

February 22, 2000

TO: Steve Ritchie

FROM: Eugenia Laychak

SUBJECT: Major Outcomes from February 17, 2000 Bay-Delta Advisory Council Meeting

Chair's Report

Next BDAC Meeting: Thursday, April 13, 2000, Sacramento, Location TBD.

BDAC members to attend the February 23, 2000 Policy Group meeting: Alex Hildebrand, Byron Buck, Bob Raab, Martha Guzman, Torri Estrada, Mike Madigan, Sunne McPeak.

Executive Director's Report

Commitment:

To report to BDAC at the April 13 meeting on major outcomes of the State/Federal Discussions.

Preferred Program Alternative Assessment

BDAC members assessed the Preferred Program Alternative by providing a few comments on the preferred alternative and the EIS/EIR assessment. Many other comments focused on implementation, such as refinements to individual program plans and governance and finance issues. An underlying issue, as stated by Mike Madigan, is deciding where population growth in California should be focused, in existing population centers, such as the coast, or in the Central Valley.

Sunne McPeak, Eric Hasseltine and Alex Hildebrand summed up the assessment with a proposed motion and amendment to the motion, with the understanding that more discussion was needed before a recommendation could be forwarded to the CALFED Policy Group.

Proposed motion:

Endorse the preferred alternative as written and recommend aggressive progress on:

- identifying guaranteed funding for ecosystem restoration,
- guaranteeing Delta outflows that support fish populations
- optimizing water use efficiency and links to other program elements
- decisions regarding storage and conveyance facilities

Proposed amendment to motion:

Add following bullets:

- optimizing through Delta conveyance
- accurately identifying water supply increases from actions
- balancing competing needs within and outside the Delta

Alex Hildebrand suggested that the Record of Decision/Certification contain a preamble that commits to resolving the issues contained in the bullets.

Staff Commitment:

Staff agreed to work with Mike Madigan and Sunne McPeak to revise the proposed motion.

BDAC Next Steps:

Sunne McPeak will present a revised motion to BDAC for discussion and possible endorsement at the April 13, 2000 BDAC meeting.

Water Management Strategy Evaluation Framework Update

Mark Cowin and Paul Brown explained the assumptions, performance measures, and process to be used in evaluating the three alternative WMS strategies. Sunne McPeak and Mike Madigan advised that the analysis explicitly state the level of confidence in economic and other assumptions. Martha Guzman suggested that employment impacts be reported by sector or industry. Roberta Borgonovo suggested that environmental benefits needed to be quantified for a balanced cost/benefit analysis. Alex Hildebrand asked that water quality changes be reported for Delta and export users.

Staff Commitment:

Mark Cowin stated that he will try to document the water quality standards that are part of the assumptions.

Water Use Efficiency Progress Report

Much of the discussion danced around the issues of who should control the water conserved by waters districts as a result of CALFED funding and the costs of CALFED financed WUE actions. Roberta Borgonovo suggested that the conserved water should further environmental goals. Sunne McPeak, Roberta Borgonovo and Tom Gohring discussed the need for interested parties to define how agriculture will measure its water use and savings. Fran Spivy-Weber summed up the discussion by suggesting that the interests need to address the desired level of water conservation to be funded by public investment.

Ecosystem Restoration FY 2001 Implementation Plan Recommendation

Wendy Halverson Martin reviewed with Judith Redmond and Alex Hildebrand the recently approved process for scientific and technical review of previously funded projects. She also discussed with Mike Schaver the option for tribes and other applicants to partner with universities and other institutions to ensure scientifically sound proposals.

Staff Commitment:

Wendy agreed to work with Alf Brandt and Mike Schaver to conduct effective outreach to tribes.

BDAC Action:

BDAC concurred with the ISB/Ecosystem Roundtable/staff recommendation on the ERP FY 2001 Implementation Plan.

Central Delta Intakes

Concept

1. Phased small intakes around Macdonald Island. First would be 1,000 cfs with additional intakes added with time; these could be in different locations and different sizes with different screen configurations (different screen configurations could allow testing of different screen designs).
2. Water quality in this region is significantly better than found near Clifton Court Forebay and Tracy PP, especially in dry years. Particularly in the case of salinity but probably in the case of organic carbon as well. More direct access to Mokelumne River and Sacramento River water may improve export water quality under certain conditions.
3. The area is heavily influenced by tides and may allow positive screens with substantial transport flows across the screens, thus may allow the likelihood of better protection.
4. The gates would operate on the tides with gates behind the screen to prevent backflow, this would mean that there would be no diversions on ebb tides, so that fish, eggs and larvae passing the screen on the outgoing tide could pass without hindrance.
5. With multiple intakes (central and south Delta) may allow operations to avoid sensitive fisheries (smelt, salmon, splittail)
6. It is assumed that the project could be implemented in such a way that resolves impacts on fish that could be in the vicinity including resident and anadromous fish native to the Delta and to all rivers tributary to the Delta.
7. The conveyance could be directly connected to Delta Island storage. Water stored on nearby Delta island(s) could be discharged directly into Tracy for Ag use or for a recirculation scheme. Island storage with a direct connection to Clifton Court Forebay or the DMC could greatly improve the flexibility of the EWA.
8. With a direct connection to the islands or conveyance system, could be used to provide water to South Delta and Central Delta water users. Which would improve the quality of island drainage water returning to the Delta.
9. Could allow use of all south Delta channels as habitat.
10. Could reduce the zone of influence of the pumps in south Delta on fisheries.

Concerns

1. The diversion is too close to the "biological crossroads" of the Delta. Juvenile life stages from both San Joaquin and the Sacramento Rivers, including delta smelt, salmon, splittail and striped bass, plus the Mokelumne River and other delta tributaries move through this area, driven by tides and currents and mediated by behaviors. Any winter-run, spring-run or splittail from the Sacramento River which does not rear in upstream areas will likely rear in this general area, increasing risk to these species.
2. Moving zone of influence to overlap San Joaquin spawning area of striped bass and moves intake into an area of some delta smelt spawning. Striped bass eggs and larvae are a major concern with screens in this region of the Delta.
3. Adds new major screens in the migration path of San Joaquin and Mokelumne River Salmon.
4. The fishery agencies would consider a 5,000 cfs diversion on the lower San Joaquin a dead situation, which would require salvaging at the screens.
5. A 5,000 cfs flat plate screen (non-salvage) with a delta smelt approach velocity (0.2 fps) would be approximately 2,000 feet long. For this length the NWFS screening criteria for length of time of exposure would be violated.
6. Unless all SWP/CVP diversions are moved to the central Delta may still have water quality and stage problems in the South Delta.
7. If the DCC is operated under current criteria probably will create water quality problems in the central Delta.
8. Operation and maintenance cost for multiple screens at multiple Delta locations would be complex and costly.
9. Could be perceived as the start of the PC growing from the south.

Evaluation Process

1. Define facilities and operational concept.
2. WMCT and the CVFFRT review concept.
3. Perform Delta Hydrodynamic modeling for stages and water quality impacts.
4. Game concept
5. Evaluate impacts and benefits.