



Flood Advocacy: Overview

Introduction

The Commission has statutory authority to advocate for federal funding for State flood projects. The world of flood has evolved since the Commission's last activity in this capacity. The Commission's 2020 strategic plan contains Goal 5 to revisit that statutory authority and determine if reactivating its role is helpful. This briefing will provide an overview of the Commission's authority and past activity as well as DWR's current federal advocacy for USACE flood risk reduction projects in the Central Valley. DWR will include information on Federal advocacy authorities, the USACE project authorization process, challenges related to federal advocacy, and how to implement effective federal advocacy given the nuances of the federal budget processes. The presentation will also provide a status of the funding and implementation for the USACE flood risk reduction projects in the Central Valley.

Background

Water Code section 12602 and 12604.3 give the Water Commission authority to address Congress related to appropriations from Congress for flood Control projects planned or constructed under the jurisdiction of the Army Corps of Engineers or the United States Bureau of Reclamation. The Commission performed this duty until the Commission lost its quorum of appointed Commissioners and was temporarily defunct, (2001 – 2010). In 2007 DWR activated its efforts to advocate for flood projects. Today federal funding is appropriated for projects and programs through multiple federal agencies. Examples include US Bureau of Reclamation funding for reservoir reoperations; FEMA funding for emergency response and flood plain management; and USACE funding for flood infrastructure improvements. Each agency can have multiple programs that can be engaged to secure federal funding that supports and benefits California.

Federal advocacy seeks to influence federal funding and policies for implementation of flood management related multi-purpose water resources and environmental projects, securing federal funding, amending federal policies, regulations, and laws, and strengthening cooperative efforts with federal agencies.

This agenda item addresses Goal 5 of the Commission's Strategic Plan, which calls on the Commission to "determine whether there is a need to reactivate its role of advocating for federal funding for flood risk reduction."

Agenda Item: 11

Meeting Date: July 17, 2024

Page 2

Meeting Overview

Executive Officer Joe Yun will present information on the Commission’s statutory authority and past Commission activity. DWR Deputy Director Laura Hollender and DWR Flood Projects Branch Manager Todd Bernardy will provide an overview on Federal Advocacy for USACE Flood Risk Reduction Projects in the Central Valley.

This is an informational item.

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