

Attachment 1  
Summary of Emerging Issues Confronting Water Quality Control in  
the Delta and Timeline to Address These Issues  
and  
Summary of Changes Made in the 2006 Bay-Delta Plan

**Emerging Issues**

The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) intends to conduct a series of quarterly workshops, commencing in January 2007, to solicit information and take further actions to address a number of emerging issues:

1. Pelagic Organism Decline (POD)
2. Climate Change
3. Central Valley Salinity

The State Water Board will conduct these planning activities in conjunction with the Delta Vision Process to develop a sustainable use and protection plan for the Delta, Suisun Bay, and Suisun Marsh. The Delta Vision Process, an interagency effort and outgrowth of the Little Hoover Commission's review of CALFED, was just commencing at the time of this 2006 update to the Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary (Bay-Delta Plan). Consistent with this process, the State Water Board recognizes that planning for and management of the Delta's multiple uses, resources, and ecosystem should occur in cooperation with elected officials, government agencies, stakeholders, academia, and affected Delta and California communities.

**1. Pelagic Organism Decline**

There is a marked decline in numerous pelagic fishes in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary and Suisun Bay. Currently, the Interagency Ecological Program (IEP), through its Pelagic Organism Decline (POD) work team, is conducting studies to evaluate the potential causes of these declines. Some of the possible causes that are being considered include invasive species, water project operations, and toxins. The State Water Board will review study results as they become available and may amend portions of this Plan to improve habitat conditions in the Estuary. A workshop to solicit information and commence further proceedings, as necessary, will be held in January 2007.

**2. Climate Change**

A growing body of information suggests that climate change could result in: 1) sea level rise that would adversely impact levees, water quality, and conveyance of water supplies through the Delta; 2) decreased snowmelt in the Sierra Nevada that would reduce effectiveness of existing water storage facilities; 3) increased rainfall that could exacerbate flooding; and 4) adverse biological effects from changes in flow and water quality. Water quality control planning must begin to address these possible effects. Future State Water Board

activities therefore should include requirements and recommendations to implement measures to offset adverse impacts of climate change. In addition, the State Water Board will need to provide timely response and guidance to water resources agencies, consistent with the Water Quality Control Plan, as they submit plans and requests to process applications for water conveyance facilities and flow control structures such as the current South Delta Improvements Project or future conveyance structures such as a Delta peripheral canal.

### **3. Central Valley Salinity**

A joint State and Regional Board Workshop on Central Valley Salinity Issues held in January 2006 resulted in broad stakeholder support for development of a Salinity Management Plan for the Central Valley and Delta (Salinity Management Plan) to protect beneficial uses of both surface waters and ground waters. Development and full implementation of the Salinity Management Plan is expected to take 40 to 50 years and reduce the economic hardship related to managing salinity. The State Water Board will develop regulations and provide regulatory encouragement to ensure that infrastructure is developed that improves and maintains Central Valley and Delta salinity while providing certainty to local and regional planners, municipalities, agriculture, water suppliers, food processors, and others.

The State Water Board will continue to coordinate updates of the Bay-Delta Plan with on-going development of this comprehensive Salinity Management Plan. As part of this larger planning effort, the State Water Board intends to conduct a workshop and initiate further proceedings to review: 1) the salinity requirements of the beneficial uses of water in the southern Delta; 2) the causes of salt loading in the southern Delta; 3) practices that could reduce salt loading from Delta sources; 4) flow and salt load reduction measures to implement the salinity objectives; and 5) the timeline for implementation of these measures. The State Water Board intends to develop and manage a study of salinity in the southern Delta as part of this effort. This process could result in amendments to the Bay-Delta Plan, further changes in water rights, or changes in both the Plan and water rights. A workshop to receive information and to establish a schedule for further proceedings on southern Delta salinity will be held in January 2007.

#### **Summary of Changes**

The following summary is provided to help the reader see at a glance the changes that have been made to the 2006 Plan. The general reason for the change is also noted parenthetically. A number of changes were made for *readability* and to reduce the bulk of the document by moving historical background and detailed explanations to the supporting staff report. These readability changes include changes in numbering of footnotes and tables. *Consistency* changes were made to assure that sections reflect the current physical condition or current regulation.

## **Chapter I. Introduction**

This chapter was revised, summarized, and reorganized. The background section has been streamlined by deleting detailed information from this section of the 1995 Plan and placing it into the amendment report (readability).

A new section D was added describing emerging water quality issues and what the State Water Board plans to do about them: Pelagic Organism Decline; Climate Change; and Central Valley Salinity.

## **Chapter II. Beneficial Uses**

There were no changes to the Beneficial Uses from the 1995 Plan to the 2006 Plan.

## **Chapter III. Water Quality Objectives**

This chapter was edited to make minor changes to the Water Quality Objectives. There are no new water quality objectives to be adopted in the 2006 Plan. The following specific changes have been made:

- Applicability of water quality objectives to specific areas in the Delta has been clarified.
- Section C has been condensed by moving discussion of rationale and implementation of the objectives to the Program of Implementation chapter (readability).
- Table 2 - Footnote 5 and three-party contract notation have been deleted (consistency).
- Table 3 - Footnotes 4, 7, and 8 have been deleted. Footnote 10 (narrative) was moved into the body of Table 3. Most footnotes were renumbered due to deletions (consistency and readability).
- Footnote 2 for Table 1 and Footnote 3 for Tables 2 and 3 were renamed as Figure 2 (readability).
- Footnote 17 for Table 3 was renamed as Figure 3 (readability).
- Footnotes 11 and 23 for Table 3 was renamed as Figure 4 (readability).
- Footnote 14 for Table 3 was renamed as Table 4 (readability).

## **Chapter IV. Program of Implementation**

Information in this chapter was updated to make changes in implementation in the 2006 Plan, including but not limited to, implementation measures imposed in D-1641, and Board recommendations to other agencies for the protection of habitat.

### Section A – Measures within State Water Board Authority

This section was expanded to include specific implementation measures for the water quality objectives established in the 2006 Plan over which the State Water Board has direct authority. Many of these objectives are implemented through permit and license terms imposed through D-1641 (consistency).

### Section B – Measures Requiring State Water Board Authorities and Actions by Other Agencies.

This section was revised to make current recommendations on other agency programs to reach water quality objectives. State Water Board authority to require that studies be conducted is cited (consistency).

### Section C – Recommendations to Improve Habitat Conditions

This section was renamed Recommendations to Other Agencies. Most of the recommendations have been updated to discuss new developments since the release of the 1995 Plan. The sections regarding unscreened water diversions and fish survival at the SWP and CVP export facilities have been moved to the Narrative Objective for Salmon Protection. The section regarding the effectiveness of barriers as a means of improving fish survival in the Delta has been updated and moved to Section E, Other Studies, and can be found under the Delta Cross Channel gate heading. The recommendation regarding temperature control measures to reduce adverse impacts on salmon and steelhead has been deleted. Additional recommendations regarding the San Joaquin River Spring flow objective and the San Joaquin River at Airport Way Bridge, Vernalis, River Flow Objective have been added. State Water Board authority to require that recommended studies are conducted is cited (consistency).

### Section D – Monitoring and Special Studies Program

Table 4 in 1995 Plan was renamed as Table 7 (readability).

This section was updated to make changes to the Water Quality Compliance and Baseline Monitoring Program. Changes to Table 4 include the addition of GIS coordinates for each location, addition and deletion of stations, and any other changes as proposed by DWR (consistency).

### Section E – Other Studies Conducted by Agencies That May Provide Information Relevant to Future Proceedings

This section is new to the Plan. It describes various programs by other agencies that are geared towards obtaining information that may be relevant to future Bay-Delta Water Quality proceedings.