

Recommended South Delta Actions

There are two actions recommended to be implemented in the south Delta to remedy current problems: (1) perform local dredging to relieve navigational and recreational impediments due to extensive sedimentation, and (2) modify/relocate existing diversions currently subject to unacceptably low water levels. The attached map illustrates the areas of concern.

(1) Dredging

There has been extensive sedimentation in the south Delta over the last decade primarily as a result of wet winter storms moving sediment into the south Delta channels. In addition, areas downstream of the barriers in Grant Line Canal and Old River near Tracy see additional water level reductions due to the location and operation of these barriers. The effects have caused economic hardship for local marina businesses because the boaters do not want to contend with the navigational hazards and low water levels near the marinas. In addition, local landowners with their own boating docks are unable to launch their boats due to the low stages and high sedimentation around their docks. At times, residents of Middleton, Hammer, and Little Hawaii islands have lost access to and from their island properties.

The two sites to be considered for dredging include the area around Hammer, Middleton, and Little Hawaii islands and at the Tracy Oasis Marina. Both areas would be dredged to maintain a minimum 4-foot depth throughout the existing channel. Estimated dredging quantities are about 24,000 and 10,000 cubic yards respectively. Dredging may be accomplished under a Corps Nationwide Permit 35. The estimated cost of dredging is \$5-10 per cubic yard.

(2) Diversion Modification

Due to the relocation of the temporary barrier in Grant Line Canal (which was moved 5 miles east of the originally proposed location) combined with high project pumping during the summer irrigation season, a number of Grant Line Canal diverters have been adversely impacted by reduced water levels affecting their ability to irrigate. The change in the Grant Line barrier location was made during the Corps permitting process to minimize navigational and recreational impacts and to avoid loss of sensitive terrestrial habitat. However, diverters downstream of the eastern barrier location are: (1) not receiving the 1.0 - 1.5 feet of increased water depth at low tide that they would have had the barrier been installed at the original location, and (2) are actually experiencing a decrease in water depth of 0.3 - 1.0 feet during low tide as water is retained upstream of the barrier when compared to what they would have experienced if there were no Grant Line Canal barrier at all.

SDWA has listed about 10 diversions that could be modified at a minimum cost (about \$120,000) to relieve the existing water availability problem. These diversions are limited to those that have been directly affected by relocation of the Grant Line barrier. Dredging would be needed at four locations. The preliminary estimate of dredging around the agricultural diversions is 3,000 cubic yards. The installation of fish screens, O&M of screens, or additional energy costs to farmers for operating the screens were not considered in the proposed modifications.

DWR, 9/16/99