Delta Cross Channel

Overview

The Delta Cross Channel (DCC), located near Walnut Grove, California, is a feature of Reclamation’s Central Valley Project (CVP) Delta Division. The facility is a gate-controlled diversion channel on the east bank of the Sacramento River, about 30 miles downstream of Sacramento. The DCC facilitates the diversion of fresh water from the Sacramento River into the interior Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta to the CVP and State Water Project (SWP).

Background

Reclamation completed the DCC in January 1951. The facility is key to maintaining water quality in the central Delta during controlled releases from northern CVP storage reservoirs, such as Shasta and Folsom, through the Delta to the headworks of the CVP’s Delta-Mendota and Contra Costa canals and SWP’s California Aqueduct.

Reclamation closes the DCC gates during high water to prevent flood stages in the San Joaquin section of the Delta. After flood danger passes, Reclamation opens the gates to allow Sacramento River water through to the federal and state pumping plants. During certain periods, the DCC gates can operate frequently and boaters are advised to check gate status, especially around holidays. Opening or closing the gates takes about one hour.

When the gates are open, the DCC diverts fresh Sacramento River water to Snodgrass Slough. From there it flows through natural channels to the CVP’s Jones Pumping Plant and SWP’s Banks Pumping Plant. The distance from the channel to Jones Pumping Plant is about 50 miles (80 km).
Reclamation is currently investigating alternatives for modernizing the operation of the DCC gates to allow for more frequent operation. Improvements are also expected to increase the structure’s operational life, decrease operation and maintenance costs, increase the safety of employees, and improve conditions for recreational boaters.

For up-to-date information on the DCC status, visit Reclamation’s Central Valley Operations Office website at: usbr.gov/mp/cvo/vungvari/dcc_chng.pdf