

CALFED OPERATIONS COORDINATION GROUP
May 23, 2001 MEETING NOTES AND ACTION ITEMS

Review of April 25 meeting notes

No revisions were made to the April 25, 2001, CALFED Ops meeting notes.

Announcements

No announcements were made.

The following handouts were provided at the meeting:

1. VAMP 2001 Daily Operation Plan for Vernalis Target Flow Period: April 20 – May 20 graph; May 22, 2001; Peggy Manza; USBR
2. Lower American River CVP Operations and Salmonid Resources; May 23, 2001; Leo Winternitz; Sacramento Metropolitan Water Planning - Water Forum
3. Folsom Dam pictures, diagrams, and charts relating to Temperature and Shutter Operations; Leo Winternitz, Sacramento Metropolitan Water Planning - Water Forum
4. Proposed Experimental Schedules for Delta Cross Channel Gates; Bruce Herbold; EPA
5. 2001 Delta Smelt 20 mm Survey #5 chart; May 23, 2001; Jim White; DFG
6. Mossdale Kodiak Trawl Average Catch per Tow (3/1/01-5/22/01); May 23, 2001; Jim White; DFG
7. Delta Smelt Daily Densities and Cumulative Salvage; May 23, 2001; Jim White; DFG
8. CALFED Operations Briefing Package; May 23, 2001; John Leahigh; DWR
9. Draft Memorandum: Recommended Water Year 2001 Strategy for Meeting SWRCB Decision 1641; May 18, 2001; Kellye Kennedy; Water Operations Management Team

SWRCB

In April, the SWRCB named Celeste Cantú as the new Executive Director. Most recently, she was the chief consultant for the Assembly Committee on Jobs, Economic Development and the Economy. She has also served as the California State Director for the USDA's Rural Development Program, the Executive Director of the Imperial Valley Housing Authority and as Planning Director for the City of Calexico. She received her undergraduate degree at Yale University and a graduate degree in public administration from Harvard University.

On April 26, the SWRCB adopted Order WR 2001-05 staying the resumption of Phase 8 of the Bay-Delta Water Rights Hearing for eighteen months. The order automatically dismisses Phase 8 at the end of eighteen months unless the SWRCB receives notice from either of the Projects requesting the resumption of Phase 8. The Phase 8 Settlement Agreement calls on the parties to produce several workplans. The first is due within six months and progress will be heard by the SWRCB at their October 3-4 workshop.

(The order is available at: www.waterrights.ca.gov/Orders/wro2001-05.htm)

On May 17, the SWRCB adopted Order WR 2001-08 amending Decision 1644 and dismissing petitions for reconsideration. Decision 1644 addressed fishery and water right issues for the lower Yuba River. A change was made in the way in which the current water year type classification is made and an additional ramping day was added in July to the instream flow schedule.

(The order is available at: www.waterrights.ca.gov/hearings/Archived_Projects.htm)

The Board did not act on petitions for reconsideration for the Delta Wetlands project (Decision 1643). Board Chairman Baggett was unable to vote on an order addressing the petitions due to past involvement with the project. The Board could address the substantive issues raised by the petitions at a later time.

Petitions for transfer of water were received from Browns Valley Irrigation District and from Yuba County Water Agency. BVID proposes to transfer 4,500 acre-feet of surface water and 3,500 af of ground water. YCWA plans to transfer 52,000 af of surface water and 61,000 af of groundwater. The petitions were incomplete and therefore have not yet been noticed to the public.

VAMP

The VAMP period this year was April 20 to May 20. The average San Joaquin River flow is 4,220 cfs. On May 4, the USGS recalculated gages. Everything is running smoothly as things are just being wrapped up. Annual VAMP report will be presented in January.

Temporary Barriers

The flap gates are tied open. Removal of the barriers will begin today. The concrete mat will be removed tomorrow and Friday. Breaching will begin Sunday. The potential to breach the Grantline Canal barrier also exists if delta smelt increases. A delta smelt meeting is scheduled for Friday. The DAT call Tuesday will

discuss the results of the holiday weekend and the possibility of breaching the other barriers.

Environmental Water Account Implementation

The EWA matrix at the back of the Operations Package was discussed. Little has changed from last month.

Lower American River

Need to keep the cold water for steelhead coming out of the gravel. An average of 65 degrees at the Watt Avenue bridge, not to exceed 69 degrees.

Delta Cross Channel Gates

Results of water quality experiment study in the summer will be used to prepare for the fall season. The Delta Cross Channel Gate schedule could change depending on the water quality at Emmaton and Jersey Point. Salinity conditions could require closing the gates earlier or later. A contract is expected to be completed by August 1. Agreement by all parties is needed as rapidly as possible. A public presentation of the fall experiment results is scheduled for tomorrow in Courtland.

OFF and DAT Update

There have been no OFF calls recently, but OFF members have been participating in the DAT calls. As winter-run Chinook salmon season ends and delta smelt season begins, lead for the DAT calls passes from Sheila Greene to Zach Hymanson. DAT calls and meetings have been called as needed to discuss delta smelt and temporary barriers (Head of Old River, Grantline, Old and Middle River) issues. DFG is overwhelmed with their fish counts at the North Bay Aqueduct. More staff is needed for more efficient data turnaround.

OPERATIONS

CVP/SWP Operations Status:

The Operations package was distributed and discussed. Last April's Hydrology and Water Quality maps were mistakenly substituted for May's maps. However, the correct maps were posted to the CALFED Ops website. Exports are low and outflows have not been a problem. Operations have been flow driven by the Emmaton water quality standard. No anticipated Chipps Island days for June. The X2 value has shifted to Collinsville. Federal allocations are at 45% and the State allocations are at 35%.

Delta Operations Criteria:

Bay-Delta Standards for the month of May were discussed.

450 TAF Cap:

A draft memorandum of the recommended water year 2001 strategy for meeting State Water Resources Control Board Decision 1461 was distributed and discussed. The following strategy outlined:

Reclamation will utilize EWA water available in San Luis Reservoir order to assist in maintaining the low point target.

The Management Agencies will develop biological criteria to serve as guidelines to identify times when CVP could pump above the baseline to refill the hole created by this strategy implementation at San Luis Reservoir without causing any additional harm to fish.

The Agencies will continue to pursue funding to acquire water supplies this year and next year to protect against impact on 2002 CVP allocations.

A smaller group consisting of Kellye Kennedy (USBR), Curtis Creel (DWR), and State Water Contractors was established to flush out the issues of funding and source of water. The group would report back to OFF.

Fishery Status

Salmon: The juvenile salmon catch has declined. The rotary screw trap at Knights Landing was only operating one trap due to low numbers. Fall-run chinook dropped from 20,000 fall run/week to 1,000 fall run/week. GCID screw trap data was decreasing as well. A few unmarked steelhead were showing up at GCID, KL, and in the Delta monitoring indicating late emigration. On the San Joaquin River, Mossdale sampling was winding down with the end of marked salmon studies, approximately 500 fall run a week were being captured there. Juvenile winter run and spring run chinook numbers have dropped to almost zero/day at the fish salvage facilities. Fall-run chinook are still being salvaged at 100/day at both facilities, but the SWP will switch from salmon screening criteria to striped bass criteria in May resulting in lower salmon numbers.

The projects are operating under a new OCAP biological opinion for spring-run chinook and steelhead issued May 8th. The opinion allows for an incidental take of unmarked steelhead up to 4,500/year. A total of 4,198 unmarked steelhead have been salvaged so far this year, however exceeding the take limit is not expected because catches have declined markedly.

Splittail: Splittail are starting to increase.

Delta Smelt: Distribution maps of 20mm delta smelt from Survey 5 were distributed and discussed, as well as plots of daily density and cumulative salvage. In low flow years, delta smelt sit where X2 is. Experiments show delta smelt do not move until they are ready.

Agenda items for Next Meeting . . . July 25, 2001