



Santa Clara Valley Water District

File No.: 15-0667

Agenda Date: 1/26/2016

Item No.: *2.2.

BOARD AGENDA MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT:

Workshop on California WaterFix and California EcoRestore.

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive an update on and discuss the California WaterFix and California EcoRestore.

SUMMARY:

Santa Clara County relies on imported water to meet 55 percent, on average, of its water needs, with 40 percent conveyed through the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. This Board agenda item provides an opportunity for the Board and public to receive information and discuss ongoing Delta planning efforts that are critical both to restore the health of the Delta ecosystem, and to ensure the long-term reliability of water supplies conveyed through the Delta.

In April of 2015, the State announced a modified approach to moving forward with key elements of the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) in response to numerous comments on the draft BDCP planning documents that were released. This approach separated the BDCP into two programs: California WaterFix and California EcoRestore. This agenda item will provide the perspectives of guest speakers who have been instrumental in the development of the California WaterFix and California EcoRestore programs.

BACKGROUND

Santa Clara County relies on imported water to meet, on average, 55 percent of its water needs, with 40 percent conveyed through the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta by the State Water Project (SWP) and Central Valley Project (CVP), and 15% diverted upstream of the Delta by the San Francisco Public Utility Commissions' Hetch-Hetchy project.

The District's SWP and CVP water supplies are a critical component of the District's water supply portfolio, providing the majority of water supply to the District's three drinking water treatment plants, serving to recharge the county's local groundwater basin to help meet pumping demands while minimizing risk of permanent land subsidence, and protecting local surface and groundwater reserves. The District's SWP and CVP supplies offer additional flexibility in that these supplies may be stored in facilities outside of the county, including the Semitropic Groundwater Bank (Semitropic), for withdrawal during dry periods. Semitropic has proven to be a valuable resource, providing over

120,000 AF of critical dry year supply to Santa Clara County over the past three drought years; however, supplies from Semitropic are conveyed to the District through the Delta, and the reliability of the bank is linked to the reliability of the Delta.

Several of the Delta's fisheries are impacted by factors including loss of native habitat, invasive species, and the damming of upstream rivers to protect against flooding and provide water supply. Diversion of water upstream of the Delta and within the Delta, as well as exports from the Delta, contribute to unnatural flow patterns, reduced outflow, changes to water quality, and entrainment of fish in pumping facilities. Delta water quality is also impacted by wastewater discharges, urban and agricultural runoff, and legacy contaminants. The combination of these factors has resulted in a history of increasing regulatory restrictions that have decreased Delta exports over the past several decades to protect fish and water quality. Delta water supplies are also at risk from increased salinity intrusion due to climate change, including sea level rise, and seismic threats to its fragile levee system. To reduce these risks, the District joined with other public water agencies since 2006 to support the State's development of the BDCP, consistent with Board Policy and CEO direction (Attachment 1).

California WaterFix:

The California WaterFix consists of upgrades to the water conveyance facilities in the Delta and new operational criteria for the SWP and CVP. The conveyance upgrades include 3 new intakes on the Sacramento River, each with a capacity of 3,000 cfs, and each equipped with state-of-the-art fish screens. These new fish screens will be designed to minimize entrainment and will be more effective at protecting fish than the existing South Delta pumping plants. Two forty-foot diameter tunnels, up to 150 feet below ground, will convey the water from the Sacramento River to a new pumping plant in the south Delta that will pump the water from the tunnels into a newly configured Clifton Court Forebay. The existing SWP and CVP pumping plants will then pump the water to meet immediate demands or to storage south of the Delta. Bypass flow criteria will be imposed on diversions from the Sacramento River into the tunnels to ensure adequate flows remain in the river to protect fish; consequently, diversions into the tunnels primarily occurs during higher river flow periods on the Sacramento River. Fisheries and in-Delta users will be further protected by outflow and water quality criteria and south Delta pumping restrictions. Diversions into the tunnels may take place separately from or at the same time water is being pumped directly from the Delta channels in the south Delta. However, all water pumped from the tunnels and the Delta channels must flow through the existing SWP and CVP pumping plants, which are not being altered by the WaterFix. The total pumping capacity of the SWP and CVP will not change; therefore, the California WaterFix will not increase the physical capacity of the SWP and CVP to divert water from the Delta. The proposed new operational criteria will provide more natural flow patterns in the south Delta, ensure sufficient river flows to protect fish below the intakes on the Sacramento River, and provide additional outflow in the spring. The California WaterFix is further described in several fact sheets (Attachments 2-8).

In July of 2015, the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) issued a Notice of Availability for the partially Recirculated Draft Environmental Impact Report/Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (RDEIR/SDEIS) for the BDCP that describes the California WaterFix in a new Alternative 4A. The California WaterFix is the new California Environmental Quality Act Preferred Alternative, replacing Alternative 4 (the proposed

BDCP). The California WaterFix is also the National Environmental Policy Act Preferred Alternative. District staff reviewed the RDEIR/SDEIS and submitted comments during the public comment period which ran from July 10 to October 30, 2015. DWR and USBR will consider all comments received during the formal comment periods on both the RDEIR/SDEIS and the 2013 Draft EIR/EIS in the Final EIR/EIS and decision-making process.

California EcoRestore:

In parallel with development of the California Water Fix, the State is proposing to accelerate restoration of at least 30,000 acres of habitat by 2020 under a separate program called California EcoRestore, utilizing a combination of funding by State and federal water contractors, DWR levee funds, Cap and Trade, propositions, and grants (Attachment 9). The State's intent is to continue restoring habitat beyond this initial target under the California EcoRestore program.

Guest Speakers:

The following guests will share their agencies' perspectives on the California WaterFix and California EcoRestore programs:

Mark Cowin, Director, California Department of Water Resources

Mr. Cowin was appointed Director of the California Department of Water Resources by Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. on April 13, 2012. He has extensive experience with California water resources management and has served as director and acting director of DWR since 2010. He has worked at DWR since 1981.

As DWR Director, Mr. Cowin heads a Department that protects, conserves and manages the state's water supply, including operation of the California State Water Project. The SWP is the largest state-run, multi-purpose water and power system in the United States. It provides a supplemental water source for more than 25 million Californians and about 750,000 acres of irrigated farmland, and directly sustains over \$400 billion of the state's economy.

Prior to his appointment as Director, Mr. Cowin served as Deputy Director of Integrated Water Management for DWR. His primary responsibilities included overseeing DWR's flood management and dam safety programs, implementing Integrated Regional Water Management, coordinating DWR's efforts related to climate change, and updating and implementing the California Water Plan.

In previous assignments, Mr. Cowin served for five years as Chief of DWR's Division of Planning and Local Assistance and was responsible for the state's strategic planning for water management and for providing technical and financial assistance for water management to local agencies and communities. Mr. Cowin also served as an Assistant Director for the CALFED Bay-Delta Program where he was responsible for the Bay-Delta Program's water

management planning activities. He received a B.S. in Civil Engineering from Stanford University in 1980.

David Okita, Director of Ecosystem Restoration, California Natural Resources Agency

Mr. Okita was appointed to run the Governor's California EcoRestore program in April of 2015. EcoRestore implements part of the Governor's California Water Action Plan by creating at least 30,000 acres of habitat restoration in the Delta and Suisun Marsh within the next 3 years.

Prior to EcoRestore, Mr. Okita served as the General Manager of the Solano County Water Agency for 25 years. At the Solano County Water Agency he lead the Agency's water supply, flood management and habitat efforts, including a countywide Habitat Conservation Plan and stream restoration on Putah Creek.

Mr. Okita has a civil engineering degree from UC Davis and a Masters in Public Administration from California State University East Bay. He is a licensed Civil Engineer.

Charlton ("Chuck") Bonham, Director, California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Charlton "Chuck" Bonham was appointed as Director of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, effective September 6, 2011. Prior to his appointment as Director of Fish and Wildlife, Mr. Bonham served in a number of roles for Trout Unlimited over ten years, including since 2004 as the organization's California director.

Mr. Bonham was responsible for developing, managing, and implementing Trout Unlimited's programs in California. These programs include the California Water Project, Sportsmen's Conservation Project, and restoration and watershed projects in both northern and southern California. In addition, Mr. Bonham was a senior attorney for the organization.

Mr. Bonham also served on the Board of Directors of the Delta Conservancy, whose mission is to conserve, sustain and enhance the cultural, agricultural, recreational, wildlife and natural habitat resources of the River Delta region, as well as to develop and promote sustainable protection, management and stewardship programs through research and education.

Mr. Bonham received his J.D. and Environmental and Natural Resources Law Certificate from the Northwestern School of Law of Lewis and Clark College, in Portland, Oregon.

Board Communication Schedule:

Attachment 10 includes a tentative schedule for future Board communications regarding the California WaterFix between now and when the Board will be asked to make decisions related to the project and preconstruction funding. The schedule is subject to change, particularly in response to changes in the State's schedule.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

None.

CEQA:

The recommended action does not constitute a project under CEQA because it does not have a potential for resulting in direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect change in the physical environment.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 01: Board Policy and CEO Direction

Attachment 02: State of the Art Solution

Attachment 03: Protecting Water Supplies and Fish

Attachment 04: Securing Solutions for Fish

Attachment 05: What Happens Next

Attachment 06: Progress Report

Attachment 07: 21st Century Approach

Attachment 08: History of Water Conveyance

Attachment 09: EcoRestore Overview

Attachment 10: PowerPoint Presentation

*Attachment 11: Handout 2.2-A - Guest Presentations

*Attachment 12: Handout 2.2-B - Comment, D. Yost

*Attachment 13: Handout 2.2-C - Comment, J Minton

*Attachment 14: Handout 2.2-D - Comment, D Obegi

*Attachment 15: Handout 2.2-E - Comment, J McManus

*Attachment 16: Handout 2.2-F - Comment, J Hooper

*Attachment 17: Handout 2.2-G - Comment, K Irvin

*Attachment 18: Handout 2.2-H - Comment, M. Giberson

*Attachment 19: Handout 2.2-I - Comment, M. Empleo Pending Distribution

*Attachment 20: Handout 2.2-J - Handout, D Des Jardin

*Attachment 21: Handout 2.2-K - Comment, North Delta Cares Action Committee

*Attachment 22: Handout 2.2-L - Comment, Dean Democratic Club of Silicon Valley

*Attachment 23: Handout 2.2-M - Comment, Leaders South Bay business technology and labor communities

*Attachment 24: Handout 2.2-N - Comment, NAACP

*Attachment 25: Handout 2.2-O - Comment, K. McClelland

*Attachment 26: Handout 2.2-P - Comment, J. Garcia

*Attachment 27: Handout 2.2-Q - Comment, S. Qureshi, Silicon Valley Leadership Group

UNCLASSIFIED MANAGER:

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