

October 27, 2020

Delta Conveyance Project: *Annual Tribal Informational Meeting*

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“We must get this done—for the resilience of our mighty rivers, the stability of our agriculture sector, and the millions who depend on this water every day.”

— Governor Newsom, 2019 State of the State Address



“Plan, permit, and build new diversion and conveyance facilities (such as a tunnel) in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta to safeguard State Water Project, and, potentially, Central Valley Project deliveries drawn from the Sacramento and San Joaquin river systems. New conveyance should complement existing and improved through-Delta conveyance to promote operational flexibility, protect water quality, and improve aquatic habitat conditions while limiting local impacts.

“The state must protect the state’s largest supply of water as well as invest in local projects. Under Governor Newsom’s leadership, California has proposed a broad new portfolio approach that prioritizes conservation, recycling, groundwater management, and much more, which will build the resilience of local water systems across the state.”

— Water Resilience Portfolio (July 2020)





3 of 5 Californians Depend on Water that Flows Through the Delta

The Delta is where rain and snowmelt from the Sierra Nevada mountains collect. It is where the state's main water distribution infrastructure — the State Water Project (SWP) — is located, distributing essential fresh water to homes, businesses and farmlands throughout California, allowing our state to become the 5th largest economy in the world.



State Water Project

2/3 of California's water originates in the Sierra Nevada mountains

50% of California's water supply flows through the Delta

29 State Water Contractors purchase and distribute water through the SWP

27m people receive clean, affordable water from the SWP

750k acres of farmland are irrigated with SWP water



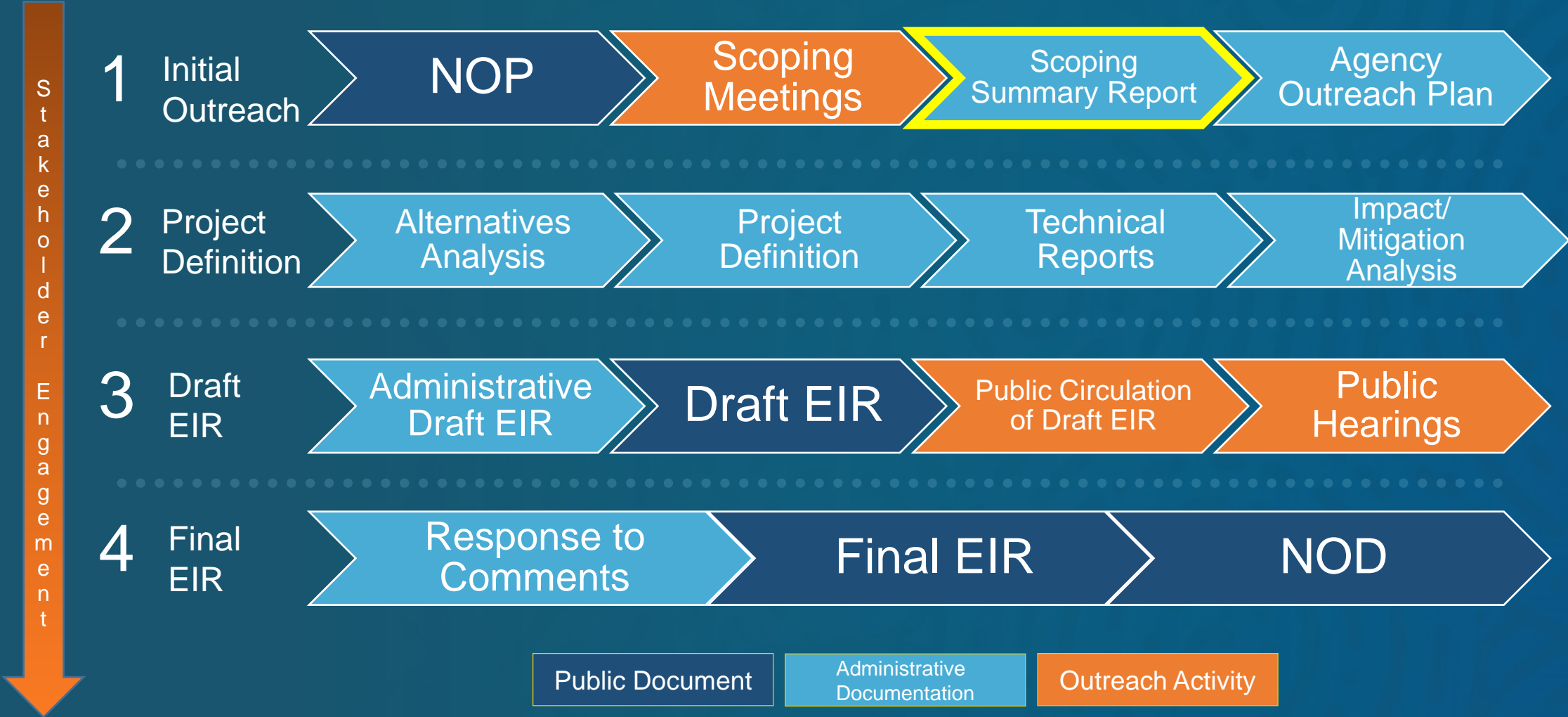
2020 - Year in Review

- January 2020: State released draft Water Resilience Portfolio and DWR issued an NOP for a proposed single tunnel project, initiating the CEQA scoping process
- Feb-Mar 2020: Scoping meetings held throughout CA
- April 2020: CEQA scoping period closes
- June 2020: DWR submits Section 404/10 Application to USACE
- July 2020: Scoping Summary Report published capturing scoping-related information including comments received and scoping meeting transcripts
- August 2020: USACE released an NOI initiating the NEPA EIS process



Environmental Review Process

Identify, analyze and disclose the potential significant adverse environmental impacts of a proposed project, and provide feasible mitigation measures and alternatives to avoid or reduce such effects.



Scoping Process Summary

FAST FACTS:

- 93-day public comment period: January 15, 2020 – April 17, 2020
- 8 public meetings: 735 total attendees combined
- Approximately 850 comment letters received
- Over 3,500 individual comments





Current Planning Efforts

- DWR is currently initiating coordination and planning on all required state and federal approvals, including but not limited to CEQA, NEPA, Endangered Species Act compliance, Clean Water Act compliance, water rights, and Delta Plan consistency.
- There will be several opportunities for public participation, as well as Tribal Government participation, throughout the course of the environmental review and planning process.





Delta Conveyance Project: Purpose and Objectives

Purpose: Develop new diversion and conveyance facilities in the Delta necessary to restore and protect the reliability of SWP water deliveries in a cost-effective manner, consistent with the State's Water Resilience Portfolio.

Objectives:

- **Address** sea level rise and climate change
- **Minimize** water supply disruption due to seismic risk
- **Protect** water supply reliability
- **Provide** operational flexibility to improve aquatic conditions

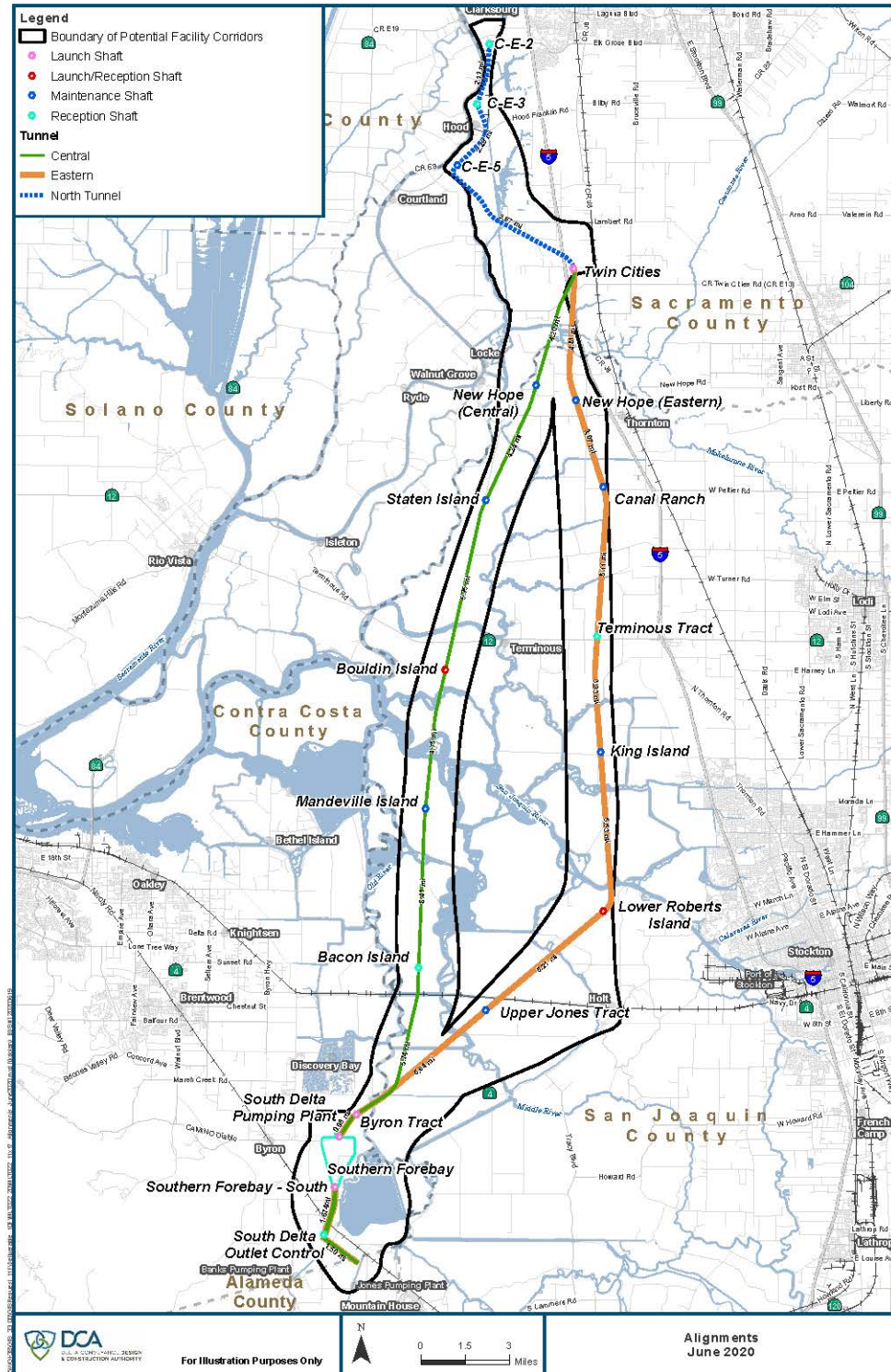


Proposed Project Facilities

- Intake facilities on the Sacramento River
- Tunnel reaches and tunnel shafts
- Pumping plant
- Forebay
- South Delta conveyance facilities

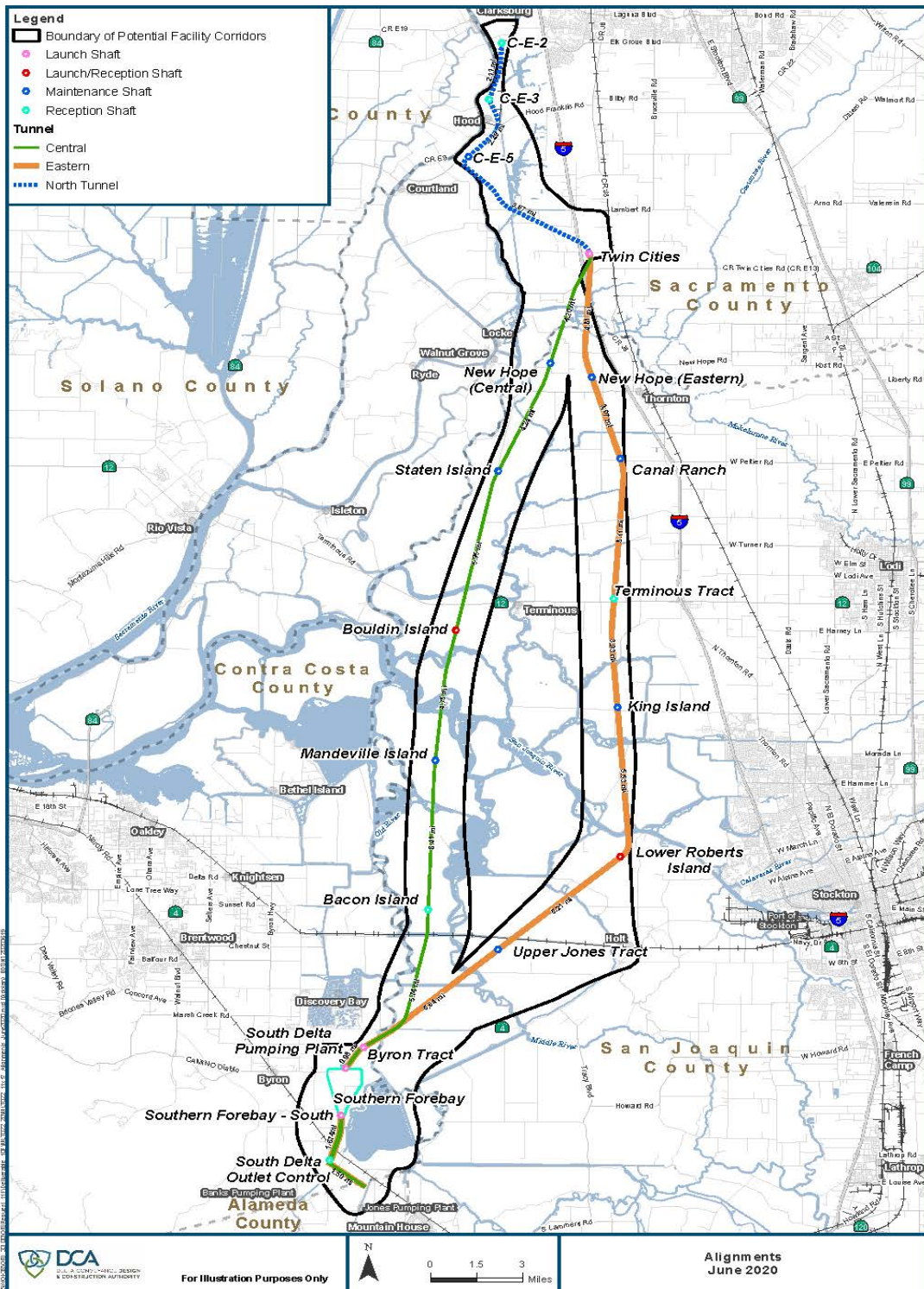
Options:

- A single tunnel is proposed to follow one of two corridors in the central or eastern portion of the Delta.



Proposed Project Capacity

- 6,000 cubic feet-per-second (cfs) combined between two intakes (3,000 cfs each).
- Likely alternatives to the proposed project capacity will likely be considered within the range of 3,000 cfs – 7,500 cfs.



Operations

- A new diversion facility would be operated together with existing South Delta pumping facilities.
- Operations would increase DWR's ability to capture water during high flow events.
- Initial operating criteria will be formulated to assess impacts and mitigation.
- Final project operations would be determined after California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and permitting is complete.



Proposed Project Area

- The proposed project (DCP) does not include operational changes on the Trinity or Klamath rivers.
- DWR heard concerns during scoping about indirect effects to these river systems and will consider the potential for these effects as part of the environmental analysis
- The Bureau of Reclamation (and their Central Valley Project) are not involved in the project





Environmental Impact Report (EIR)

- Inform:** Decision-makers and the public about a proposed project's environmental effects
- Identify:** Ways to avoid or reduce significant environmental impacts
- Prevent:** Environmental damage by requiring implementation of feasible alternatives or mitigation measures
- Foster:** Interagency coordination and public participation
- Show:** That the agency is considering environmental implications of actions prior to making decisions





Key Contents of an EIR

- Project description
- Environmental setting / baseline
- Discussion of significant environmental impacts
- Direct, indirect and cumulative impacts
- Mitigation measures
- Growth-inducing impacts
- Alternatives compared in meaningful detail
- Significant irreversible changes
- Organizations / persons consulted
- Summary





Alternatives

- All alternatives suggested through the scoping process went through the screening filters
 - Filter One: Meets most of the basic project objectives
 - Filter Two: Avoids or substantially lessens an expected significant environmental effect of the proposed project
- Alternative formulation process will be documented in the Draft EIR





Bethany Reservoir Alternative

Worth Further Exploration Because...

- Fewer surface impacts because no construction of a new terminal forebay
- No additional south delta conveyance facilities needed

Filter 1

- Climate Resiliency
- Seismic Resiliency
- Water Supply Reliability
- Operational Resiliency

Filter 2

- Avoids/lessens impacts

Section 404 Application

- Application includes a project description, an assessment of impacts to wetlands and waters, and avoidance and minimization measures.
- Timing: DWR submitted the application early to initiate selection of NEPA lead agency. No permit will be issued until after CEQA, NEPA, and other permitting are complete.
- Project description: the application includes only one alignment because USACE requested that DWR identify one corridor for purposes of preparing a complete application under Section 404/Section 10. This does not constitute a decision; no decision will be made until after environmental process is complete.



National Environmental Policy Act

- USACE is responsible for permitting the proposed project
- NEPA is required before issuing permits
- USACE has released a Notice of Intent that they will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement on the proposed project
- USACE accepted scoping comments through October 20



Environmental Planning and Permitting

DWR is currently initiating coordination and planning on all required state and federal approvals, including but not limited to:

- **NEPA:** USACE is Federal Lead Agency and will be developing an Environmental Impact Statement
- **ESA:** USACE will be consulting with USFWS/NMFS to comply with the Endangered Species Act and obtain Biological Opinions for potential endangered species impacts
- **CWA:** DWR will coordinate with USACE and SWB to obtain Clean Water Act Section 404 and 401 permits for impacts to Waters of the U.S.
- **Water Rights:** DWR will petition for a Change in Point of Diversion from the SWB to obtain a water right for intakes on Sacramento River



Environmental Planning and Permitting (continued)

DWR is currently initiating coordination and planning on all required state and federal approvals, including but not limited to:

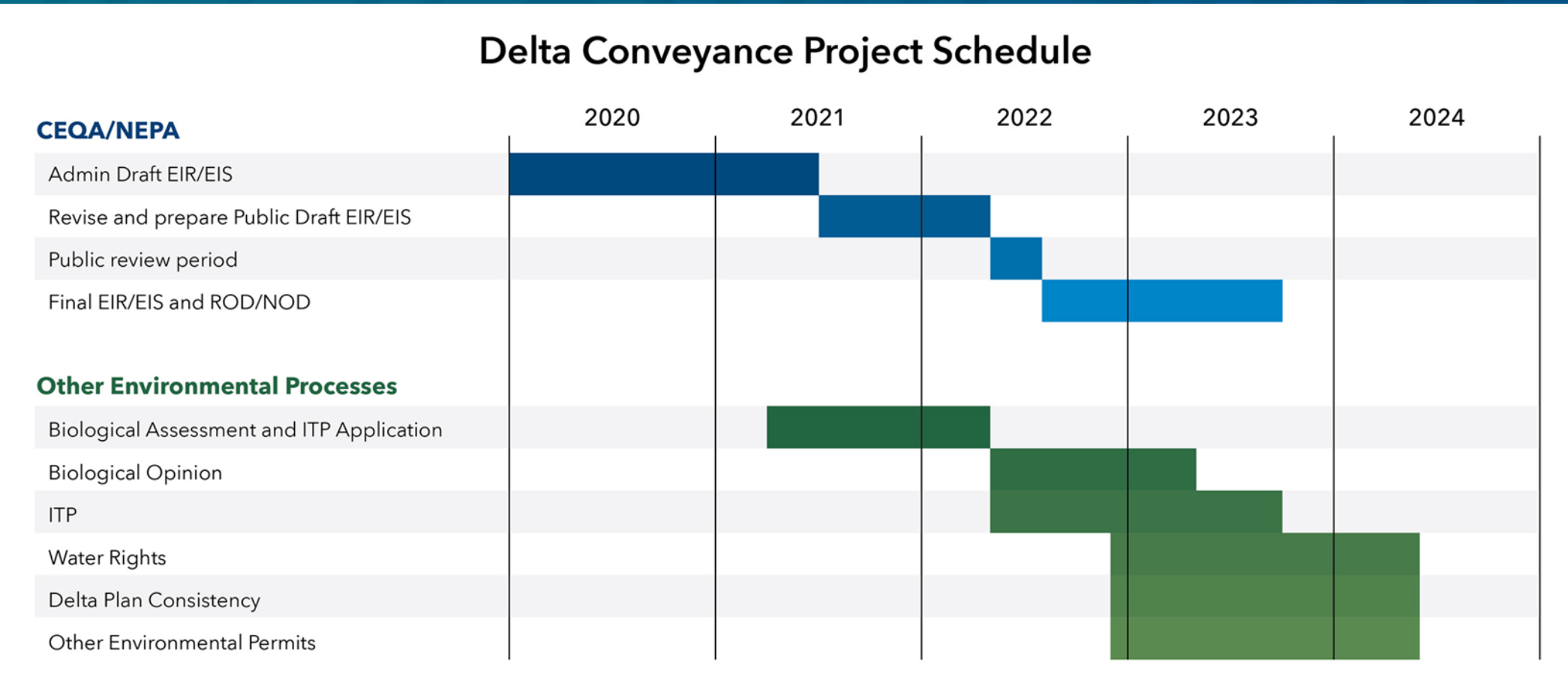
- **RHA:** DWR will coordinate with USACE to obtain a Section 408 permission, under the River and Harbors Act, for potential alterations/modifications of Federally constructed levees
- **Delta Plan Consistency:**
DWR will be submitting a Certification of Consistency with Delta Plan to the Delta Stewardship Council





Updated Project Schedule

Delta Conveyance Project Schedule





Delta Conveyance Design and Construction Authority (DCA)

- At the direction of DWR, the DCA continues to further project design and engineering to support EIR impact analyses, as well as permit acquisition efforts
- Ongoing design work to avoid/minimize construction-related effects
- Preliminary cost assessment developed





Stakeholder Engagement Committee

- The Stakeholder Engagement Committee is a forum for Delta stakeholders to provide input and feedback on technical/engineering issues related to the DCA's current activities
 - Note – the SEC and its meetings are not part of any CEQA process related to the Delta Conveyance project
 - Two Tribal Government Representatives are SEC members
- SEC meets each month to provide input on current project engineering details





Other Planning Activities

- Soil and biological surveys
- Traffic counts
- GIS preparation
- Model development
- Agency, tribal, and EJ outreach





Survey of Delta Environmental Justice Communities

1. Learn about the places and resources important to people

- A robust understanding of these baseline values will improve the CEQA analysis of disproportionate impacts to Disadvantaged Communities in the Delta.

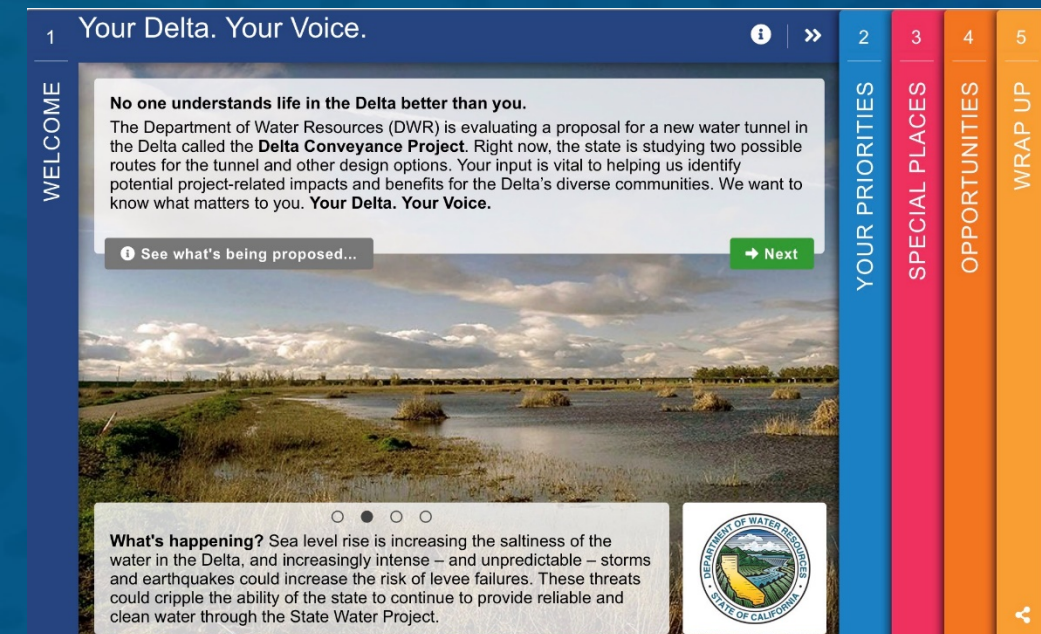
2. Identify potential project-related impacts and benefits for the Delta's diverse communities

- Goal is to identify ways in which the project may affect these places and resources and consider options to reduce these impacts or benefit Disadvantaged Communities in the Delta.



Survey Design

- Collect data and provide education
- Quick and engaging
- Robust marketing to encourage broad participation
- Mobile-friendly, digital surveys are a best practice
- In-person, paper surveys discouraged due to COVID-19



Ways to Stay Informed



water.ca.gov

- Programs
 - State Water Project
 - Delta Conveyance



Project Hotline

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