Delta-Mendota Canal Recirculation Feasibility Study

Stakeholder Meeting Comment Summary

Friday, February 9, 2007
9:30 a.m. – 12 Noon
Modesto Centre Plaza, Modesto, CA

Meeting Group Purpose and Outcome

Purpose – Engage stakeholders in identification of baseline assumptions and evaluation criteria to be considered as part of the Initial Alternatives Information Report for the Feasibility Study.

Outcome – Receive input on the key parameters for alternatives.

Background and Prior Studies

Maury Kruth, Reclamation Project Manager, provided Feasibility Study update

- A question was raised as to why Stockton East Water District (Stockton East) did not receive a cooperating agency letter. A list of the cooperating agencies will be sent to Stockton East's representative.
- The South Delta Water Agency (SDWA) stated that the agency is requesting another pilot study this year due to pending low water levels. SDWA has sent a letter to Reclamation requesting the pilot study. SDWA agreed to allow Reclamation to distribute the letter to the DMC Recirculation stakeholders. SDWA also sent a letter to DWR, requesting a revised placement and operation of the South Delta barriers to allow better circulation and improve dissolved oxygen.

Initial Alternatives Information Report

Technical Approach Overview

- A question was asked as to whether Reclamation had reviewed the New Melones operations model ("NewMOM").
- A question was raised about tools that will be used to study losses in the San Joaquin River due to water level changes. Bourez indicated that it would be difficult and would be done as a sensitivity study.
- Why was the Fischer Delta Model (FDM) utilized? Bourez indicated it is more efficient and that FlowScience, a member of the consultant team, is the custodian of the model. It was indicated that DWR would run cases with DSM2 to check the results of FDM.
- It was questioned whether FDM can predict stagnant flow zones in Delta (at <1200 cfs there are null zones in Delta). Bourez indicated the project team would address that in the analysis.

- **Water Supply Operations**
  - **Baseline and Future Without Conditions**
    - Will this depict null zones? Paul Marshall, from DWR, indicated they have used DSM2 or FDM with adjusting consumptive use for certain conditions: low river flow, low Delta exports, and high heat (irrigation, demand, eutrophication).
    - Has any study used 2003 hydrology? Not sure that any study has used the 2003 hydrology, but the New Melones operations model may have used it.

- Alternatives should include taking caps off pumping limitations for recirculation.
- Water quality compliance may require impacting recirculation.
- It was suggested that recirculation demand can be reduced using low-head pumps at operable barriers in the South Delta. Such pumps should be evaluated in combination with recirculation as alternatives
- Can use segmented analysis to look at changes in regimes due to changes in flow and recirculation levels and look at impacts in supplying different levels of recirculated water.
- It was stated that Phase 8 water and the Yuba transfer component should be included in the Baseline.
- Steve Ottemoeller, URS consultant, explained the Project Team's approach to establishing alternatives that capture the range of differing views of stakeholders regarding the priorities for recirculation pumping versus the priorities for Delta export water supplies without trying to predetermine what constitutes excess capacity at the pumps.
- It was indicated that some stakeholders are comfortable with the approach for alternatives development being used by the Project Team.

o **Evaluation Criteria**

- It was recommended that project objectives should include compliance with EC objectives at Brant Bridge.
- A suggestion was made to include Exchange Contractors and refuges in water supply evaluation criteria.
- How will the Project Team deal with potential changes in the WQCP and D1641?

- **Water Quality**
  - o Terry Cooke, URS consultant, summarized the Project Team's approach to Baseline and Future Without Conditions relative to water quality.
  - o Evaluation Criteria
    - Include salt load as well as concentration as an evaluation criteria to indicate consumptive use impacts downstream of Vernalis.

- **Fisheries**
  - o Tom Taylor, Entrix consultant, summarized the Project Team's approach to Baseline and Future Without Conditions relative to fisheries
  - o Evaluation Criteria – there were no comments regarding fisheries evaluation criteria.

Next Steps

- o There will be no further workshops as part of the IAIR. Next Stakeholder Workshops will likely be this summer as the Project Team proceeds with the Plan Formulation Report.
- o Public Scoping meetings will be held in March (*later rescheduled to be April*) in three locations: Sacramento, Modesto and Los Banos.

Participants – 29