

Fish Diversion Effects

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E-003277



Memorandum

Date: July 8, 1998

To: CALFED Policy Group

From: Lester A. Snow
Executive Director

Subject: Diversion Effects on Fish - Draft Impacts and Issues Report

Summary

In February of this year an interagency/stakeholder Diversion Effects on Fish Team (DEFT) was formed to address the technical issues related to diversion impacts on fisheries for each of the CALFED alternatives. The primary issues to be addressed were:

- Which species, populations, and life stages are most sensitive to diversion effects under No Action and Alternatives 1, 2, and 3?
- What degree of benefit and impact will the common programs provide?
- What is the risk and chance of success of species recovery for each alternative?
- To what extent can diversion effects be offset by modifications to the alternatives or by operational changes?

DEFT has completed its assessment of the first three issues. The "Diversion Effects on Fish - *Issues and Impacts*," report summarizes the process, assumptions, modeling studies, information, professional judgment and the conclusions reached by the teams on these three issues. The American Fisheries Society is peer reviewing the report and will have its recommendations in August. The report is included in this mailing to Policy Group members only. Management Team received the report at the July 1 Management Team meeting.

Process

The fourth issue above is now being addressed using the following process.

CALFED Agencies

California

- The Resources Agency
- Department of Fish and Game
- Department of Water Resources
- California Environmental Protection Agency
- State Water Resources Control Board

Federal

- Environmental Protection Agency
- Department of the Interior
- Fish and Wildlife Service
- Bureau of Reclamation
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

- Department of Agriculture
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Department of Commerce
- National Marine Fisheries Service

The DEFT was expanded to include representatives from the following:

- DEFT species teams
- Interagency Fish Facilities Technical Team
- Water Quality Technical Team
- No Name Group
- USBR operations
- DWR operations
- DWR modeling
- CALFED staff

Their task is to optimize benefits and minimize impacts of each alternative. Since CALFED's primary conveyance strategy is a through-Delta conveyance, with a contingency strategy being a dual system conveyance, DEFT will first concentrate its efforts on developing, from a fisheries point of view, a best through-Delta alternative while considering water supply and water quality benefits. The alternative will not include actions that will preclude the option of moving to a dual system if needed to meet CALFED objectives. Both physical and operational actions in the Delta and in the river systems upstream are being considered. As the alternative is being developed, specific actions will be recommended for implementation in Stage 1 of the CALFED Program. Once the through-Delta is complete the Team will address the dual system and its staging.

Schedule

Progress report to Policy Group on the through-Delta alternative Aug 13-14
Report on peer review by AFS..... Sept 14-15
Draft DEFT report on optimized alternatives to Policy Group..... Sept 14-15

Action

Concurrence

The Policy Group is being asked for discussion and concurrence of the proposed process and schedule for the Diversion Effects on Fish Team.