



## **Delta Conveyance Project Informational Webinars Frequently Asked Questions**

*November 2021*

The following questions and responses address common themes the Department of Water Resources (DWR) heard during the four informational webinars held between July and September to provide background information related to preparation of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

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### **1. Questions About Overall Project Purpose, Needs and Objectives**

#### **1.1. Why is DWR proposing the Delta Conveyance Project?**

A major component of the State Water Project (SWP) relies on the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta's (Delta) channels to convey water and is increasingly vulnerable to earthquakes and the effects of climate change, including sea level rise. Upgrading SWP Delta diversion infrastructure protects against these threats and secures the longevity of the SWP and the future reliability of SWP water supplies. The purpose of the proposed Delta Conveyance Project is to modernize the aging SWP infrastructure in the Delta to restore and protect the reliability of SWP water deliveries in a cost-effective manner, consistent with the State's Water Resilience Portfolio. And in doing so, allow DWR to address sea level rise and climate change, minimize water supply disruption due to seismic risk and provide operational flexibility to improve aquatic conditions in the Delta.

#### **1.2. What are the specifics of the proposed Delta Conveyance Project?**

The proposed Delta Conveyance Project includes constructing and operating new conveyance facilities in the Delta that would add to the existing SWP infrastructure. Two new intake facilities, each with 3,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) capacity for a total 6,000 cfs, would be located in the north Delta to divert water. The new conveyance facilities would include a tunnel to convey water from the new intakes to the southern Delta. The proposed Delta Conveyance Project would be operated in coordination with the existing south Delta pumping facilities, resulting in a system known as "dual conveyance" because there would be two complementary methods to divert and convey water.

**1.3. Given the variability of precipitation in California, why propose this project when it appears there will be even less rain and snow in the future?**

The new climate normal of less snow and more rain occurring over a shorter duration of the year, coupled with frequent drought conditions, means we need a way to capture and store the water when it is available for use when it is otherwise not available. Adding facilities in the north Delta to capture excess flows when available, that can be operated in coordination with the existing south Delta facilities, will ensure the reliability of water supplies to the communities, farms and businesses throughout the state who are counting on them to survive.

**2. Questions About Environmental Impacts and Analysis**

**2.1. What will the effects of the proposed project be to fish, water quality, groundwater, subsidence, upstream watersheds and local residents?**

DWR is now in the process of preparing a Final EIR that will analyze and disclose the proposed project's potential environmental impacts and associated mitigation measures for impacts found to be potentially significant. Release of the Draft EIR for public review and comment is expected in mid-2022. Resource areas evaluated and described in the Draft EIR will include fish and aquatic resources, groundwater, water quality, noise, air quality and transportation, among many others.

**2.2. What mitigation will be required? How will DWR know that the mitigation is adequate?**

The Draft EIR (currently in progress) will include proposed mitigation measures when necessary to avoid or reduce potentially significant environmental impacts. Release of the Draft EIR for public review and comment is expected in mid-2022. As part of the EIR certification process, if a project is approved at the conclusion of the environmental review process, DWR would be required to adopt a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program that would include all feasible mitigation measures, and implementation and enforceability details, such as responsible party and timing.

**2.3. Will the EIR take climate change into consideration?**

The Draft EIR will consider climate change in several ways:

- An analysis of air quality and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the proposed project construction and operational activities to assess how the project might contribute to climate change,
- hydrologic modeling to consider future conditions with climate change and sea level rise, and
- an assessment of how the project might operate in those future conditions and contribute to climate resiliency.

Models used in Draft EIR preparation will be looking at existing conditions as well as conditions projected for 2040, which will include projected climate conditions.

**2.4. When conducting environmental analyses, how will DWR verify the accuracy and completeness of the data? Will assumptions be made public?**

The analysis, data and information presented in the Draft EIR will be based on the most relevant and best available science. All source materials will be made available as part of the Draft EIR release, including reference and supporting documents, and modeling assumptions and other data inputs, among others. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) calls for project proponents to utilize data sources available at the time of the Notice of Preparation (NOP), which for the Delta Conveyance Project was January 2020. DWR also utilizes coordination with appropriate relevant expert public agencies regarding specific resource analysis to ensure the information utilized is accurate and complete. In addition, DWR expects a thorough review of the Draft EIR from the public and interested public agencies and, as appropriate, will reflect those comments in the Final EIR.

**2.5. Will DWR utilize a statement of overriding considerations to approve the project, notwithstanding the potential for significant and unavoidable impacts?**

As described in CEQA Guidelines Section 15093, CEQA requires the decision-making agency "to balance, as applicable, the economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits, including region-wide or statewide environmental benefits, of a proposed project against its unavoidable environmental risks when determining whether to approve the project. If the specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits, including region-wide or statewide environmental benefits, of a proposal project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, the adverse environmental effects may be considered "acceptable." " Therefore, if DWR determines it is appropriate to approve the proposed project and the EIR discloses that the project has the potential to result in the occurrence of significant effects which cannot be avoided or substantially lessened, DWR will state in writing the specific reasons to support its action based on the Final EIR and/or other information in the record in a statement of overriding considerations. This statement will be included in the record of the project approval and mentioned in the Notice of Determination.

**2.6. Will the EIR address effects to other regions, including upstream watersheds?**

CEQA requires consideration of direct, indirect and cumulative impacts that could occur, including those beyond the immediate project area. In addition to

the project area in the Delta, which consists of the footprint of the project facilities, the proposed study area for certain resources includes areas upstream of the Delta, other regions in the Delta and the SWP/Central Valley Project (CVP) export service areas. The study area for the actions evaluated in the Draft EIR is larger than the project facility footprint in the Delta because some of the operational effects of implementing the project would extend beyond the physical project boundaries. The study area varies and is specifically defined for each resource based on the assessment of where environmental impacts might occur.

**2.7. Will the EIR evaluate the effect of the project on cold water storage in upstream reservoirs?**

The Delta Conveyance Project is not proposing changes to the operating rules of reservoirs upstream. Upstream reservoir operations are governed by existing requirements, which include cold water pool requirements and flood control requirements. Nevertheless, there may be indirect effects associated with the Delta Conveyance Project. DWR is currently performing an initial analysis to determine if there is potential for changes to upstream reservoir water in storage or reservoir releases. If the analysis shows that there could be potential changes to upstream reservoirs, DWR would perform additional analysis to determine if those changes could affect environmental resources.

**2.8. What are growth inducing impacts and how will they be evaluated?**

CEQA requires an EIR to discuss the potential for the proposed project to directly or indirectly foster economic or population growth (see CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(e)). Specifically, the EIR will discuss the potential for direct growth inducement as a result of construction jobs. It will also evaluate indirect growth inducement associated with the construction of access roads in the Delta Region, and indirect growth inducement associated with increased water supply reliability in the SWP service areas.

**2.9. How will DWR incorporate new data, new information, or changed circumstances into the CEQA impact analyses?**

CEQA requires that baseline information is set using data available at the time the NOP is published, which for the Delta Conveyance Project was January 2020. If significant new information is made available between January 2020 and the Draft EIR, DWR will consider it for inclusion in the EIR analysis, as appropriate.

**2.10. Will DWR look at cumulative effects of the project?**

Yes. CEQA requires analysis of cumulative impacts in an EIR. A cumulative impact is a combined environmental impact from the proposed project along with other past, present and reasonably foreseeable future projects causing related impacts. Each resource chapter will address cumulative impacts and will evaluate whether the project's incremental contribution to a cumulative impact is considerable.

**2.11. Is DWR assuming there will be any new upstream storage?**

The EIR considers ongoing and reasonably foreseeable programs, projects and policies in the existing conditions, No Project Alternative and cumulative impact analysis consistent with CEQA requirements and guidelines. The No Project Alternative will consider reservoir projects upstream of the Delta that were under construction as of January 15, 2020 (NOP publication), and facilities and programs that received approvals and permits on or before January 15, 2020.

The environmental analysis considers reasonably foreseeable projects which include some storage projects. However, expansions or new reservoirs were not far enough along in their planning and permitting to qualify.

**2.12. Will DWR evaluate the option of not doing a tunnel at all?**

Yes. While the EIR will analyze a reasonable range of potentially feasible alternatives that can achieve the project objectives and avoid or reduce potential significant environmental impacts, it will also analyze what impacts would occur if no project is approved. The range of alternatives ultimately selected for detailed analysis in the EIR include varying capacities and tunnel conveyance alignment options and were chosen after a multi-step screening selection process. The No Project Alternative will also be included in the evaluation, describing likely conditions if the project is not implemented. The alternatives formulation process and detailed evaluation and analysis will be documented in the Draft EIR.

**2.13. Who are the environmental planning consultants working on the Delta Conveyance Project?**

The Draft EIR is being developed by DWR with technical assistance from the Delta Conveyance Design and Construction Authority (DCA). The consultant teams developing the EIR include ICF, RBI Consulting, Inc., ESA, Fehr & Peers, Stantec, and Woodard and Curran. The complete list of entities involved in Delta Conveyance Project planning and details regarding roles/responsibilities will be included in the Draft EIR.

**2.14. How long will the public comment period be for the Draft EIR to allow sufficient review of an extremely complex and lengthily document?**

The review period length for the Draft EIR will likely be 90 days, which is longer than what CEQA requires. Before and during release of the Draft EIR, DWR will provide background and educational information in a variety of formats to improve access to and understanding of the document and its contents, and to encourage participation in public comment opportunities. The department will also provide resources during the public comment period. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is leading the effort to develop a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and USACE may have a different review period for the public Draft EIS.

**3. Questions About Alternatives**

### **3.1. Why not look at desalination, groundwater recharge, conservation, recycling or any number of other options?**

DWR focused on [identifying alternatives to the proposed project](#) that could meet most of the project objectives and lessen potential significant environmental effects. Based on CEQA guidance, this process identifies action alternatives for more detailed evaluation that reflect other ways DWR could meet the fundamental project purpose and objectives, which include continued reliability of the SWP. Alternatives that would allow the reliability of the SWP to continue to degrade do not meet the fundamental project purpose, so were screened out of consideration for the action alternatives that are analyzed in more detail in the Draft EIR.

Alternatives that included alternate supplies (such as conservation, recycling and desalination) were screened out from further evaluation as action alternatives because they did not satisfy the screening criteria. The No Project Alternative will describe likely conditions if the project is not implemented, including potential actions that may be taken absent a project, such as conservation, recycling and desalination, and the EIR will present the potential effects of not approving an action alternative.

## **4. Questions About the Overall Planning Process and Project Details**

### **4.1. Will DWR perform a benefit/cost analysis and what will it entail?**

Separate from the CEQA process, there will be a cost estimate, a benefit-cost analysis and a financial analysis developed during the appropriate stages of the planning and approval process. However, this stage of planning is focused on evaluating environmental impacts. Cost analyses will come later in the process, after a preferred alternative has been selected and the EIR process has been completed.

A preliminary cost assessment was prepared by the DCA in August 2020 and will be refined over time as planning and environmental review proceed and more precise design and engineering data become available.

### **4.2. What does it mean to say the project would be “funded by State Water Contractors”?**

The SWP is funded by the public water agencies that have contracts with DWR to receive water through the project. This modernization project would be funded by the public water agencies that would benefit from the conveyance infrastructure. These participating public water agencies fund planning efforts and would fund construction and operations if the project is approved. No aspect of the project would be funded through state general funds.

### **4.3. When will DWR seek a Biological Opinion?**

Consistent with Section 7 of the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), a biological assessment will be developed for the proposed Delta Conveyance

Project to determine the likely adverse effects the project may have on federally listed species and critical habitat. This will follow completion of the Draft EIR. DWR is coordinating with USACE as the lead federal action agency and will coordinate initiation of formal consultation and expects to receive biological opinions from both the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). In addition, DWR will work with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to comply with the requirements of the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) through applying for an Incidental Take Permit consistent with Section 2081 of the CA Fish & Game Code.

**4.4. What is DWR doing to engage with Tribes and Tribal Members?**

DWR is conducting formal Tribal consultation as prescribed under CEQA's "AB 52" requirements and DWR's Tribal Engagement Policy, as well as informal outreach and discussions as requested by Tribes. DWR will assist USACE with Tribal outreach associated with the federal Section 106 process, as appropriate. Additionally, DWR will work to ensure Tribal input is reflected in all facets of project planning through appropriate [engagement opportunities](#), including annual update meetings.

**4.5. How will this project gain approval and what are the steps?**

There are two phases of approval required before the Delta Conveyance Project could move forward. First, after DWR completes the CEQA process and determines if the project should be approved, the project would need to obtain the required environmental and regulatory permits and approvals, including but not limited to those under the federal and state endangered species acts, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) process for adding points of diversion to existing water rights and process for Delta Plan Consistency. There will be several opportunities for public participation throughout the course of the environmental review and planning process.

Second, the public water agencies that would receive water from the project, and have already voted to continue project planning, would have to approve participation in the project once the environmental review process is complete and if the project was approved.

**4.6. Who are the decision-makers on the project approval?**

The decision-maker specific to CEQA, certifying the EIR/selecting an alternative and deciding whether to approve a project is DWR. Additionally, the public water agencies that would receive water from the project will have to decide whether to participate and fund the project at the completion of the planning process. These participation decisions would be made individually by each agency's board of directors. In addition, there are several regulatory agencies, including USACE, SWRCB, NMFS, USFWS and CDFW, who have independent authority regarding approvals, authorizations or issuing permits under their specific jurisdiction.

**4.7. What kind of power will be used by trucks and other construction equipment?**

DWR is still working on a lot of these details but generally, the requirement is to use the most up to date equipment that is available. Current project assumptions include use of electric, diesel/electric or Tier 4 diesel engine equipment, as readily available. Additionally, the project would be required to comply with all state regulations related to vehicle emission standards at the time equipment is purchased.

**4.8. Where will the reusable tunnel material (RTM) be placed during construction?**

It depends on the alternative. For example, with the Central and Eastern Alternatives there would be an embankment around the new southern forebay, where RTM would be used to the extent possible. The material that cannot be reused would stay at the tunnel launch sites. There are potential sites at Twin Cities (for all alternatives), Bolden Island (for the Central Alternative) and Lower Roberts Island (for the Eastern and Bethany Alternatives).

**5. Questions About the State Water Project and Operations**

**5.1. Describe what “excess water” means in the context of the SWP. Who determines what is considered excess flow? How much excess water will there be given the anticipated effects of climate change?**

“Excess Delta flows” are flows that are greater than necessary to meet all other “in- basin uses,” which include water quality and flow standards in the Delta itself and contracted amounts for senior water rights holders and other water diverters. The standards that are included in “in-basin uses” include outflows and required Delta flows determined by the SWRCB through the Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan, which is currently being updated. Future excess flow amounts will be determined by these same SWRCB and regional processes that balance requirements and other factors to identify appropriate Delta flows at any given time and subsequently what additional flows would be available.

**5.2. Will DWR disclose the proposed operations, including decision criteria and bypass flows, for the project as a part of the EIR?**

DWR will include preliminary operational assumptions in the EIR to assist in the assessment of impacts to the environment, including water quality and aquatic resources. If the analysis indicates the potential for significant environmental impacts, DWR may revise the operational criteria to help avoid or reduce effects. Additionally, subsequent permitting efforts under ESA and CESA may further modify the operational criteria to avoid or reduce effects to sensitive species.

**5.3. How much does DWR currently rely on real-time operations and adaptive management, and will that change at all if this project is approved?**

Real-time operations occur today and would continue to occur with the Delta Conveyance Project, if approved. Real-time operations are a daily assessment of conditions and an adjustment of operations to meet ESA, CESA and SWRCB requirements, among others. With the Delta Conveyance Project there would be additional requirements included in these daily real time assessments.



The intent of adaptive management is to provide a regulatory framework to guide actions where there is substantial uncertainty regarding potential outcomes. This allows for project implementation, where actions taken to protect species are evaluated and then the results are used to inform stakeholders on which actions to take in the future. The implementation of adaptive management into the permitting process is typical for complex projects and will continue to evolve and improve as more is learned.

**5.4. How much of SWP water supplies go to agriculture and how much go to urban uses? How much of the source water flows to the ocean currently? Will any of these flow amounts change when this project comes online?**

For the current 29 SWP contracts, approximately two-thirds to three-fourths of the water diverted by the SWP is for urban uses and the remainder is for agriculture. That is the existing breakdown and future use details will depend on which contractors participate in the project. Generally, it is expected that there will be more interest from urban contractors and for urban needs moving forward. While the amount of source water allocated to the environment can vary by water year type and hydrological conditions, the 2020 California Water Resilience Portfolio indicates environmental water use ranged from approximately 34% to 57% of total applied water use between 2011 and 2015.

**5.5. Do SWP operators consider how the water will be used in their operations planning?**

SWP operators consider several factors in their operations planning. The two primary considerations are meeting regulatory requirements and contractual obligations prior to developing water supply for the State Water Contractors. The water developed after meeting all other requirements is then allocated based on long-term contracts.

**5.6. Why not capture as much water as possible during high flows for storage and later usage?**

The Delta Conveyance Project proposes adding facilities in the north Delta to efficiently capture, move and store water when it is available, especially from storm events, that can be operated in coordination with the existing south Delta facilities, to ensure the reliability of water supplies to the communities, farms and businesses throughout the state who are counting on them to survive.

**5.7. How will DWR redefine the Delta export/inflow ratio?**

The export/inflow (E/I) ratio is a requirement in SWRCB Decision 1641 (D-1641) that limits SWP and CVP exports at Clifton Court Forebay and the Jones Pumping Plant based on a percentage of the inflow. Because E/I is a SWRCB requirement, it is beyond DWR's purview to make a determination on how to define this requirement. However, DWR is recommending that the diversions from the Delta Conveyance Project be included as an export in combination with SWP and CVP diversions in the south Delta.

## 6. Questions About Modeling

### 6.1. Is the CalSim model based on artificial intelligence?

No. CalSim's simulation of state, federal and local agency water projects is based on a set of water management objectives and a set of operational constraints. Water management objectives are given relative priorities or weights. For example, regulatory requirements, such as minimum flow requirements specified in licenses, contracts and water rights are assigned a higher priority than discretionary actions such as storage regulation and water supply allocations. Operational constraints are formulated through discussions with the operators of the SWP and CVP and through discussions with local agencies. The model includes both "hard" constraints, which represent what the model must do (e.g., to meet physical capacity limitations) and "soft" constraints in which certain actions are assigned a high priority. CalSim 3 finds an optimal solution to competing management objectives while meeting all operational constraints.

### 6.2. Have the CalSIM3 and DSM2 models been tested to understand accuracy and what conditions they best model? How are they validated? Are these models used on other rivers/systems?

DWR and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) developed CalSim 3 using a generalized modeling platform known as WRIMS (Water Resources Integrated Modeling System). CalSim is an application of WRIMS particular to the water resources of the Central Valley and Delta. This platform has been used to model other systems, e.g., the Klamath Irrigation Project. CalSim 3 has been carefully reviewed to understand its limitations by comparing model results to recent historical data.

### 6.3. How did DWR pick 2040 as a future year to evaluate? Will DWR look at any other future years for comparison?

CEQA requires comparison of an alternative to a baseline at the time the NOP is published, which was in January 2020. To comply with CEQA, the analysis looks at a 2020 baseline and compares conditions with and without the project at that time. DWR Identified the year 2040 for the No Project Alternative because future conditions at this time are reasonably foreseeable. Additionally, land and water use data for 2040 was also readily available. Further into the future, there is increasing uncertainty regarding the effects of climate change and sea level rise. Despite these uncertainties, 2040 conditions are more foreseeable than at more distant time horizons.

### 6.4. Are the models based on real data from previous years?

CalSim 3 represents existing water resources, land use, infrastructure and regulations. The historical weather sequences and associated monthly runoff from 1922 through 2015 are used to represent the variability of hydrologic conditions. For the Delta Conveyance Project Draft EIR, there are two simulated weather sequences; one for the current (2020) conditions and one that

represents future (2040) conditions for which the historical runoff has been transformed for the effects of climate change.

**6.5. How can there be a 94-year average in Shasta when the dam was only built in 1945?**

CalSim 3 is not a predictive model nor a model of historical operations. CalSim 3 represents existing conditions and facilities but uses the historical weather sequence, beginning in 1922, to represent the variation in water supply conditions. Model results for 1922 show how the SWP and CVP would operate if a repeat of the 1922 temperature, precipitation, snow accumulation and snow melt runoff occurred today.

**6.6. Does CalSim account for groundwater levels and usage?**

Yes. CalSim simulates changes in groundwater elevations and subsurface groundwater flows. Simulated groundwater elevations show an annual cycle of drawdown and recovery imposed on longer periods of drawdown during drought periods and rising water levels during a sequence of wet years. The model simulates groundwater pumping to meet agricultural and municipal and industrial water demands.

**6.7. Does CalSim account for salinity intrusion?**

CalSim 3 simulates SWP and CVP operations to meet requirements of SWRCB D-1641 and the water quality objectives established by the 1995 Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan. However, CalSim 3 does not simulate Delta salinity directly. Instead, CalSim 3 uses a statistical model, known as an Artificial Neural Network (ANN), that estimates flows needed to satisfy salinity standards based on Delta current month and prior month simulated conditions. Delta water quality is subsequently determined using the DSM2 model. DSM2 calculates water quality based on saltwater intrusion, channel mixing and Delta inflows and Delta exports from CalSim 3 output.

**6.8. How reliable are DWR's models in assessing future water quality?**

Analysis includes an assessment of water temperature in the Sacramento River and of Delta salinity. Uncertainties regarding the effects of climate change on the amount and timing of runoff and the height of sea level rise are the biggest obstacles in determining what a 2040 environment would look like. Additionally, there may be changes in regulatory requirements and/or adaptive management measures as conditions evolve over the next two decades. The modeling approach is to consider a large range of hydrologic conditions (a mix of wet years and dry years) so that potential project effects can be fully identified. The models are not a projection of what will happen, but an analysis what may happen under a range of possible meteorological and weather conditions. Future weather patterns are based on a consensus (central tendency) of what international climate change models project for the future. The sea level rise assumption for 2040 (1.8 feet) is an extreme scenario with a very low probability of occurrence.

**6.9. Will CalSim and DSM2 data outputs be made available to the public?**

Yes. The State will release this information when the Draft EIR is released. On August 1, 2021, DWR and Reclamation made a joint release of the CalSim 3 model version that simulates existing conditions. This joint release package includes the CalSim 3 model schematic.

**6.10. How will dissolved oxygen in the Delta be modeled to account for the impact of changed flows due to this project?**

Currently, Delta channel dissolved oxygen concentration is not being simulated as part of the Delta Conveyance Project.

**7. Questions About Fisheries and Aquatic Analysis**

**7.1. What will the Delta Conveyance Project do to help restore fisheries?**

The Delta Conveyance Project is currently undergoing environmental evaluation to determine potential impacts created by the project, and to avoid, minimize or mitigate those impacts, including impacts to fish. While the Delta Conveyance Project does not have a specific objective to restore fisheries, the project's operational resiliency objective is intended to provide flexibility to improve aquatic conditions in the Delta. Additionally, DWR is involved in many other programs to protect and restore fisheries that are unrelated to the Delta Conveyance Project.

**7.2. Will fish be evaluated at all life stages?**

Yes. The environmental evaluation includes all life stages, including juvenile and adult life stages, among others.

**7.3. Do juvenile fish move with the river flow? Do they tend to group at the outside of river bends?**

Fish behavior depends on the species. Acoustic tagging studies have shown that juvenile Chinook salmon tend to move or concentrate based on flow. These types of studies will help guide the environmental evaluation of the project.

**7.4. Please explain the term "refugia."**

Refugia refers to a place in the water where fish can rest free from predation and/or changes in water flow. In the context of Delta Conveyance Project, the incorporation of fish refugia (e.g. in the form of bar racks spaced to exclude larger predators) into the intake structure or fish screen design, is a measure that will be considered to further minimize potential effects of the project on listed fish species.

**7.5. How will the status of Chinook salmon and Delta smelt be evaluated?**

DWR will utilize the best available science for all of the analyses, including any available data related to the drought and to the status of different fish species. Ultimately, the CEQA evaluation will form the basis for other agencies to consider the granting of permits for the proposed project, including USFWS, NMFS and CDFW.

**7.6. How do current climate conditions affect models and predictions?**

CalSim 3, a primary model utilized for the Delta Conveyance Project, utilizes an updated water system representation of the Central Valley, including a fully updated representation of the San Joaquin Valley. In addition, various updates have been made to the Sacramento Valley and Delta portion of the model. These updates include Land Use, Urban Water Demands, etc. Models will be looking at existing conditions as well as conditions projected for 2040, which will include projected climate conditions. These 2020 and 2040 scenarios will be utilized to estimate potential species (terrestrial and aquatic) impacts associated with the Delta Conveyance Project. For example, estimates of fish movement based on biological and behavioral relationships to physical changes in hydrology (e.g. increased water temperatures, changes in precipitation timing and volume) will be considered in the analysis.

**7.7. Please describe analyses of non-salmonid entrainment at the NDD? Examples include fish that spawn in the vicinity of the diversion facilities.**

As part of the Draft EIR analysis, DWR is looking at other species that could be entrained. Examples include white sturgeon larvae, striped bass eggs/larvae and other fish with small life stages that could occur in the area.

**7.8. What is done to ensure that spawning salmon can return upstream?**

The proposed NDD would not create a fish passage barrier for upstream salmonid migration. The intakes will be engineered to prevent entrainment of juveniles. It is assumed that any criteria that will prevent juvenile entrainment will be sufficient for adults, as they are stronger swimmers. Flows deemed necessary for listed fish life-cycle fulfillment will be developed as part of the permitting process with the relevant resource agencies (e.g. CDFW, NMFS, USFWS).

**7.9. How will cumulative impacts on winter and spring runs be measured?**

Cumulative impacts on fish and aquatic resources, including winter- and spring-run Chinook salmon as well as all other focal species included in the EIR, will be assessed qualitatively in consideration with a list of applicable plans, policies, and programs/projects that could affect the species cumulatively in addition to the Delta Conveyance Project.

**8. Questions About Fish Screens**

**8.1. How did DWR determine fish screen location and configuration?**

DWR considered a range of intake sites along the Sacramento River and evaluated these sites in accordance with multiple siting criteria. The criteria included an assessment of physical parameters of the river (depth, river curvature, geotechnical concerns, etc.), biological suitability, and potential disturbances to existing environmental resources and communities. The current concepts are DWR's proposal and wouldn't be finalized until after approval by the fishery agencies.

DWR considered the use of cylindrical tee fish screens and vertical flat plate screens. DWR is proposing to use the cylindrical tee fish screens because the screen lengths would be shorter than vertical flat plate screens for the same design capacities. Cylindrical tee fish screens as compared to vertical flat plate screens would also have more efficient flow control and screen cleaning and are less susceptible to debris damage.

**8.2. Is it possible that fish (all life stages, including eggs) can get “caught up” in the fish screens? If so, how will DWR determine an acceptable level?**

The screens would be designed to avoid effects to fish based on input gained by collaborating with fishery agencies. This would include utilizing the best available science based on life stages for every species of concern. In addition, after the environmental analyses are complete, there would be an extensive process for seeking and obtaining permits from the fishery agencies to analyze and reduce effects to sensitive species.

**8.3. Is there a difference in the fish screens when looking at the different capacities under consideration (e.g. 3,000 cfs vs 7,500 cfs)?**

The screens themselves would be the same size regardless of the capacity. But the structure size, and number (e.g. 1, 2, or 3 intake structures to meet the alternative capacities), would change to accommodate a smaller or larger capacity. The size of the structure for the two different types of fish screens under consideration would be about the same, but the vertical plate screen option would be somewhat longer.

**8.4. What is the difference between the capital and operating costs for the vertical flat plate and cylindrical tee screens?**

Capital costs are roughly the same, and the operations and maintenance costs are also very similar. The vertical plate screens have fewer motors, but more pumps, both of which would involve larger motors than used for tee screens. Vertical plate screens may be slightly more costly to operate, but it would not be significant. Labor costs would also slightly favor the tee screens because they would require less manpower.

**8.5. Is the high-pressure cleaner harmful to fish?**

High pressure cleaning would only be conducted when the screen cylinders are removed from the water, so fish would not be subject to the high-pressure washing activity.

## **9. Questions About Fisheries and Operations**

**9.1. Will DWR be able to change operational criteria during implementation?**

As discussed in the response to question 5.2, DWR has developed preliminary operational criteria that may be refined during the regulatory process to help avoid or reduce potential effects. Once permits are issued, the criteria would be finalized. It is important to note that adaptive management would be used to evaluate and consider potential changes in operational criteria based on

information gained before and after the new facilities become operational. This program would be used to consider and address scientific uncertainty regarding the Delta ecosystem and to inform project operations. The adaptive management process would be conducted in close coordination with the fishery agencies and any changes would have to successfully go through the process identified in the adaptive management plan.

**9.2. How will project operations impact fish levels?**

As part of the CEQA environmental review process, DWR is developing a Draft EIR to evaluate potential environmental effects of the proposed project and alternatives. This will include an evaluation of potential effects to fish and aquatic resources, including various listed species and species of recreation and economic importance, due to project construction and operations/maintenance. In addition, if warranted, the EIR will include mitigation measures and other requirements to minimize potential effects. Although the impact analysis has not been completed at this time, the Draft EIR is expected to be available for public review in mid-2022.

**9.3. Would proposed diversions and velocities be collected and evaluated on an average, daily or instantaneous basis?**

The current assumption is that sweeping velocities would be measured and evaluated on an instantaneous basis and the bypass criteria would be implemented based on a 3-day averaging period. Operations would also be the subject of Real-Time and Adaptive Management strategies to improve benefits to both aquatic species and water supply.

**9.4. Would “low level pumping” be happening at all times?**

“Low level pumping” would be the lowest level of pumping allowed for the Delta Conveyance Project facilities. This low-level pumping would not occur at all times and would be guided by operational rules that would call for “low level pumping,” depending on environmental conditions, such as volume of flow in the river, as well as time of year.

**9.5. Are operational criteria being developed for both salmonids and for smelt?**

Yes. Operational criteria will consider the needs of both salmonids and smelt, using the best available science. In addition, various operational criteria (e.g. approach velocity) for smelt and salmonids is also expected to be protective of sturgeon.

**9.6. How much outflow is needed to protect aquatic resources in the Delta?**

The SWRCB is responsible for setting water quality standards and the SWP must comply with the rules established under that process. The state board is contemplating changes under its ongoing Water Quality Control Plan Update, which would apply to the SWP and Delta Conveyance Project, if approved. The Delta Conveyance Project would continue to be subject to all SWRCB water quality standards.

**9.7. How will DWR consider "appropriate Delta flow criteria" required by the Delta Reform Act?**

DWR will evaluate proposed operating criteria in the context of existing Delta standards and policies, including those established by the Delta Reform Act. Additionally, DWR will coordinate with the Delta Stewardship Council, as appropriate, to insure the adequacy of the Delta Conveyance Project analysis and documentation for Delta Plan Consistency.

**9.8. What would maximum south Delta diversions be during December to April? What would the maximum simultaneous diversion be between the north and south facilities?**

South Delta diversions are governed by multiple existing regulations and operating criteria, such as Old and Middle River flow restrictions (e.g. to minimize potential impacts to listed fish species) and SWRCB D-1641 (e.g. export to inflow ratio) during this period. Additionally, system constraints (e.g. available storage in San Luis Reservoir) also determine operations of existing diversions, and would continue to do so for the proposed facilities. While the theoretical combined pumping capacity for the SWP and CVP south Delta diversion facilities is approximately 15,000 cfs, these existing regulations, criteria and system constraints mean that the maximum diversion capacity is almost never used. The proposed north Delta intakes would be operated to meet existing as well as new criteria (e.g. Bypass flow criteria). The existing south Delta pumping capacity would not be altered and the additional north Delta capacity would range from 3,000 – 7,500 cfs, depending on the alternative. Therefore, the theoretical maximum capacity of existing and proposed new north Delta diversions would be the combination of their capacities, but the actual diversions would likely be considerably less during the period in question for most hydrologic conditions.

**9.9. What does "preliminary bypass flow criteria" mean? Will the Draft EIR analyze a range of flow criteria that are not preliminary, and will the project description describe the quantitative criteria under which the preliminary bypass flow may change?**

Preliminary bypass flow criteria reflect the proposed operations being evaluated in the EIR (e.g. to assess potential impacts to winter-run Chinook salmon). Depending on impacts identified through the environmental planning process, refinements to the preliminary bypass flow criteria, as well as consideration of alternative or additional criteria (e.g. development of Real-Time-Operations), may be appropriate to avoid or reduce environmental effects.

**9.10. How do pulse protections work to address impacts to fish migration?**

While the exact percentage of fish migrating through and past the intake reach during pulse protection periods under actual future operations is uncertain at this time, pulse protection is initiated when a large number, and relatively high concentration, of winter-run Chinook salmon juvenile salmonids begin migrating into the Delta from upstream locations. This movement is usually triggered by environmental cues, such as first run-off events of the season. Pulse protection is intended to further minimize survival changes for emigrating salmonids (i.e. winter-run and other juvenile salmonids) in the intake reach, as well as through the Delta.



**9.11. Will the proposed bypass flows eliminate tidal flows in the Delta?**

Regardless of any potential changes in Delta hydraulics associated with the Delta Conveyance Project, tidal flows will continue in the Delta. Potential changes in Delta hydrodynamics and associated changes to specific resource areas will be evaluated in the Draft EIR. Bypass flow criteria is intended to minimize survival changes for emigrating salmonids in the intake reach, as well as through the Delta, and minimize the potential for upstream movement of fish with flow at two points of control: (1) Sacramento River upstream of Sutter Slough, and (2) Sacramento River downstream of Georgiana Slough.

**9.12. Is there an example of NDD operations for 2014 or 2015?**

The technical webinar included an example of NDD operations for 2016 based on historic flow information. This example was a rough approximation of operations because it did not include a broad spectrum of modeled conditions. The Draft EIR will include modeling results from the CalSim 3 operational simulation; these results are based on hydrologic information through 2015.

**10. Questions About Climate Change and Sea Level Rise (DWR & CA-Specific)**

**10.1. How does the Delta levee system help maintain Delta hydrodynamics related to saltwater intrusion into the Delta? And what is DWR doing to protect this system?**

The various levees around the islands and tracts throughout the Delta work together as a system. The failure of any one island levee could cause a domino effect that weakens other island levees around it. In a worst-case scenario, multiple islands could fail together, leading to an in-rush of sea water into the Delta interior. It has generally been shown that the far western islands (Sherman, Twitchell, Jersey, Brannan-Andrus) play an important role in constricting the water pathway between the saltier San Francisco Bay and freshwater-dominated interior Delta. Most levees throughout the Delta are privately owned, operated and maintained. DWR has had a Delta Levees program for nearly five decades which works with the local maintaining agencies to provide funding and support for levee maintenance and improvements throughout the Delta.

**10.2. What are the state's greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals? How do DWR's greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals as a state agency compare to the state's goals and how does this relate to the proposed Delta Conveyance Project? And how do emissions from wildfires factor into the state and DWR's ability to achieve these goals?**

The state of California has a goal of reducing GHG emissions by 40% below 1990 levels by 2030 and 80% below 1990 levels by 2050. DWR has its own GHG emissions reduction plan that covers all DWR activities. DWR's goals are to reduce GHG emissions to 60% below 1990 levels by 2030 and to be carbon neutral by 2045, meaning that DWR will minimize emissions to the greatest extent feasible by using renewable energy and other cutting-edge technologies, and will offset any emission that cannot be avoided. If the Delta Conveyance Project were constructed by DWR, the emissions generated from construction would be

minimized to the extent possible and any remaining emissions would be offset to zero net emissions. Future operations of the proposed Delta Conveyance Project would be consistent with DWR's existing GHG emissions reduction goals and would not impede achievement of future reductions.

Wildfires emit significant GHG emissions that can contribute to climate change. In California, the 2020 wildfires are estimated to have released 112 million metric tons of carbon dioxide, according to a California Air Resources Board [report](#). It is challenging to determine how much wildfire emissions alter the GHG concentrations in the atmosphere and contribute to anthropogenic climate change because wildfire emissions are part of the terrestrial carbon cycle. The California Air Resources Board has a [website](#) and [FAQ](#) dedicated to addressing questions related to wildfires and climate change.

## 11. Questions About Climate Change Analysis

### 11.1. How will the effects of saltwater intrusion coming into the Delta due to future sea level rise be evaluated?

Due to the effects of climate change related to sea level rise, salinity is expected to push into the Delta, resulting in effects to the freshwater saline zone. It is an important and problematic climate change effect to evaluate, which DWR will do in the Draft EIR by evaluating salinity at intake areas under the extreme sea level rise [H++] scenarios from the [Ocean Protection Council guidelines](#).

### 11.2. How will sea level rise and climate change affect construction-related activities?

The DCA has created conceptual designs that include ways to manage runoff and erosion during construction, which include a combination of non-structural and structural flood risk management measures to reduce the risk of flooding at construction sites. Additionally, the sites that would be storing materials and stockpiles would have levees surrounding them that would contain everything so there would be no opportunity for erosion and runoff.

### 11.3. Will DWR use the most recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change data (*Sixth Assessment*)?

CEQA calls for project proponents to utilize data sources available at the time of the NOP, which for the Delta Conveyance Project was January 2020. The IPCC released a first component of the Sixth Assessment – the Physical Science Basis in August 2021. DWR will reference written information from the Sixth Assessment Physical Science Basis after final review of the report is complete.

Additionally, CMIP6 (Coupled Model Intercomparison Project) data underlying the projections of the Sixth Assessment is currently being vetted, validated and downscaled for use in California (e.g., via LOCA) and is therefore not yet available for project specific application. Depending on the timing of when the downscaled information is available for project specific application,

datasets may require additional validation or processing for integration with water resource planning models (e.g., CalSim) that DWR is using in conjunction with climate projection information to assess climate change effects.

**11.4. How are evaporative impacts of rising atmospheric temperatures being factored into the CalSim modeling?**

Some operations changes and CalSim models are based on different global models. DWR is adjusting inputs in future CalSim scenarios for changes in temperature and precipitation, which includes evaporation.

**11.5. How will sea level rise in conjunction with the proposed Delta Conveyance Project operations affect water quality, particularly for Environmental Justice communities?**

Sea level rise is anticipated to impact water quality and communities regardless of whether the proposed project is implemented. The EIR for the Delta Conveyance Project will evaluate the possible effect of the project regarding water quality, taking possible sea level rise into account. If impacts are found, it will also evaluate whether there are disproportionate impacts to Environmental Justice communities. It is important to note that salinity in the Delta is managed through regulations set by the SWRCB. The SWP, with and without a Delta Conveyance Project, is operated to meet those requirements relative to water quality.

**11.6. According to the Delta Stewardship Council, climate change will make future exports for the State Water Project unreliable. How will DWR reflect this in the environmental analyses?**

The EIR for the proposed Delta Conveyance Project will review climate trends under a future scenario for the No Project alternative for SWP annual deliveries. The EIR will then assess how the proposed project and project alternatives could affect SWP deliveries for long-term average, dry water years and critical water years.

One of the primary project objectives is to address future threats to the water supply reliability of the SWP caused by climate change and sea level rise. As precipitation becomes more variable and runoff and snowmelt patterns shift with climate change, the project is expected to provide the ability to make allowable diversions when there is excess flow. This ability to make diversions is being assessed in the Draft EIR.

**11.7. What is the study area used for the climate change and sea level rise analyses?**

The study area for the climate change and sea level rise analyses includes areas upstream of the Delta region, Delta region and south-of-Delta SWP services areas. The sea level rise tide gauge referenced in the analysis is the San Francisco tide gauge, though sea level rise projections will be discussed for all coastal regions that make up the study area.

**11.8. What will happen to the existing diversion facilities under future climate change scenarios?**

SWP diversions from the existing south Delta pumping facilities and associated deliveries are expected to decrease under climate change in the future. DWR is assessing how the project may help to stabilize SWP diversions and deliveries and create more reliable operations during drier dry years with reduced Delta exports that have been identified in other statewide reports (e.g., California Fourth Climate Assessment).

**12. Questions about Environmental Justice Overview**

**12.1. Do Environmental Justice principles direct us to secure a fresh water supply to populations in Southern California?**

A central objective of the project is to protect the reliability of the SWP, which provides an affordable and reliable supply of high-quality and safe drinking water for communities across California. Many SWP contractors have populations that are economically disadvantaged, including millions of people in Southern California communities.

**12.2. Does Environmental Justice include Minority Owned, Women Owned, and the many types of Disadvantaged Business and Small Business Enterprises?**

The Environmental Justice analysis does not address businesses specifically, however, the effects on businesses would be captured in analysis of other chapters of the EIR, such as Socioeconomics and Agriculture. If significant impacts are identified, they would be further analyzed for disproportionate adverse effects on Environmental Justice communities. Because the geography of Environmental Justice communities would necessarily include minority-owned, disadvantaged and small businesses that serve the community, these business owners would be captured by the definitions of minority or low-income if they meet the established criteria. It should be noted that “woman” is not a criterion for disadvantaged in the Environmental Justice context, but minority or low-income women would be included by definition.

**13. Questions About Environmental Justice Survey Report and Lessons Learned**

**13.1. How has DWR engaged with Environmental Justice (EJ)/Disadvantaged Communities (DAC) and will DWR continue to do so?**

Environmental Justice communities can feel left out of public processes if there are language barriers, technological constraints, or a lack of information or understanding of how the subject may impact their communities.

To lead EJ/DAC outreach efforts for the Delta Conveyance Project, DWR brought on the facilitation non-profit, Ag Innovations (AIN), who also led development and outreach for the Environmental Justice Survey conducted last fall. A large part of AIN’s survey outreach efforts included developing an accessible suite of informational materials in multiple languages as identified through census information (English, Spanish and Chinese), creative methods

to reach intended audiences, and various options to access the survey. AIN also worked extensively with community leaders and groups to identify and reach prospective respondents. Specific survey outreach actions included virtual and hardcopy notices and information sharing, social media, participation in community events, one-on-one support and several others.

In recent months, AIN has been reaching out to Environmental Justice communities to share survey results and information about next steps for the Delta Conveyance Project. Moving forward, DWR will continue to work with AIN on robust outreach and engagement based on what has worked and what has not in the past as well as direct feedback from these communities about their preferences and priorities. From the survey, AIN all learned that one of the best ways to reach communities is to be invited by partners who know where and who we should be talking to. As project planning continues and circumstances change, the goal is to have face-to-face contact and conversations with people about the process and how best to get their input, specifically during the Draft EIR public review period.

### **13.2. What were the goals for the survey?**

The goals identified by DWR and AIN during survey development included:

1. Gathering information from Disadvantaged Communities in the Delta about how they work, live, recreate and experience the Delta
2. Understanding how the Delta community values and uses its natural, economic, and social resources
3. Increasing awareness of the proposed Delta Conveyance Project among Disadvantaged Community members in the Delta and interest in participating in ongoing public engagement related to the project

### **13.3. Does DWR consider the survey a representative sample of Delta Environmental Justice Communities?**

The Delta is a unique geographic region. It includes five different counties, as well as small towns, rural and urban areas. For the purposes of the EJ Survey, AIN defined the Delta as five-mile radius around the statutory Delta, also taking into account zip codes, Delta boundaries, and CAI EPA Enviro Screen information to assign respondents as within or outside of the Delta region when conducting outreach and analyzing the information collected. AIN also placed high priority on ensuring that the information for disadvantaged and severely disadvantaged respondents was accurate for the analysis. To understand whether respondents typify the diversity of the Delta, AIN compared survey responses to information from the American Communities Survey (2013) conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau.

The intent of the survey was to gather insights from the people who live, work and care for the Delta about what they value, not perform a quantitative analysis. The innovative survey outreach approaches combined with people who were passionate in their opinions and wanted to be heard, allowed us to gather information from a much wider swath than would normally happen for a public planning process.

A few response highlights include strong participation from Latino Hispanic populations, which is the highest minority population in the area. There was very good participation from Asian or Pacific Islanders. However, there are several other populations that did not participate, and the intent is to continue to try to reach these communities and build relationships. Additionally, the results, insights and lessons learned from this survey will provide a strong foundation that DWR will continue to build on.

**13.4. Will DWR share data like respondent zip code information, so the public knows where gaps exist?**

The survey data is available upon request, with personal identifying information redacted.

**13.5. Did survey respondents know the potential effects of the project and how the information they provided would be used?**

The survey did have introductory language, which included an overview of the project with specific details such as construction length and other potential construction impacts. Additionally, a big part of outreach to community leaders was education and information sharing about the project so they could provide this context and background in their individual outreach to their networks and address specific concerns. Specific information related to potential project impacts will not be available until public release of the Draft EIR.

**13.6. How many Black, Indigenous, People of Color worked on the Environmental Justice survey?**

The survey was developed by AIN in consultation with DWR, Metroquest (the survey platform) and other communications contractors. Ag Innovations also interviewed Environmental Justice advocates, community engagement specialists and local community leaders and members to understand context, history and potential impacts and benefits, and requested their support in survey outreach. Communities of color were involved throughout the course of survey development and implementation in various capacities.

**13.7. Was there any focused Tribal outreach around the survey?**

DWR conducted individual and tailored outreach to invite indigenous and Tribal members to participate in the survey. Examples include a presentation to the Delta Conveyance Project Tribal Engagement Committee, which is made up of the Delta Tribes. AIN also sent out an electronic notification to statewide Tribal leaders, representatives and members, which is their preferred method of communication, and asked them to share further within their own personal networks. Additionally, AIN asked the Delta Tribes what would be most helpful to reach their communities and ended up distributing over 1,000 flyers and postcards based on their feedback.

Regarding the actual survey and Tribal and cultural resource issues, the survey included information that Tribal issues could be sensitive and that a general

survey could not adequately capture important historical and local knowledge. While designing the survey, it was also important to acknowledge that while the survey was an opportunity to gather information, it is completely separate and apart from the formal AB 52 Tribal consultation process.

## **14. Questions about Environmental Justice in the Environmental Impact Report**

### **14.1. What geographic regions are part of the EJ analysis study area?**

The Environmental Justice study area in the Draft EIR consists of census tracts and block groups intersected by where the proposed project has the potential to cause environmental impacts (i.e., the area in which temporary or permanent physical effects may occur), which generally includes the Delta as a whole and the SWP service areas. Where impacts are found somewhere beyond the project footprint and intersect with an EJ population, they would also be analyzed, including areas north of the Delta if impacts are found to occur there.

### **14.2. How are Disadvantaged Communities defined in the Draft EIR and will Environmental Justice populations be adequately represented in the analysis?**

For purposes of Environmental Justice analysis in the Draft EIR, Disadvantaged Communities are defined per federal guidance as minority (American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian or Pacific Islander, Black non-Hispanic, Hispanic), or low-income. Low-income is defined as households with income less than about \$60,000 per year and may include members of any race or ethnicity. These definitions are used to collect U.S. Census data on race and income for the Environmental Justice study area, which is the census tracts that contain project elements. This method identifies the presence of Disadvantaged or Environmental Justice communities in the study area and is used to assess whether an impact would be disproportionate for these communities. The priorities, values, and suggestions that were identified in the Environmental Justice Survey results are then used, along with other sources, to guide analysis of the impact on Environmental Justice communities relative to the significant physical impacts found in the EIR for other resources.

### **14.3. How will water quality be assessed relative to Disadvantaged Communities?**

If there are impacts to any resource area, including water quality, that are found to have a potentially disproportionate effect on Environmental Justice populations, they would also be included in the Environmental Justice analysis.

### **14.4. Who assesses how the project could cause an economic impact on Disadvantaged Communities in relation to potential ratepayers increases in Southern California?**

The Delta Conveyance Project would be funded by the various public water agencies that receive SWP water, if they choose to participate in the project. A variety of factors go into their individual rate decisions. Each agency discloses this information and will determine their own process for deciding whether to participate in and fund the project.

A central reason for proposing this project is to protect the reliability of the SWP, which provides an affordable and reliable supply of high-quality and safe drinking water for communities across California, several of which have populations that are economically disadvantaged, including millions of people in Southern California communities.

**14.5. Is DWR looking at how Tribes north of the Delta could be affected by the project?**

DWR is engaged in a separate Tribal consultation process as prescribed by AB 52 and DWR's Tribal Engagement Policy to identify Tribal cultural resources, discuss the potential effects from the proposed project and alternatives on these resources, and develop mitigation measures to reduce or avoid effects. See also question 4.4.

**14.6. What will the impact of the project be on fishing, specifically for those communities that rely on it as food source?**

The Environmental Justice analysis will analyze impacts to EJ communities that rely on fish as a food source if impacts to fish and aquatic resources are found to occur.

**14.7. Does DWR's EJ analysis in the EIR go beyond NEPA's requirements for EJ analysis in an EIS?**

DWR is developing an EIR to comply with CEQA, which does not require an EJ analysis. NEPA includes an EJ analysis within EIS documents completed by federal agencies. Typically, a NEPA analysis looks at adverse effects that are identified in other resource chapters and compares them to the location of EJ communities to determine if there is a disproportionately high or adverse effect on those communities. DWR is doing this in the analysis as well as utilizing the information collected from the EJ survey to help us further understand the resources EJ communities rely on. We are also evaluating whether there could be a negative effect on other resource areas that are typically relied on heavily by EJ communities. If an impact is found that is not captured through the evaluation of the geographic location of communities, it would be analyzed it because it is identified in the survey as a resource that is relied on by these communities.

**15. Resource Links for Other General Questions**

**15.1. Information about drought-related issues can be found here:**

<https://water.ca.gov/water-basics/drought>

**15.2. Information about overall California water policy can be found here:**

[https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/laws\\_regulations/](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/laws_regulations/)

**15.3. Information about ecosystem and wetland restoration can be found here:**

- Wetlands: [https://mywaterquality.ca.gov/eco\\_health/wetlands/](https://mywaterquality.ca.gov/eco_health/wetlands/)



- Ecosystem restoration: <https://water.ca.gov/Programs/All-Programs/EcoRestore>
- 15.4. Information about water rights and how they were established can be found here: [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/board\\_info/faqs.html](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/board_info/faqs.html)
- 15.5. Information about local/regional water supply resiliency and planning can be found here: <https://resilientca.org/topics/water/>
- 15.6. Information about flood planning can be found here: <https://water.ca.gov/Programs/Flood-Management/Flood-Planning-and-Studies>
- 15.7. Information about climate change planning can be found here:
- Climate Action Plan: <https://water.ca.gov/Programs/All-Programs/Climate-Change-Program/Climate-Action-Plan>
  - Climate Change Program: <https://water.ca.gov/programs/all-programs/climate-change-program>
- 15.8. Information about SWP reservoir levels can be found here: <https://www.americangeosciences.org/critical-issues/maps/interactive-map-water-levels-major-reservoirs-california>
- 15.9. Information about the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act can be found here: <https://water.ca.gov/programs/groundwater-management/sgma-groundwater-management>