

**STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD
BOARD MEETING SESSION - DIVISION OF WATER RIGHTS
MARCH 15, 2011**

ITEM 8

SUBJECT

INFORMATIONAL ITEM TO PRESENT THE FINDINGS OF THE U. S. BUREAU OF RECLAMATION'S DELTA-MENDOTA CANAL RECIRCULATION FEASIBILITY STUDY – PLAN FORMULATION REPORT

DISCUSSION

Pursuant to State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) [Revised Water Right Decision 1641](#) (D-1641), the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) is responsible for meeting fish and wildlife flow and agricultural salinity objectives on the San Joaquin River at Vernalis included in the 1995 and 2006 Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary (Bay-Delta Plan). D-1641 also requires Reclamation and the Department of Water Resources to meet the agricultural salinity objectives at the interior southern Delta compliance locations contained in the Bay-Delta Plan. D-1641 requires that Reclamation evaluate the feasibility and impacts of recirculating water from the Delta-Mendota Canal through the Newman Wasteway as a method for meeting and/or augmenting the Vernalis objectives and other San Joaquin water quality objectives.

In an effort to comply with D-1641 and the Bay-Delta Plan, Reclamation has submitted reports on various phases of the Delta-Mendota Canal Recirculation Feasibility Study over the past 10 years. Reclamation's latest submittal is the Delta-Mendota Canal Recirculation Feasibility Study - Plan Formulation Report (PFR), January 2010 (Updated September 2010). Reclamation's PFR overall findings indicate that Delta-Mendota Canal recirculation is not feasible. The report can be found on Reclamation's website: <http://www.usbr.gov/mp/dmcrecirc/docs/final/index.html>

The State Water Board is particularly interested in Reclamation's findings regarding compliance with D-1641, in terms of using recirculation as a method for meeting and/or augmenting the Vernalis objectives and other San Joaquin water quality objectives. According to the PFR, Reclamation's recirculation modeling results showed limited potential to achieve the water quality objectives at two of three interior southern Delta compliance locations and some potential for meeting the flow objectives at Vernalis.

A representative from Reclamation will be present to discuss the findings and answer any questions.

POLICY ISSUES

N/A – Informational Item

FISCAL IMPACT

N/A - Informational Item

REGIONAL BOARD IMPACT

N/A – Informational Item

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

N/A – Informational Item

State Water Board action on this item will assist the Water Boards in reaching Goal 4 of the Strategic Plan Update: 2008-2012 to comprehensively address water quality protection and restoration, and the relationship between water supply and water quality, and describe the connections between water quality, water quantity, and climate change, throughout California's water planning processes.