



**CALIFORNIA
WATER FIX**
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Biological Assessment for the California WaterFix

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EXHIBIT BKS-2

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3 Description of the Proposed Action

3.1 Introduction

The CVP/SWP comprises two major inter-basin water storage and delivery systems that divert and re-divert water from the southern portion of the Delta. The CVP/SWP includes major reservoirs upstream of the Delta, and transports water via natural watercourses and canal systems to areas south and west of the Delta. The CVP also includes facilities and operations on the Stanislaus and San Joaquin Rivers. The major facilities on these rivers are New Melones and Friant Dams, respectively.

The California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) permits the CVP and SWP to store water during wet periods, divert unstored water, and re-divert water that has been stored in upstream reservoirs. The CVP/SWP operates pursuant to water right permits and licenses issued by the SWRCB to appropriate water by diverting to storage or by directly diverting to use and re-diverting releases from storage later in the year. As conditions of their water right permits and licenses, the SWRCB requires the CVP/SWP to meet specific water quality, quantity, and operational criteria within the Delta. Reclamation and the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) closely coordinate the CVP/SWP operations, respectively, to meet these conditions.

The proposed action (PA) includes new water conveyance facility construction, new conveyance facility operation in coordination with operation of existing CVP/SWP Delta facilities, maintenance of the existing facilities and newly constructed facilities, implementation and maintenance of conservation measures, and required monitoring and adaptive management activities. Each of these components of the PA is described in detail below. The chapter ends with a discussion of activities that may be interrelated or interdependent with the PA.

Table 3.1-1 identifies the proposed new facilities, identifies the existing requirements that apply to CVP/SWP facilities in the Delta region, and notes which requirements are (or are not) incorporated in the PA. As such, Table 3.1-1 clarifies which facilities and activities addressed under the 2008 FWS and 2009 NMFS Biological Opinions will be replaced and superseded by the PA once the new facilities are operational, provided, however, that requirements listed in Table 3.1-1 may be adjusted to the extent allowed by law based on new data and/or scientific analyses, including data from the coordinated monitoring and research to be conducted under the Coordinated Science and Adaptive Management Program and real time operations, such that operations will still adequately protect listed species from jeopardy while maximizing water supplies.

- c. Monitoring, including but not limited to:
 - i. Fish
 - 1. Redd surveys
 - 2. Fall mid water trawl
 - 3. Spring Kodiak trawl
 - 4. Rotary screw trap
 - ii. Sediment
 - 1. Turbidity plume
 - iii. First flush events

3.7.2 Proposed Future Drought Procedures

The following is a list of generalized procedures for implementation of future drought response actions for operations of Delta Facilities:

- a. If on October 1st, if the prior water year was dry or critical³⁵, Reclamation and DWR will convene a multi-agency “drought exception procedures” technical team to include representatives from Reclamation, DWR, USFWS, NMFS, SWRCB, and CDFW.
- b. If, by December 1st, hydrologic forecasts predict dry or critical water year conditions, Reclamation and DWR, in coordination with the Drought Exceptions Procedure Team, will prepare a Drought Contingency Plan Framework outlining Proposed Drought Response Actions that may be requested by the Projects.
- c. If the February 1st hydrologic forecast indicates the potential for a dry or critical water year, Reclamation and DWR, in coordination with the Drought Exceptions Procedures Team, will prepare a Drought Contingency Plan, which includes current and/or updated hydrologic forecasts (50%, 90%, 99% exceedances) and operations plan.
- d. Reclamation will prepare a draft biological review (including a description of the Proposed Drought Response Actions, current status of the species, modeling outputs, and potential effects of those Actions) and transmit to a technical team of agency biologists for review and comment.
- e. Reclamation will prepare a letter to NMFS and memorandum to USFWS outlining its request and including the appropriate documentation and submit the packages to NMFS and the USFWS, respectively, with copies to DWR, SWRCB, and CDFW.
- f. NMFS and USFWS will issue letters/memorandums with their conclusions

³⁵ For either Sacramento Valley or San Joaquin Water Year classifications

- g. DWR would need to get Consistency Determinations under the California Endangered Species Act.
- h. Reclamation and DWR will prepare TUCPs, as needed, for submittal to the SWRCB