



State Water Project Efforts in the Delta

Background

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) coordinate operations of the State Water Project (SWP) and the Central Valley Project (CVP) to comply with the Endangered Species Act. Restoration efforts are underway to comply with two federal biological opinions on the status of five fish species.

National Marine Fisheries Service Biological Opinion

In 2009, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) issued its Biological Opinion (BiOp) and Conference Opinion on the Long-term Operation of the CVP and SWP. In October 2019, NMFS issued an updated BiOp. The BiOps address effects of CVP and SWP operations on four federally-listed anadromous fish species: Sacramento River winter-run Chinook salmon, Central Valley spring-run Chinook salmon, California Central Valley steelhead, and Southern Distinct Population Segment (DPS) North American green sturgeon. Under the BiOps, DWR and BOR are required to implement the Yolo Bypass Salmonid Habitat Restoration and Fish Passage Project. In addition, under the 2009 BiOp, DWR and BOR implemented several other projects to benefit fish passage in the Yolo Bypass including the Wallace Weir Fish Rescue Facility and the Fremont Weir Adult Fish Passage Modification Project.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Biological Opinion

In 2008, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) issued its Biological Opinion on the Long-term Operation of the CVP and SWP. In October 2019, USFWS issued an updated BiOp. The BiOps address effects of CVP and SWP operations on federally-threatened Delta smelt. Under the BiOp, DWR is required to restore a minimum of 8,000 acres of intertidal and associated subtidal habitat in the Delta and Suisun marshes to improve habitat conditions for Delta smelt by enhancing food production and availability.

DWR is pursuing implementation of this action through the Fish Restoration Program in conjunction with California Department of Fish and Wildlife. These projects are also expected to provide floodplain habitat for protected salmon.

At this meeting, Catherine McCalvin, Chief of DWR's Office of Environmental Compliance, will describe the status of these projects and others that are underway to restore habitat for listed species in association with the SWP.

This is an information item.

Agenda Item: 11

Meeting Date: March 18, 2020

Page 2

Contact

Jennifer Ruffolo

Assistant Executive Officer

California Water Commission

(916) 653-7937