



Update Priority List for Delta Levees Special Projects Funding

Background

The Delta Levees Special Flood Control Project provides engineering, environmental, and financial assistance to local levee maintaining agencies for repair and rehabilitation of levees in the Delta. Since the inception of the program in 1989, the State has provided more than \$250 million to local agencies in the Delta for flood control and related habitat projects. The intent of the program is to preserve the Delta, protect public benefits, and net long-term habitat improvements.

In January 2012, DWR released its most recent Project Solicitation Package (PSP) to provide approximately \$50 million in funding for levee repair and improvement projects that improve the stability of the Delta levee system to the Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) standard. The HMP standard is a set of criteria that enables local agencies to be eligible for FEMA funding in a flood emergency. The proposals by local agencies also include measures to restore the Delta ecosystem. A set of Near Term Guidelines, setting forth the purpose, process, and requirements for the Special Projects selection and expenditure of funds, were adopted by DWR following a public process in 2010.

At its July 6, 2012 meeting Gail Newton, Chief of the Department of Water Resources' (DWR) FloodSAFE Environmental Stewardship and Statewide Resources Office (FESSRO), briefed the Commission on the funding priority list for Delta Levees Special Projects. In the 1990s, the Commission approved the original priority list for Delta Projects. The priority list has since been expanded through provisions of Propositions 1E and 84 to include the entire Delta.

The most recent draft of the Delta Stewardship Council's (DSC) Delta Plan asks DWR to create a prioritization list for Delta levee work for DSC's approval and incorporation into the plan. Chapter 7, Section RR P1 of the plan states:

The Delta Stewardship Council, in consultation with the Department of Water Resources, the Central Valley Flood Protection Board, and the California Water Commission, shall develop priorities for State investments in Delta levees by January 1, 2015. These priorities shall be consistent with the provisions of the Delta Reform Act in promoting effective, prioritized strategic State investments in levee operations, maintenance, and improvements in the Delta for both levees that are a part of the State Plan of Flood Control and non-project levees. Upon completion, these priorities shall be considered for incorporation into the Delta Plan.

DWR is currently working to update the list from 1990. At this meeting Dave Mraz, Principal Engineer with FESSRO's Delta Levees and Environmental Engineering Branch, will provide an update on the status of the schedule for completion for the special projects planning in regards to Delta levees.

The Water Commission has a statutory responsibility to approve the list of priority areas where flood control work is needed to protect public facilities or provide public benefits. Specifically, Water Code §12313 states:

(a) The department shall develop a list of areas where flood control work is needed to protect public facilities or provide public benefits. In developing the list, the department shall consult with all appropriate federal, state, and local agencies. The list shall establish a priority for the areas based upon both of the following:

(1) The importance or degree of public benefit needing protection.

(2) The need for flood protective work.

(b) The list shall be submitted to the California Water Commission for approval, and shall be updated by the department, with the approval of the California Water Commission, as the department may deem appropriate.

Contact

Maggie Hunnicutt
Staff Services Analyst
California Water Commission
Phone: (916) 651-7501