

EXHIBIT: SDWA-9

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**Reclamation Managing Water in the West
Program to Meet Standards
Response to CALFED Bay-Delta Authorization
Act (Public Law 108-361)
CALFED Bay-Delta Program, California**

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

Program to Meet Standards

**Response to CALFED Bay-Delta Authorization
Act (Public Law 108-361)
CALFED Bay-Delta Program, California**



**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Mid-Pacific Region
Sacramento, California**

February 2006

Executive Summary

The United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), Mid-Pacific Region, has initiated implementation of a program to provide greater flexibility in meeting existing water quality standards and objectives for which the Central Valley Project (CVP) has responsibility in order to reduce reliance on releases from New Melones Reservoir for those purposes. Implementation of this program is consistent with direction given by Congress in the Water Supply, Reliability, and Environmental Improvement Act (Act; Public Law 108-361) to develop and initiate a Program to Meet Standards (PTMS, Program). The purpose of this report is to summarize the scope, activities, and management approach Reclamation is pursuing for the Program.

Program Authorization

This Program was authorized in Section 103(d)(2)(D) of the Act. The authorization directs the Secretary of the Interior (Secretary), in consultation with the Governor of California, to develop and initiate implementation of a program to meet all existing water quality standards and objectives for which CVP has responsibility. This should be accomplished prior to increasing export limits from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Delta) for the purposes of conveying water to CVP contractors south of the Delta, or increasing deliveries through an intertie between the California Aqueduct and Delta-Mendota Canal.

Program Scope and Area

The Act clarifies that the purposes of this authority and direction are to provide greater flexibility in meeting existing water quality standards and objectives for which the CVP has responsibility, reduce releases from New Melones Reservoir for those purposes, and assist the Secretary in meeting any obligations to CVP contractors from the New Melones Project (i.e., Central San Joaquin Water Conservation District and Stockton East Water District).

Because of this direction in the Act, the scope of the Program focuses on those water quality standards and objectives that New Melones Reservoir is currently operated to meet. Consistent with this focus, the Program area includes the lower San Joaquin River and lower Stanislaus River areas (see Figure ES-1).

Response to CALFED Authorization Act
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Figure ES-1. Program Area

Water Quality Standards in Program Area

New Melones Reservoir is operated primarily for flood control, water supply to meet water right obligations and to provide CVP contract delivery, instream flow requirements, water temperature requirements, water quality requirements, fishery enhancement, and hydropower generation. The reservoir and Stanislaus River also provide recreation benefits.

Existing operations of New Melones Reservoir are guided by the New Melones Interim Plan of Operation and the San Joaquin River Agreement. The water quality standards that New Melones Reservoir is currently operated to meet were stipulated in water right Decision 1641 (D-1641) issued by the California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), and the 2004 Biological Opinion by National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on the Long-Term Central Valley Project and State Water Project Operations Criteria and Plan, including the following:

- Water temperature target in the lower Stanislaus River at Orange Blossom Bridge in Oakdale
- Dissolved oxygen requirements in the lower Stanislaus River near Ripon
- Water quality standards in the San Joaquin River near Vernalis

Reclamation has historically met the terms and conditions of water right permits for operation of the New Melones Project, as required by SWRCB, and is committed to meet these terms and conditions in the future.

D-1641 also includes a requirement for Reclamation to ensure water quality objectives for agricultural beneficial uses in the southern part of the Delta at the following three locations: San Joaquin River at Brandt Bridge, Old River near Middle River, and Old River at Tracy Road Bridge. Water quality standards at these locations are currently identical to those of the San Joaquin River near Vernalis. However, D-1641 allows latitude in Reclamation's selected method for meeting these requirements. Reclamation and the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) have attempted to meet these requirements by implementing a seasonal rock barrier program in the South Delta. Under the South Delta Improvement Project (SDIP), Reclamation and DWR are currently evaluating installation of four permanent barriers with operable gates to replace the seasonal rock barriers.

Program Development and Implementation

Development and implementation of the Program are summarized in the following sections.

Program Objectives

Objectives of the Program include the following:

- Reduce reliance on releases from New Melones Reservoir for meeting water quality and fishery flow requirements near Vernalis so as to increase water deliveries to CVP contractors.
- Improve water quality conditions in the San Joaquin River above Vernalis.

Program Strategies and Associated Elements

The following strategies and associated Program elements have been identified to achieve the above Program objectives.

Reduce the quantity and improve the timing of salinity discharges to the San Joaquin River above Vernalis The associated Program elements to implement this strategy include the West Side Regional Drainage Plan, Grassland Bypass Project, and Wetlands Best Management Practices Plan.

Provide alternative sources of water for flows in the San Joaquin River near Vernalis The associated Program elements to implement this strategy include Delta-Mendota Canal Recirculation and Water Acquisition from Willing Sellers.

Improve accuracy of New Melones Project operation and planning efforts The associated Program elements to implement this strategy include the New Melones Revised Plan of Operation, CALSIM II Improvement for Planning Efforts, Forecast Model for CVP Allocation, Flow and Water Quality Data Collection, and Level of Certainty Analysis for Meeting San Joaquin River Basin Standards.

The above identified Program elements and their focus will be further investigated, refined, and augmented through public input and stakeholder communications in future Program efforts.

Program Coordination

Implementing the Program is a complex management challenge due to the complicated interrelationships of water operations, regulatory requirements, and stakeholder interests. Reclamation is pursuing a coordinated management approach to develop and implement the Program elements. Reclamation's coordinated management approach also recognizes that the following two

ongoing programs are closely related to, and should be integrated with, the Program.

- Installation of permanent barriers with operable gates under the SDIP (physical changes to address water quality requirements)
- Eastside Integrated Resources Plan (addressing water supply needs)

Reclamation will share information among these programs and coordinate implementation activities to promote Program efficiency, effectiveness, and completeness. Because the Program relies heavily on the accuracy of modeling and forecasting in the Program area, Reclamation's coordinated approach also includes extensive efforts to upgrade and integrate hydrologic, operations, groundwater, and water quality models.

Reclamation and other Federal and State agencies will coordinate and track the progress of program elements through the Joint Agency Task Force organized under the San Joaquin River Water Quality Management Group. This task force includes representatives of Reclamation, DWR, SWRCB, NMFS, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and California Department of Fish and Game. Program status and accomplishments will be reported annually in the CALFED Program Annual Report.

Table ES-1. Summary of Program to Meet Standards

Items	Relative Priority	Comments	Next Major Milestones
<i>Salinity Discharge Reduction and Improvement</i>			
West Side Regional Drainage Plan	High	Source control actions with a high level of local support	Ongoing implementation
Grassland Bypass Project	Medium	Continued implementation of the formulated plan	Ongoing implementation
Wetlands Best Management Practices Plan	High	Source management actions within wildlife refuge areas	Finalized plan in 2006
<i>Alternative Sources for Water Flows</i>			
DMC Recirculation	High	Water management actions that may contribute to flow and water quality objectives, and reduce needs for water acquisition	Plan of Study by May 2006
Water Acquisition from Willing Sellers	Low	Actions that are subject to further appropriation and their needs may be reduced by other water management actions	-
<i>Improvements to Operations and Planning Efforts</i>			
New Melones Revised Plan of Operation	High	Reclamation-committed update for operations plan for greater balance in resource management	Transitional Operation Plan in 2007

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Items	Relative Priority	Comments	Next Major Milestones
CALSIM II Improvement for Planning Efforts	Medium	Continued model development to assist CALFED and other planning processes	San Joaquin River Module for Plan Formulation of CALFED Storage Investigation in 2006
Forecast Model for CVP Allocation	Low	Supports for DWR-led efforts	In coordination with DWR efforts
Flow and Water Quality Data Collection	Medium	Continued implementation of the formulated plan	Ongoing implementation
Level-of-Certainty Analysis for Meeting San Joaquin River Basin Standards	Medium	Consolidated efforts to delineate the needs and assurance for meeting standards	Concept plan in 2006
<i>Related Programs to Be Integrated</i>			
Installation of Permanent Barriers with Operable Gates in South Delta Area	High	Strategic implementation for meeting standards in the South Delta	Decision on implementation in 2006
Eastside Integrated Resources Plan	Low	Overall water supply gap analysis for the San Joaquin River eastside tributary areas (on hold for New Melones Transitional Operation Plan)	Appraisal Study Report (on hold)

Key:

CALSIM = California simulated computer model
DMC = Delta-Mendota Canal

CVP = Central Valley Project
DWR = California Department of Water Resources