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

In the News

Delta: A lake in the making

By Mike Taugher
Contra Costa Times- September 13, 2010

The toxic blue-green algae floating in the scientist's jar is a symptom of a disturbing shift in the West Coast's biggest estuary. Common in lakes and reservoirs around the world, this kind of algae is less likely to be found in estuaries where rivers and ocean tides tangle in a restless ebb and flow.

But the slime has spread in an increasingly stagnant Delta. After five years of studies, scientists are coalescing around the idea that diverting fresh water to farms and cities has led to a fundamental change in the Delta by slowing flows for most of the year.

Other factors are also at play, especially the dramatic conversion of a once vast tidal marsh into a network of deep channels and "islands" first built for farming.

http://www.contracostatimes.com/ci_16026343?IADID=Search-www.contracostatimes.com-www.contracostatimes.com

Water Smart: California farmers disagree on water supplies

By Tim Daly
News 10- September 8, 2010

STOCKTON, CA - Farmers from the southern side of the San Joaquin Valley are disputing the reasons for declining fish populations in order to receive more water for their crops.

It's long been believed the pumping process that removes water from the Sacramento San Joaquin Delta is the leading reason for fewer Delta smelt, salmon and other fish.

But farmers from Fresno, Kings, and Madera counties claim the real reason is pollution from cities like Stockton and Sacramento. Those cities are allowed to put treated wastewater into the delta.

<http://www.news10.net/news/local/story.aspx?storyid=94618&catid=2>

Council questions Delta plan's undercurrents

By Greta Mart and Donna Beth Weilenman
Martinez News-Gazette - September 2, 2010

The Martinez City Council has joined neighboring municipalities and jurisdictions in supporting the concept of a national protection zone around the Delta region.

During a spirited debate on Wednesday night, Council members Lara DeLaney and Mike Menesini seemed to butt heads over the true intentions of the proposal; Menesini was vehemently concerned it would facilitate the exporting of water, via a peripheral canal, to points south, but DeLaney asserted it would do the opposite and retain control over decisions about Delta water issues at a local level.

<http://www.martinezgazette.com/news/story/11342/2010/09/02/council-questions-delta-plans-undercurrents>

Delta water diversion spawns another lawsuit

By The Record
Stockton Record- September 10, 2010

A coalition of environmental groups has filed yet another lawsuit in the ongoing tussle over how much water can be taken from the Delta west of Stockton.

The groups argue that state water managers have violated an age-old public trust principle - that is, the concept that water is a public resource and should be managed as such.

The Stockton-based California Sportfishing Protection Alliance, California Water Impact Network and AquAlliance allege that the state, through a series of actions, has allowed the amount of water pumped from the Delta to increase even as fish populations plummet. The water is pumped to cities and farms as far south as San Diego.

http://www.recordnet.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20100910/A_NEWS/9100323/-1/NEWSMAP



US Army Corps of Engineers®
Sacramento District

Delta Islands & Levees Feasibility Study

Sacramento District, USACE (SPK)

Current Work

The Corps team members are meeting regularly with study partners from the California Department of Water Resources (DWR). Draft problem and opportunity statements focus the team on the authorized study purposes of **Ecosystem Restoration, Flood Risk Management**, and other related water resources purposes. Meetings were held in June 2010 to capture goals, constraints, and objectives that will lay the groundwork to identify data and information gaps.

On July 26th, the Project Delivery Team (PDT) conducted an inter-agency meeting with other Federal, State, and local agencies in order to get additional input on draft problems, opportunities, objectives, goals, and constraints. The PDT met on August 25th to review comments from the inter-agency meeting and to discuss the relationship of the Delta Study with other in-Delta programs. These and other planning components will guide ongoing revisions to the existing PMP, signed in 2006 with DWR, the non-Federal project sponsor.

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 state planning efforts will be used to help define problems, opportunities, and specific planning objectives. The feasibility study will address ecosystem restoration and flood risk management, and may also investigate related issues such as water quality and water supply. 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
- √ Extend meeting invitation to other Federal, State, and Local agencies—July 26, 2010
- Public Workshops—FY2011

CALFED Levee Stability Program

Sacramento District, USACE (SPK)

Current Work

The Corps team has completed draft PMPs for four LSP projects, including **McCormack-Williamson Tract, Bacon Island, Walnut Grove, and River Junction**. Final review and certification of PMPs and negotiation of FCSAs with non-Federal sponsors is ongoing. The Corps team is preparing a draft PMP for the **Brannan-Andrus Levee Maintenance District** project for review. The team will begin preparing draft PMPs for the next group of projects in the program in October.

The Draft Program 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.

To date, the Kleinfelder-Geomatrix Joint Venture (K-G JV) contractors have submitted 30 Preliminary Draft Project Implementation Reports (PDPIRs) that will provide information for future PMPs.

Bethel Island Project

On July 13th, the **FCSA for Bethel Island – Horseshoe Bend was signed** by the Bethel Island Municipal Improvement District (BIMID) and the Corps. BIMID and the Corps have begun hydraulic and hydrologic (H&H) modeling of alternatives to determine the feasibility of the crosscut channel. Preliminary H&H modeling results were presented at the August 24th PDT meeting. The PDT decided to proceed with additional modeling and geotechnical borings to determine the viability of the crosscut channel in future alternatives analyses. The approved FCSA and PMP will be templates for future projects under CALFED LSP. With this approved template, the Corps will move forward with the FCSAs and PMPs for the next group of LSP projects.

Emergency Response Planning

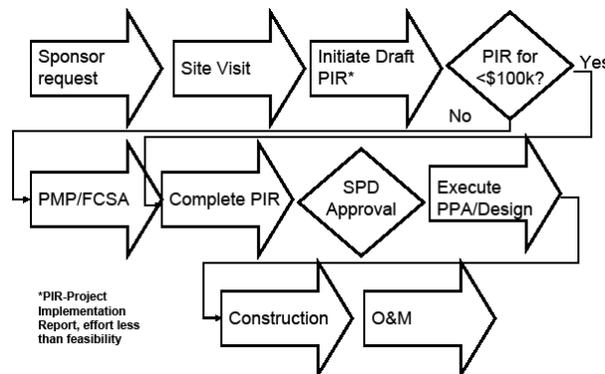
A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was signed between USACE and DWR, allowing the Corps-DWR to initiate GIS Flood Contingency Mapping and Phase 1 of an Emergency Response Plan for the Delta region. The team has begun meeting with Delta counties to get input on the GIS products, response plan, and related data. The Corps/DWR team is also investigating next steps toward Phase 2 of the response plan.

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 \$4,814,000



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

Current Work

A Delta LTMS Technical Work Group meeting (TWG) was held on July 20 and was attended by representatives from USACE San Francisco and Sacramento Districts, USEPA, Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control (CVRWQCB), USFWS, Port of West Sacramento, Port of Stockton Contra Costa County, Solano County, Bay Planning Coalition and other stakeholders.

The group discussed the various meetings attended and lessons learned. Updates were given on the progress of the Sacramento and Stockton Deep Water Ship Channels, CALFED Levee Stability Program, Delta Islands Feasibility Study, and the Bethel Island Project. For Sacramento DWSC there were updates given on the status of the draft SEIS/SEIR, sediment testing report, hydrodynamic modeling and placement sites/beneficial use report. The RWQCB gave an update on the status of the general order.

USACE, dredgers, and RWQCB staff had met within the past few months to discuss methylmercury and have been conducting a monitoring study since last year. USACE has also drafted a list of practical field methods to reduce methylation. The use of credits and total Hg vs. methyl Hg are still issues to be determined.

Additional updates, including past agendas and meeting minutes, can be found on the project website, <http://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

Delta LTMS was approved to receive reprogrammed funds of \$150,000.

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

- Programmatic EIR/EIR for alternatives: FY 2011
- Adopt Sediment Management Plan: FY 2012

Lower San Joaquin Feasibility Study Sacramento District, USACE (SPK)

Current Work:

- Geotechnical:
 - New recurring collaborative meetings with Corps, DWR and joint contractor URS, to determine available geotechnical data from the Urban Levee Evaluations and Non-Urban Evaluations program for use within the Lower San Joaquin River Feasibility Study
- Hydrology:
 - Modification to existing task order for David Ford Consulting awarded on September 10 for the reoperation study of New Hogan Dam
- Hydraulic Modeling:
 - Contracting efforts postponed to extend the Adaptive Hydraulic Model of the Bay-Delta.
 - Project Delivery Team is working to define the best technical approach to assess the impact of the sea-level rise for use in the planning and design of LSJR project features.
 - FLO-2D model draft release from CVFED for the Stockton Metropolitan area scheduled for September
- Upcoming Meetings:
 - ◆ Project Delivery Team Meeting September 16, 2010
 - ◆ Geotechnical Meeting September 20, 2010
 - ◆ Hydraulic Partnership Meeting October 7, 2010

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.

Funding

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

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 existing conditions for the EIS/EIR. The beneficial reuse survey has identified preliminary levee rehabilitation, habitat enhancement, and stockpile sites for the placement of dredged material. Other technical studies that have been initiated are a utilities survey and the baseline conditions report (existing conditions section of the EIS/EIR). Habitat mapping commenced on August 14 and a draft report is due this fall. Another mapping effort to verify plant species will take place in spring 2011. The Economics team has begun their analysis for projecting future commodities and uses at the Port of Stockton. In addition, USACE will continue to work with participating agencies in the Delta LTMS to approve a Sediment Sampling and Analysis Plan (SAP) for the proposed project.

<http://www.sfbaytostockton.org>

Funding

FY 08: Received \$403,000 Federal

FY 09: Received \$1,340,000 Federal

FY 10: \$1,093,000 in FY09 carryover funds

Project Purpose

The SF Bay to Stockton Deep Water Ship Channel Project is a congressionally authorized project being implemented by 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 MLLW and provide access to oil terminals, industry in Pittsburg, and the Port of Stockton

Milestones

- Feasibility Scoping Meeting (F3 Milestone) – March 2011
- Draft EIS/EIR – February 2012 (assumes adequate funding is available)



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

Current Work

The Project Delivery Team (PDT) for the SRDWSC is moving forward with work on the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement/ Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (SEIS/SEIR), including ongoing coordination with resource agencies to assess potential project impacts to habitat. Biologists from the USFWS and USACE collected field data for the Habitat Evaluation Procedure from dredged material placement sites. USACE San Francisco and Sacramento Districts are also working with the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control on methylmercury as it pertains to dredge activities.

The habitat mapping report is completed. The report included additional potential beneficial reuse sites and levees that were examined in July and August. Geotech investigations of select placement sites also took place this month. These technical studies support completion of the Limited Reevaluation Report (LRR) and the Draft SEIS/SEIR.

Funding

FY 09: Combined Federal and non-Federal share: \$1,276,000
FY 10: Combined Federal and non-Federal share: \$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

- Draft SEIS/SEIR November 2010
- Alternative Formulation Briefing (F4A) November 2010
- Public Review period Nov 2010 - Jan 2011
- Public meeting(s) Dec 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

September

- 21: Bethel Island Horseshoe Bend PDT Meeting
- 22: Delta Regional Initiatives Team Meeting
- 23 & 24: Delta Stewardship Council
- 29: Delta Islands and Levees Feasibility Study PDT Meeting

October

- 6: Delta Islands and Levees Feasibility Study PDT Meeting