



Delta Conveyance

Background

On September 18, 2019, Department of Water Resources (DWR or Department) Director Karla Nemeth briefed the California Water Commission (Commission) on DWR's strategic plan and revised approach to Delta conveyance. In that briefing Director Nemeth informed the Commission that the Department would be pursuing a new environmental review and planning process for a single tunnel solution to modernize Delta conveyance.

On January 15, 2020, the Department issued a Notice of Preparation of an environmental impact report under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the conveyance project. The Department is holding [scoping meetings](#) to receive public input on the scope of the environmental impact analysis including project description and alternatives. This Commission briefing is **NOT** a CEQA scoping meeting.

According to DWR, "This fresh approach is consistent with the Governor's recent executive order directing state agencies to develop a portfolio of statewide water actions and investments. Modernizing Delta conveyance paired with complementary projects that improve water recycling, recharge depleted groundwater reserves, strengthen existing levee protections and improve Delta water quality, is critical to building a resilient water supply for California's communities and economy."

California Water Commission Role

The Commission can serve several roles based in statute regarding facilities of the State Water Project (SWP). For example, per Water Code section 165, the Commission conducts an annual review of the progress of the construction and operation of the SWP. Additionally, the Commission must approve any eminent domain proceedings associated with taking property for SWP construction.

Goal 3 of the Commission's updated Strategic Plan lays out the Commission's intent to carry out its statutory authorities associated with the SWP. Within Goal 3, Objective 1 states that the Commission will coordinate with the Department to remain apprised of the operations and construction activities of the SWP. More specific to the Delta conveyance project, Objective 2 calls for coordinating "with DWR to enhance public engagement for the new Delta Conveyance Project."

Agenda Item: 9

Meeting Date: February 19, 2020

Page 2

Given the various roles the Commission can have during a project's life cycle and the objectives of its Strategic Plan, it is important for the Commission to understand the Delta conveyance project as it develops to understand how and when its various roles may be needed.

Carrie Buckman, DWR's Environmental Program Manager for the Delta conveyance process, will brief the Commission on the project, building on the Director's September briefing.

This is an informational item.

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