Question 1: Does the certified final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) address all potential impacts if the WaterFix Project is constructed and operated in stages? In the supplement to the EIR, what additional analyses will be performed and what specific environmental issues will be evaluated?

No, the final EIR/EIS does not address all potential impacts if the WaterFix Project is constructed and operated in stages. The water supply analysis in Chapter 5 of the EIR/EIS, and the supporting hydrologic modeling, must be revised to analyze new information regarding the
parameters of Reclamation’s participation in the project, and to mitigate for potential adverse impacts to Central Valley Project (CVP) water deliveries. For example, the WaterFix Project includes material modifications to pumping restrictions for the existing south Delta intakes, yet DWR’s proposal to construct and operate the project in stages will result in greater reliance on those existing intakes for CVP water deliveries.

Petitioners must propose operational parameters or mitigation measures to ensure that both stages of the project are implemented in a way that avoids negative impacts to all CVP contractors’ water supply reliability. As it relates to Reclamation’s delivery of CVP water from the Delta to wildlife refuges, the effects on CVP refuge water supplies as a result of the staged project should also be analyzed and mitigated in Chapter 12 (terrestrial biological resources) and Chapter 15 (recreation).

**Question 2:** If DWR constructs and operates the WaterFix Project in stages, to what extent would Reclamation participate during the first stage? Would the WaterFix Project be operated differently if Reclamation does not participate?

Petitioners have consistently relied on a dual-conveyance operational model which assumes that approximately half of all water delivered to south-of-Delta contractors from the CVP and the State Water Project (SWP) will be conveyed through the WaterFix Project facilities. (Exhibit SWRCB-102, Chapter 5, p. 218, Table 5-7, compare “Exports at North Delta Diversion Intakes” with “Exports at South Delta Intakes”.) In contrast, although Petitioners have not provided detailed responses to Question 2, the preliminary modeling made available by DWR on February 7, 2018 assumes that less than 17% of the WaterFix Project capacity would be dedicated to CVP water deliveries during the first stage. This new modeling, which assigns to the CVP 1,000 out of a total of 6,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) of WaterFix capacity, presumably represents the proposed extent of Reclamation’s participation during the first stage.

Moreover, it is not only the volume of Reclamation’s participation in the WaterFix Project, but the character of that participation, that implicates Delta operations and south-of-Delta water deliveries. Reclamation proposes to provide only “participating” contractors with a right to convey their CVP contract allocations (and perhaps more) through the WaterFix Project facilities. (Exhibit
“Accounting and mitigation of water supply impacts attributable to [WaterFix]-specific regulations that have the potential to decrease the CVP Allocation for non-participating contractors,” as well as “operational assumptions, sharing of regulatory requirements, storage in San Luis Reservoir, [and] accounting for changes to required carriage water” in the Delta, would all be addressed in the future. (Id., p. 5.) The need for such measures regarding Reclamation’s participation in the WaterFix Project cannot be postponed until after the water rights for the CVP and SWP are changed through this proceeding.

**Question 4:** If the WaterFix Project is constructed and operated in stages, are there potential impacts to legal users of water, fish and wildlife, the public interest, or consideration of appropriate Delta flow criteria that would warrant revisiting any Part 1 or Part 2 key hearing issues? Which issues?

From the perspective of legal users of water, the staged construction and operation of the WaterFix Project could change the project’s effects on Petitioners’ contractors who receive CVP and SWP water from the Delta. Accordingly, the hearing officers may wish to revisit the following key hearing issue for Part 1, as described on page 5 of the Ruling Letter dated September 29, 2017: “To what extent are parties who have entered into contracts with petitioners protected under the terms of their contracts from any changes to stream flows or reservoir storage levels that may occur as a result of the proposed changes? What conditions, if any, should be included in any approval of the change petition to protect legal users from injury due to changes in stream flows or reservoir storage levels?”

From the perspective of fish and wildlife, recreational users of water, or other public trust resources, the key hearing issues identified on pages 12-13 of the hearing officers’ August 31, 2018 Ruling Letter remain adequate, but those issues will need to be reviewed in light of new information about project construction and operations.

**Question 6:** Would any conditions necessary to adequately protect the rights of legal users, fish and wildlife, or the public interest be different if the WaterFix Project were constructed in stages? Would appropriate Delta flow criteria be different? Why or why not?

Yes, the conditions necessary to adequately protect the rights of legal users of water, fish
and wildlife, and the public interest will be different if the WaterFix Project is constructed in stages. For example, the water supply reductions attributable to the project’s proposed restrictions on south Delta pumping and increased Delta outflow should be assigned to the project beneficiaries in proportion to their benefit, rather than assigned broadly to both Petitioners. As another example, wildlife-protective conditions for refuge water supply deliveries would need to take into account the fact that Reclamation will not necessarily participate in the WaterFix Project as originally proposed, to meet the requirements of senior water-right holders and wildlife refuges before CVP water deliveries are made to others.

Respectfully submitted on February 13, 2018, by:

ELLEN L. WEHR
Attorney for Protestant
GRASSLAND WATER DISTRICT