisory group on scientific issues.

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2009/12/19/BAOL1B6JFV.DTL#ixzz0ccoBVvFO>



Delta Islands & Levees Feasibility Study

Sacramento District, USACE (SPK)

Current Work

Corps team members are meeting regularly with study partners from the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) to develop the study foundation. The team met on 09 December 2009 and approved draft problem and opportunity statements. A meeting was held on 13 January 2010 to develop planning constraints. The goals for the next few meetings will be to finalize constraints, and form goals and objectives that will lay the groundwork to identify data and information gaps.

The next steps in the planning process will include inviting other Federal, State, and local agencies for an inter-agency meeting(s) for their input. Public scoping meetings will follow in the coming months. Problem and Opportunity statements will be used to update the 2006 PMP that was signed with DWR, the non-Federal project sponsor. The revised PMP is scheduled to be completed in early 2010.

Project Purpose

This feasibility study is the Corps' mechanism to participate in a cost-shared solution to a variety of water resources needs for which we have the authority. Results of DWR's Delta Risk Management Strategy (DRMS) studies will be used to help define problems, opportunities, and specific planning objectives. The feasibility study will address flood risk management, ecosystem restoration, water quality, water supply, and a variety of other issues. A feasibility cost-sharing agreement (FCSA) was executed May 26, 2006 with the DWR, our non-Federal sponsor.

Funding

- The total cost of the feasibility study is currently \$12,000,000; cost shared 50/50 with the DWR
- FY 08 appropriations at \$859,000
- FY 09 appropriations at \$478,000
 - Reprogrammed additional \$150,000
- FY 10 appropriations at \$394,000

Milestones

- √ Delta Site Visit—March 2009
- √ Funds Reprogrammed—June/July 2009
- √ Problems & Opportunities PDT Session—September 2009
- Multi-agency Kick-off Meeting—Early 2010
- Public Workshops—Spring 2010

CALFED Levee Stability Program

Sacramento District, USACE (SPK)

Current Work

The Programmatic Management Plan (PgMP) is currently being revised based on comments and additional information from the Corps team. The Draft PgMP will include templates for Project Management Plans (PMPs) and Feasibility Cost Sharing Agreements (FCSAs) developed for projects in the LSP.

The Kleinfelder-Geomatrix Joint Venture (K-G JV) contractors have conducted site visits and trip reports (28 submitted) for LSP project proposals, followed by preliminary draft Project Implementation Reports (PIRs) (28 submitted) to provide information for future PMPs. Each PMP will be accompanied by a feasibility cost share agreement (FCSA) to be executed with various Reclamation Districts (RDs) and other potential non-Federal project sponsors.

The team is evaluating four new project proposals for the LSP, and if accepted, will initiate site visits and the development of trip reports, preliminary draft PIRs and PMPs for each. The team is beginning to prepare draft fact sheets and PMPs for five LSP projects.

Bethel Island Project

The PMP and draft FCSA for Bethel Island were approved by the Board of Directors of the Bethel Island Municipal Improvement District (BIMID) on 15 October 2009. The PMP has been signed by BIMID and the Corps. Once the FCSA is approved by the Corps, BIMID and the Corps will sign the FCSA and begin hydraulic and hydrologic (H&H) modeling of alternatives to determine the feasibility of the cross cut channel.

Study team members met on 05 January 2010 to report on details of habitat types and acreages, mitigation requirements, and draft success criteria for project alternatives. In addition, the PDT discussed Operations and Maintenance (O&M) issues to determine duration and costs, real estate criteria, and responsible parties for the crosscut channel and ecosystem restoration areas within the alternatives. A focused PDT meeting was held on 14 January 2010 to discuss ownership of the cross cut channel and ecosystem restoration areas and responsibility for O&M activities.

Emergency Response Planning

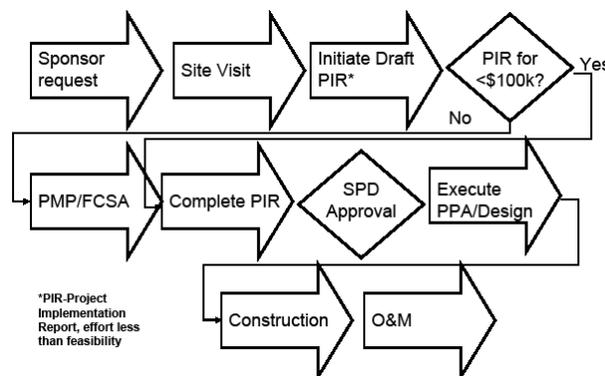
A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was signed between USACE and DWR, allowing the Corps-DWR to initiate GIS Flood Contingency Mapping for 5 Delta counties and the Delta region.

Project Purpose

The CALFED Act (PL 108-361) directed the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to deliver a report that identified and prioritized potential levee stability projects in the Delta that could be carried out with the authorized \$90 million in Federal funds. An additional \$106 million was authorized to be appropriated by Section 3015 of WRDA 2007. To quickly identify critically needed projects with active non-Federal support, the USACE invited Delta stakeholders to submit project proposals with letters stating their willingness to participate as cost-sharing sponsors. In response, Delta area Reclamation Districts and flood management agencies submitted 68 project proposals totaling more than \$1 billion in estimated costs. USACE evaluated proposals and prioritized potential projects according to how well they met USACE environmental, economic, and other implementation criteria. The USACE short-term strategy is to move quickly to construction on high priority levee reconstruction projects identified in that report. The authorized \$196 million of Federal funds, plus the required non-Federal funds, would be an important first step to address Delta-wide levee system needs. The long-term strategy will be developed through the Delta Islands and Levees Feasibility Study process. The project delivery process includes: PMP/FCSA development; Project Implementation Report (PIR); SPD approval; Project Partnership Agreement (PPA) execution; design & construct; and operate & maintain.

Funding

- Authorized appropriations of \$90M; additional WRDA 07 add of \$106M for a total of \$196M authorized to be appropriated.
- FY 08: Received \$4,920,000
- FY 09: Received \$4,784,000
- FY 10: Received \$4,844,000



Delta Long Term Management Strategy (Delta-LTMS) San Francisco District, USACE (SPN)

Current Work

An interagency meeting between USACE, EPA, and the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVRWQCB) will be held on January 25th to discuss the Memorandum of Agreement for the Delta Dredging and Reuse Management Team (DDRMT) and discuss issues pertaining to starting a trial DDRMT. The group will also discuss the development of a Programmatic Biological Assessment for maintenance dredging in the Delta. Resource agencies representatives were also invited to the interagency meeting. A joint Technical Work Group meeting scheduled for February 4th is open to stakeholders and interested public, and will include discussion on preparing a General Order for emergency levee repair, updates on current Delta projects, and discussion regarding the DDRMT. Additional updates, including past meeting agendas and minutes, can be found on the project website, www.deltaltms.com.

Funding

FY 05:\$ 133,558
 FY 06:\$ 450,187
 FY 07:\$ 591,692
 FY 08:\$ 440,633
 FY 09:\$ 273,403
 FY 10:\$ 100,000
 Total cost of the study: \$6,440,000

Project Purpose

The Delta Long-Term Management Strategy (LTMS) is a cooperative planning effort to coordinate, plan, and implement beneficial reuse of sediments in the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Delta (Delta). Five agencies (USACE, USEPA, DWR, CBDA, and CVRWQCB) have begun to examine Delta dredging, reuse, and disposal needs. The Delta LTMS will explore ways to coordinate and manage dredging planning, regulatory approval, and implementation to protect and enhance Delta functions, ecosystem, and water quality. The goals of the LTMS are to manage dredging activities to:

- Support and maintain Delta channel functions for navigation, flood control, water conveyance, and Recreation
- Maintain and stabilize Delta levees that protect land-based activities, water conveyance, and terrestrial ecosystems
- Protect and enhance water quality for Delta water supply and ecosystem function

Milestones

- Implement Regional General Orders: August 2009
- Set up trial Delta Dredging & Reuse Management Team (DDRMT): Jan 2010
- Formulate Management Alternatives: July 2010
- Programmatic EIS/EIR for Alternatives: FY11
- Adopt Sediment Mgmt. Plan: FY 12

Lower San Joaquin Feasibility Study

Sacramento District, USACE (SPK)

Current Work

- The Environmental team is preparing to hold a public scoping meeting. University of Pacific will host, DWR and SJAFCA in attendance.
- The PDT will begin a partnership with the state for H&H modeling within the study area.
- The PDT continues to refine the project schedule via technical and management planning meetings.
- Upcoming Meetings
 - Hydraulic Partnership Meeting 14 Jan 2010
 - Technical PDT Meetings 18 Jan 2010
 - PDT Public Scoping Meeting on 27 Jan 2010

Funding

Prior to FY 2008	\$125,000
FY 2008	\$129,000
FY 2009	\$454,000
FY 2010	\$897,000

Project Purpose

The purpose of this feasibility study is to determine if there is a Federal interest in providing flood risk management and ecosystem restoration improvements along the Lower (northern) San Joaquin River. The Lower San Joaquin River study area includes the San Joaquin River from the Mariposa Bypass downstream to, and including, the city of Stockton. The study area also includes the channels of the San Joaquin River in the southernmost reaches of the Delta: Paradise Cut and Old River as far north as Tracy Boulevard and Middle River as far north as Victoria Canal. The floodplains of the lower San Joaquin River and its tributaries are also included in the study area.

Milestones

- FY 10: Public Scoping Meetings & Workshops
- FY 10: H&H Modeling
- FY 12: Feasibility Scoping Meeting



SF Bay to Stockton Navigation Improvement Project

San Francisco District, USACE (SPN)

Current Work

Work continues for studying baseline conditions for the EIS/EIR. Hydrodynamic, salinity and dissolved oxygen modeling continued.

Potential dredged material placement sites have been partially identified and additional capacity is being sought. The sponsor and USACE environmental team are participating in the Delta LTMS Alternatives Work Group (AWG) to identify potential placement and beneficial reuse sites.

<http://www.sfbaytostockton.org>

Funding

FY 08: Received \$403,000 Federal
FY 09: Received \$1,340,000 Federal
FY 10: \$917,163 in FY09 carryover funds

Project Purpose

The SF Bay to Stockton Deep Water Ship Channel Project is a congressionally authorized project being implemented by the USACE and the Port of Stockton and the Contra Costa County Water Agency. A joint (EIS/EIR) will evaluate the action of navigational improvements to the John F. Baldwin and Stockton Deep Water Ship Channels. A General Reevaluation Report is being prepared to determine the feasibility of modifying the current dimensions of the West Richmond, Pinole Shoal, Suisun Bay, and Stockton Ship Channels, which are currently maintained to 35 feet and provide access to oil terminals, industry in Pittsburg, and the Port of Stockton.

Milestones

- Draft EIS/EIR – 2011 (assumes adequate funding is available)



Sacramento River Deep Water Ship Channel Project San Francisco District, USACE (SPN)

Current Work

The Project Delivery Team for the SRDWSC is moving forward with work on the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement/ Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (SEIS/SEIR). The environmental staff met with representatives from the US Fish and Wildlife Service and NOAA Fisheries to discuss current project development, present past and ongoing technical studies, and initiate discussions for endangered species consultation and in preparation of a Coordination Act Report. The environmental team will follow up with USFWS, NOAA Fisheries, and the California Department of Fish and Game on additional data needs. Salinity modeling, beneficial reuse survey, and ship simulation studies are ongoing. Hydrodynamic and salinity modeling results are expected in early 2010. Preliminary information regarding beneficial reuse opportunities in the Delta is expected in spring 2010. A new ship simulation study is also underway to determine the navigational safety of the existing channel and propose areas for additional widening if necessary.

Funding

The expressed capability for FY10 is approximately \$2,000,000.

Project Purpose

The Sacramento River Deep Water Ship Channel Project (SRDWSC) is a congressionally authorized project being implemented by USACE and the Port of West Sacramento. Currently, USACE and the Port are conducting a Limited Reevaluation Study to recommend navigation improvements for Federal funding and preparing a joint SEIS/SEIR to evaluate the action of resuming construction of navigational improvements to the SRDWSC.

Milestones

- Feasibility Scoping Meeting– December 2009/January 2010
- Draft SEIS/SEIR– September 2010

Delta Links

Delta Initiatives, Official Sacramento District, Corps of Engineers site:

<http://www.spk.usace.army.mil/projects/civil/Delta/News.html>

Delta LTMS: <http://www.deltatms.com/>

Delta Risk Management Strategy (DRMS): <http://www.drms.water.ca.gov/>

Delta Vision: <http://www.deltavision.ca.gov/>

CALFED Bay Delta Program: <http://calwater.ca.gov/>

Delta Protection Commission: <http://www.delta.ca.gov/>

DWR, Delta Initiatives: <http://www.water.ca.gov/deltainit/>

Bay-Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP): <http://baydeltaconservationplan.com>

Bay-Delta Office (BDO), DWR: <http://baydeltaoffice.water.ca.gov/>

California Delta Chambers & Visitors Bureau: <http://www.californiadelta.org/>

SacDelta.com, an interactive guide to the Delta: <http://www.sacdelta.com/>

SF Bay to Stockton Navigation: <http://www.sfbaytostockton.org>

Sacramento River Deep Water Ship Channel: <http://www.sacramentoshipchannel.org>

Subscription Info

Delta News is a monthly publication by the US Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento and San Francisco Districts. To subscribe, please send an email with 'Subscribe' in the subject line to: DeltaNews@usace.army.mil

Upcoming Delta Events

January

13 & 27: Delta Islands and Levees Feasibility Study Project Delivery Team (PDT) Meeting

25: Delta LTMS IWG Meeting

February

2: Bethel Island-Horseshoe Bend PDT Meeting

10: Delta Islands and Levees Feasibility Study Project Delivery Team (PDT) Meeting