



ISDP INTERIM SOUTH DELTA PROGRAM



Program Update
July 1995

This is to update interested parties on the Interim South Delta Program. The ISDP is proposed jointly by the The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR). The purpose of the ISDP is to (1) improve water levels and circulation problems in the southern Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta for local agricultural diversions, and (2) improve south Delta hydraulic conditions to increase diversions into Clifton Court Forebay and maximize the full pumping capability of Banks Pumping Plant (the Delta export facility of the State Water Project system owned and operated by DWR).

The south Delta area generally comprises the lands and channels of the Sacramento - San Joaquin Delta southwest of Stockton. Included in this area is the South Delta Water Agency, which represents the many agricultural diverters within the area. In addition to the local agricultural diversions, the area includes the State Water Project (SWP) and federal Central Valley Project (CVP) pumping facilities and the planned intake to Contra Costa Water District's Los Vaqueros Project.

In July 1982, the South Delta Water Agency (SDWA) filed a lawsuit over the effects of SWP and CVP operations on the south Delta. The suit claimed the operations hurt agricultural activities by lowering water levels and degrading water quality below acceptable limits.

FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT OF 1986

Negotiations between DWR, USBR and SDWA led to an October 1986 framework agreement. As a result of the litigation and framework agreement, the following actions were taken:

- Tom Paine Slough (see photo p. 2) was dredged and siphons were installed to improve the water level in the slough;
- the Temporary Barrier Program was initiated to improve water levels and circulation in the south Delta waterways and provide information for the development of permanent improvements;
- the South Delta Water Management Program was initiated to bring permanent improvements to the area.

In June 1990, a draft Environmental Impact Report and Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) for the South Delta Water Management Program (SDWMP) was released for public review and written comments were received. This draft was not finalized due to the controversy surrounding a variety of unresolved Delta issues.

A number of State and federal policies and laws have recently emerged to provide more specific direction and guidance related to the formulation of the original 1990 SDWMP. In 1992, Governor Pete Wilson issued his water policy statement, declaring that "the Delta is broken," and that "we need to take immediate interim actions in the south Delta that will help restore the environment and improve the water supply." Also in 1992, President Clinton signed the Central Valley Project Improvement Act into law. Section 3406(b)15 of this law directs the Secretary of Interior to "construct...a barrier at the head of Old River...to increase the survival of young out-migrating salmon...in a manner that does not

significantly impair the ability of local entities to divert water." Even more recently, on December 15, 1994, high-ranking federal and State officials announced agreement on a comprehensive plan to protect the Bay-Delta estuary. One of the elements in the agreed-upon plan is to construct and operate a barrier at the head of Old River to protect San Joaquin River salmon during April and May of all water year types.

The ISDP has been developed to be compatible with, and responsive to, all of these major policies.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The ISDP preferred alternative (see figure 1) is comprised of channel dredging, a new intake to Clifton Court Forebay, a fish barrier and three agricultural flow control structures, as discussed below.

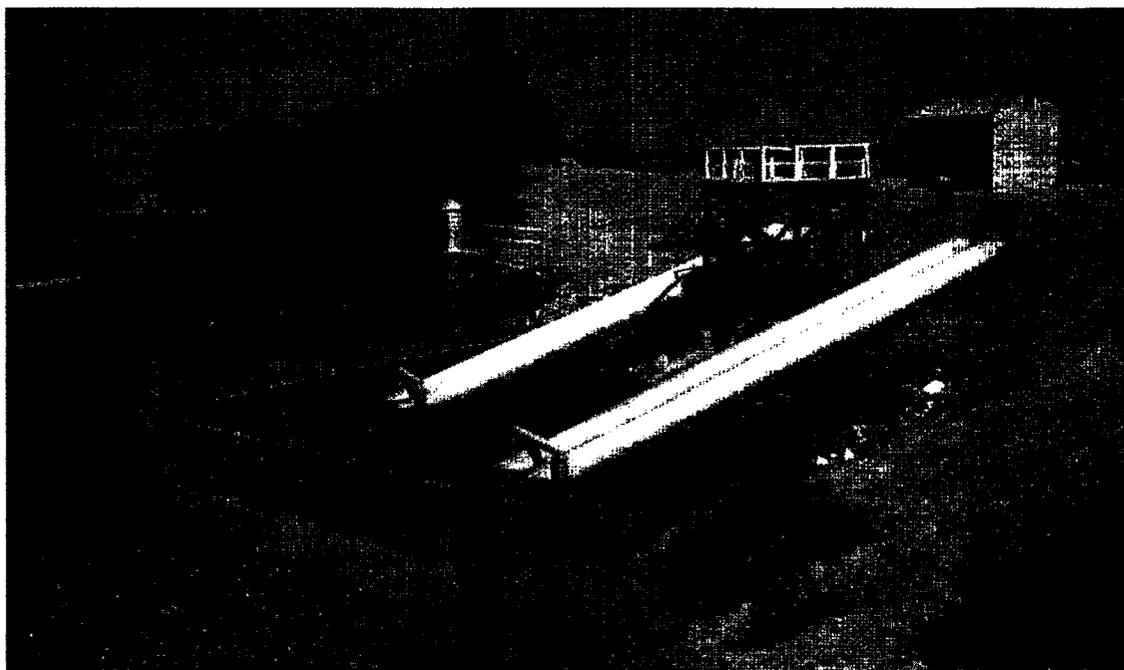
⇔⇔ Channel Dredging

It will be necessary to increase the existing channel capacity by dredging in the reach of Old River from the Western Canal to the

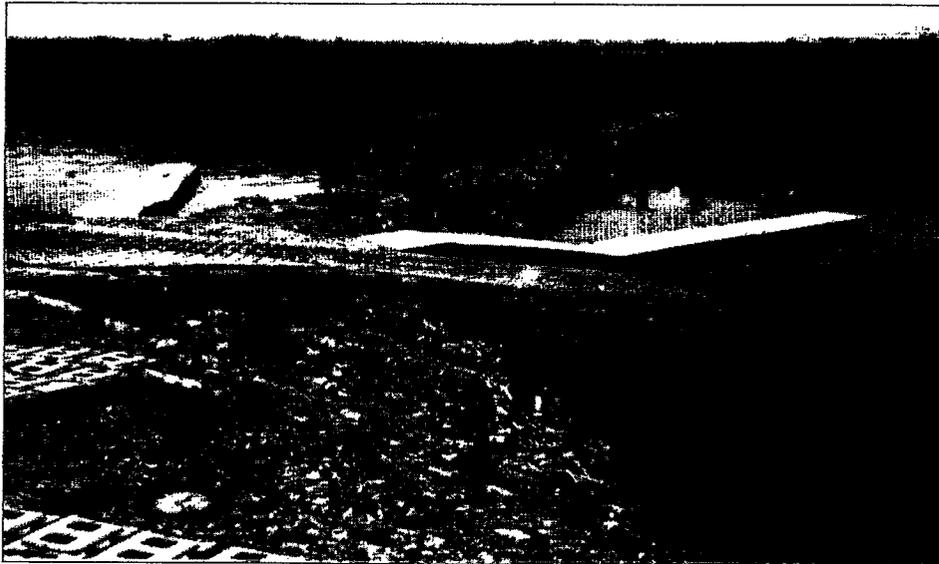
confluence of Old River and North Victoria Canal to allow the diversions during high flow periods necessary to support the full pumping capability of the Banks Pumping Plant. Approximately 1.25 million cubic yards of material would be dredged from a 4.9-mile reach of Old River to increase the channel capacity north of the new intake. The existing channel would be dredged to increase the average channel depth no greater than five feet.

⇔⇔ New Intake

An additional intake structure is proposed at Clifton Court Forebay. The proposed intake would be operated either in conjunction with, or independent of, the existing intake, depending on the amount of water to be diverted into the forebay, water quality, specific tidal conditions and other factors. The construction and operation of an additional intake structure at Clifton Court Forebay will facilitate diversions from the Delta in amounts that will support the full pumping capability of Banks Pumping Plant.



Tom Paine Slough siphon. Siphons were completed in July of 1989.



Temporary rock barrier installed on Old River near Tracy. This seasonal barrier has been operational since August 1991.

The structure would be concrete with vertical lift gates, boat docking facilities, and a jib crane. The jib crane would be used to transfer boats from one side to the other via a sling apparatus when the gates are in place. This structure would be operated only during the spring and fall periods of each year. During other times of the year, the gates would remain fully raised.

⇔ Fish Barrier

A proposed fish barrier would improve dissolved oxygen levels along the portion of the San Joaquin River from its confluence with the head of Old River downstream to the Port of Stockton, and enhance the survival of migrating San Joaquin River salmon smolts by lessening the chances of exposure to the influences of project and local diversions during the spring and fall. The barrier would be constructed at the confluence of the head of Old River and the San Joaquin River.

SACRAMENTO-SAN JOAQUIN DELTA

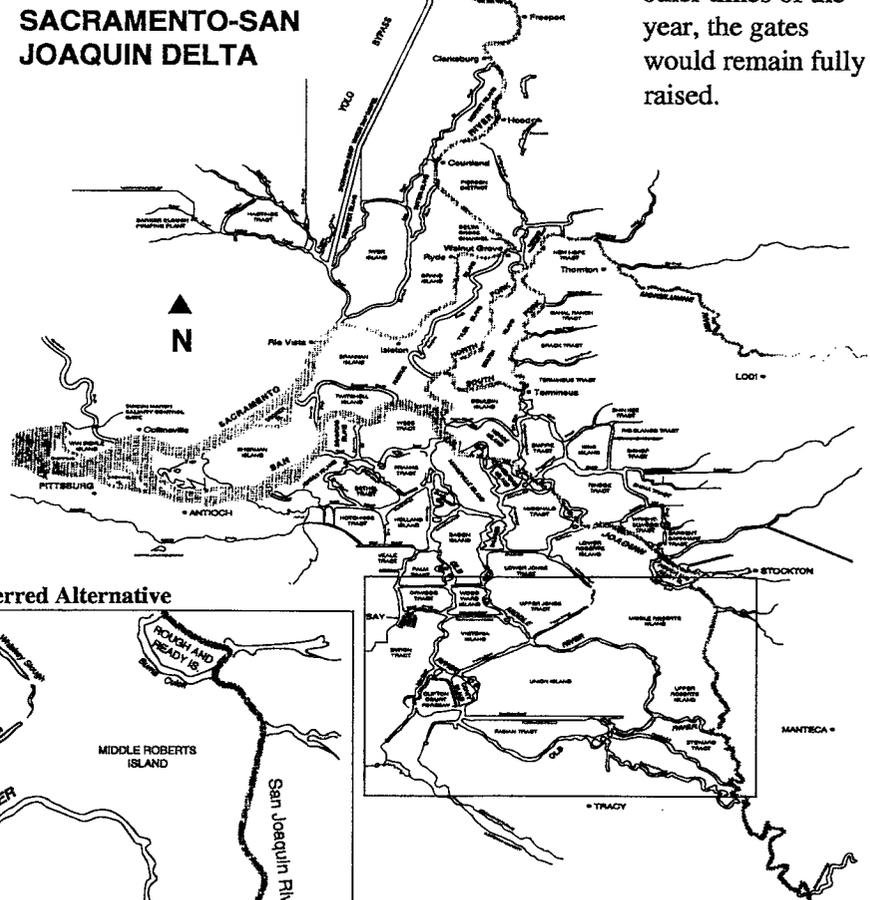
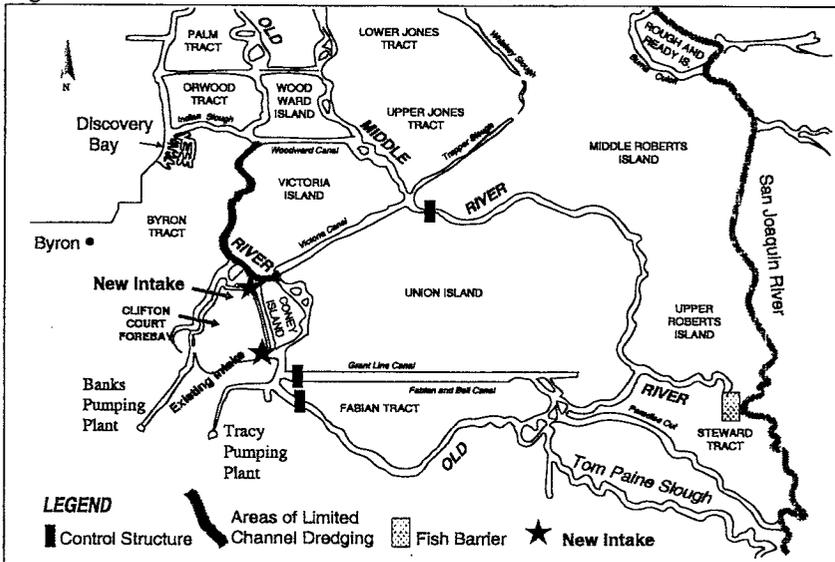
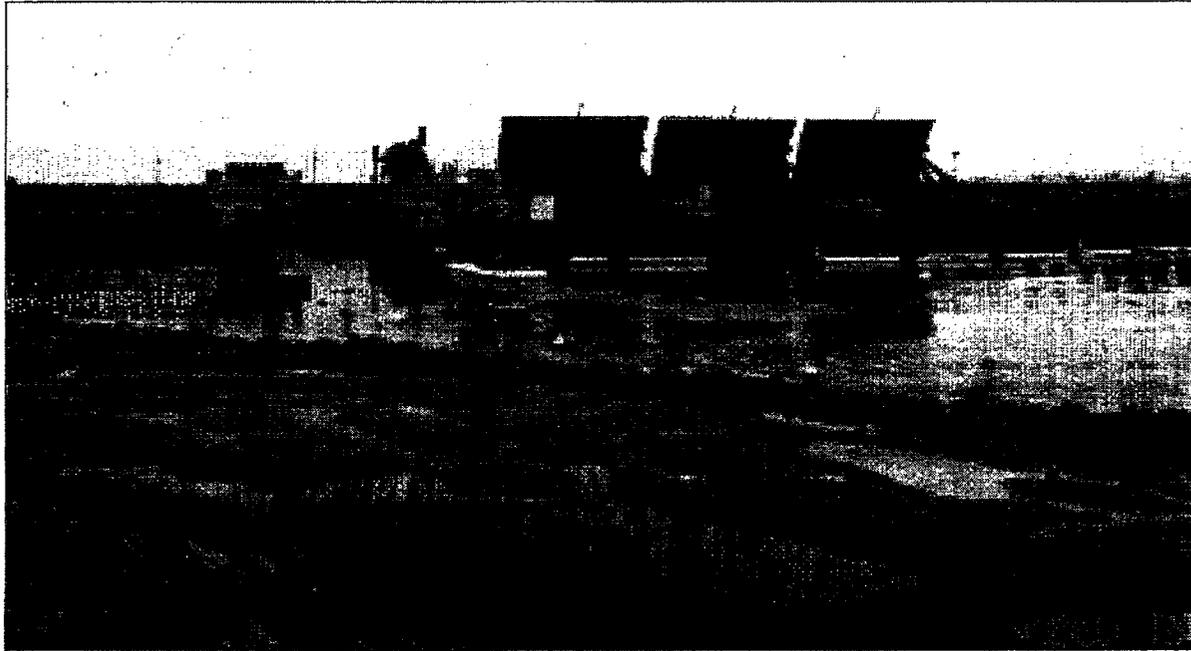


Figure 1 Interim South Delta Preferred Alternative



⇔ Flow Control Structures

Flow control structures are proposed for three locations; Middle River, Grant Line Canal, and Old River east of the Delta-Mendota Canal. These flow control structures would improve water levels



Montezuma Slough Control Gates are representative of the proposed barriers included in the Interim South Delta Program.

and circulation in the south Delta by "tidal pumping." Tidal pumping allows one directional flow into the channels upstream of the barriers during incoming tides (flood tide) and impedes water movement out of these areas during outgoing tides (ebb tide). These operations would retain flood tide flows in south Delta channels for a longer period of time to raise water levels.

The Middle River structure would be located on Middle River, near the confluence of Middle River, North Canal, Victoria Canal and Trapper Slough, approximately 13 miles east of Stockton. This barrier would consist of two radial gates housed in a reinforced concrete gate bay structure and a boat ramp. The boat ramps would be used to transfer boats and people across the structure.

The Grant Line Canal and Old River flow control structures are very similar in design. The planned location of the Grant Line Canal Barrier is at the western end of Grant Line Canal. However, mitigation actions are underway to lessen potential boating impacts by

moving it to a more easterly location. The Old River structure, east of the Delta Mendota Canal, is approximately 4,000 feet southeast of the intersection of the Alameda, Contra Costa, and San Joaquin County lines. The two barriers would consist of concrete control structures with radial gates. A 50-foot-wide by 105-foot-long boat lock would also be included in each structure.

All of the flow control structures would be operated during the agricultural irrigation season only (April to September), to increase flows from the northwest direction to the southeast direction. The radial gates would be raised when the water level rises. When the tide reverses and water levels began to drop, the gates would be lowered to capture the water.

BENEFITS

Improved water quality and irrigation, fewer fish losses, better water supply, enhanced recreation, and better flood protection are examples of other benefits that will be produced by the implementation of the Interim South Delta Program.

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

The ISDP must comply with all applicable State and federal laws before it can be implemented. Among the key statutes affecting its potential implementation are the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and the federal and State Endangered Species Acts. DWR and USBR plan to complete a draft EIR/EIS for the ISDP and release it for public review and comment in September 1995. The EIR/EIS will provide key information necessary to determine whether permits for the project may be issued by the responsible agencies and if the project should continue to move forward.

A public comment and review period will follow the release of the draft EIR/EIS. All comments received will be addressed in the final EIR/EIS for ISDP, tentatively scheduled for release in January 1996. If you would like more information on the ISDP, please contact Mike Ford at (916) 653-8348 or Al Candlish at (916) 989-7255.

