



State Water Project Briefing: Planning and Operations, and Construction Updates

Introduction

The final State Water Project (SWP) briefing of 2023 will consist of two topics: an update on planning and operations, and a review of the key construction activities undertaken in the past year to manage and maintain the SWP.

Planning and Operations

Water Year 2023 began with well below average SWP surface storage due to the preceding three years of drought conditions. In anticipation of continued dry conditions, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) implemented an extraordinary planning approach. This briefing will describe how conditions took a significant turn in January with a series of atmospheric rivers and cold storms which resulted in surface storage improvement, above average precipitation, record-setting snowpack, and very high flows in the Bay-Delta, which all contributed to a 100-percent SWP water supply allocation, the first since 2006.

Construction Update

DWR manages the SWP to ensure adequate water supplies are available under various hydrologic and legal conditions while maintaining SWP operational flexibility. Construction and refurbishment projects occur across the entire length of the SWP and include all major facility types – dams, canals, pipelines, pumping and generating plants. These projects represent DWR's efforts to modernize fire and life safety programs, to identify and implement needed repairs, and to refurbish aging infrastructure. This briefing will provide updates on:

- SWP Fire and Life Safety Modernization
- SWP Physical Security Upgrades
- Salmonid Habitat Restoration and Fish Passage (Big Notch)
- Oroville, Cedar Springs, and Pyramid Spillway Maintenance Repairs
- California Aqueduct Radial Gate Maintenance and Repairs
- Montezuma Slough Radial Gates Refurbishment
- Oroville Dam River Valve Outlet System Rehabilitation Project
- Gianelli Pumping-Generating Plant Unit Refurbishment
- Dos Amigos Unit Refurbishment
- Devils Den Pumping Plant Electrical Fault Response and Recovery
- Chipps Island Tidal Habitat Restoration Project

Background

The California State Water Project consists of 36 water storage facilities and 700 miles of rivers, pipelines, and canals. It supplies water to 27 million people and irrigates 750,000 acres of farmland. The system includes 21 pumping plants, powered by a system of power-generation

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and power-recovery plants. DWR also operates the world's tallest water lift – the Edmonston Pumping Plant – which pumps water more than 1,900 feet over the Tehachapi Mountains into Southern California.

Goal Two of the Commission's Strategic Plan directs the Commission to remain apprised of the operations and construction activities of the State Water Project, focusing on how the SWP adapts and responds to hydrological extremes expected with climate change, restores critical ecosystems, and addresses aging infrastructure. As required by Water Code section 165, the Commission conducts an annual review on the progress of the construction and operation of the SWP and reports its findings and recommendations to DWR and the Legislature. This series of briefings will inform the Commission of SWP activities in preparation for the Commission's 2023 annual review.

Meeting Overview

At the October meeting, SWP Water Operations Manager Molly White will provide an update on planning and operations during water year 2023. Sergio Escobar, DWR Division of Engineering Acting Manager, will brief the Commission on the status of major SWP investigative, construction, and refurbishment efforts in 2023.

This is an informational item.

Contact

Paul Cambra

Public Information Officer

California Water Commission

(916) 873-5774