

Interagency Ecological Program Background



Interagency Ecological Program

COOPERATIVE ECOLOGICAL
INVESTIGATIONS SINCE 1970

Evolution

- 1961-1971 - Delta Fish Protective Study which included DFG and DWR.
- 1972-1984 - Interagency Ecological Studies Program which included DFG, DWR, USBR and USFWS.
- 1985-1997 - Interagency Ecological Program which now includes DFG, DWR, USBR, USFWS, USGS, SWRCB, NMFS, USACOE, USEPA.

Mission

Provide information that allows scientists and managers to evaluate the effects of natural and cultural factors on the ecological resources of the Sacramento-San Joaquin estuary and to develop management actions to protect these resources while maintaining water supply reliability.

Dissemination of Data and Information

- Annual workshop with about 300 attendees including agency staff and stakeholders
- Quarterly newsletter with distribution of about 1000
- Technical report series
- Journal articles
- Presentations and submittals at symposia, workshops, public meetings, regulatory hearings

Use of Data and Information

The data collected by this program and the information derived from them provide the basis for most of the environmental decisions made in the upper estuary over the past three decades. Examples of their use are:

- Compliance reporting for regulatory agencies including SWRCB, DFG, NMFS, USFWS
- SWRCB decisions such as D-1485
- The 1994 Delta Accord
- Environmental Documents including Biological Opinions
- The CALFED Bay/Delta Program
- Documenting the arrival and spread of several exotic fish and invertebrates in the estuary
- Real-time water project operation

Program Review

A significant review of the entire program was conducted in 1993. Upon consultation with stakeholders and agency managers, several fundamental program changes were made. Examples of these changes are:

- Created project work teams which include agency staff as well as stakeholders

- Increase of stakeholder involvement by establishing a management level advisory committee
- Added scientific advisory group to provide technical oversight
- Established a mid-level interagency management team to help with day-to-day operations

Program review is continuing and since the 1993 review the program has gone to a web site based relational data base to increase data availability, implemented more standardized QA/QC procedures and conducted real-time monitoring and reporting programs in support of the CALFED Operations Group.

Another example of a fundamental program change has been to establish a Central Valley Salmonid Team which helps coordinate and conduct salmon and steelhead monitoring and special studies throughout the estuary, the watershed and, to a limited extent, the coastal ocean. This team not only expands the traditional geographic range of the program but also looks at the entire life history of chinook salmon. The team can be a model of what is needed by CALFED and other activities as we move into more of the ecosystem approach to resource management. The team submitted a valley-wide salmonid monitoring program to CALFED to be included in the ERPP. A few key points about the team are:

- Membership - Five agency and four stakeholder representatives.
- Mission - Encourage, coordinate and conduct chinook salmon and steelhead monitoring and applied research in the Central Valley and make data and information available to scientists and managers.
- The mission is accomplished through satellite work teams which focus on specific geographic areas, runs, or technical issues. Existing teams include:

Spring Run	Winter Run	Steelhead	Genetics
Feather River	San Joaquin Basin	Delta	
Upper Sacramento River		Winter Run	Captive Broodstock

- Information transfer - much of the data will be on the IEP relational data base including those data from the CVPIA's Comprehensive Monitoring and Assessment Program. The team has also sponsored two workshops during the past year - one on the use of shallow water habitat by salmon in the Delta and one on Central Valley salmonids in general. Proceedings of the second workshop will be published.

The IEP is applying the Central Valley Salmonid Team model to fish facilities in an effort to coordinate information collection about fish screens throughout the Valley. The concept is to use information developed at specific sites to help ensure that the next round of screens is designed to maximize fish protection. Much of the information at some sites, such as Red Bluff Diversion Dam and the Glenn-Colusa intake can be used in design of large Delta fish screens.