



Briefing on the National Research Council's study on Sea Level Rise and DWR work on Coastal Inundation

Background

Jeanine Jones, DWR Interstate Resource Manager, will provide an overview on the National Research Council's study on Sea Level Rise and DWR's work on Coastal Inundation.

In 2008, Governor Schwarzenegger signed Executive Order S-13-08, requesting that the National Research Council (NRC) estimate future sea level rise (SLR) in California. A consortium of California state agencies, as well as the states of Oregon and Washington and three federal agencies joined together to fund an NRC study of West Coast SLR, which was completed in June 2012. The study projected SLR values for California in 2030, 2050, and 2100, and pointed out that the greatest damages from coastal inundation during this time period will be occurring during winter storm events, especially in El Niño years.

Executive Order S-13-08 also directed that state agencies planning construction projects in areas vulnerable to SLR consider a range of SLR scenarios during the interim period while the NRC study was being prepared. In 2010, the Ocean Protection Council adopted interim guidelines for SLR the state agency projects and local agency projects with state funding were directed to use. These interim guidelines will be revisited now that the NRC study is completed.

Damages from coastal inundation through mid-century will be driven largely by winter storm events. Tools for adapting to these events include improved monitoring and forecasting of extreme storms, improvements to local stormwater systems, and implementation of FEMA's flood insurance program. DWR has been working with NOAA's Hydrometeorology Testbed program to improve abilities to track and forecast extreme storms, and the first of four coastal atmospheric river observatories is scheduled to be installed later this fall.

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