

**Department of Water Resources Response to Delta Vision Task Force  
Delta Actions Implementation Inquiry  
October 19, 2007**

***Task Force Question:***

**How long would it take to implement various Delta management actions ranging from immediate actions to long-term conveyance; including actions that benefit the ecosystem?**

***DWR Response:***

DWR would like to take this opportunity to share some historical perspective with the Task Force on the issue of implementation times for various Delta actions. In the past, many interim solutions have been attempted in an effort to minimize implementation times, avoid controversy, minimize investment, and/or avoid sunk costs. This approach often involved the deferral of a long-term, comprehensive solution. DWR endorses an approach centered around long-term, more durable and sustainable solutions to Delta issues. Certainly, DWR recommends implementation of early actions and other economically justified actions that move us toward those long-term solutions. However, this needs to occur within the context of implementing the long-term Delta solution that offers more comprehensive and sustainable benefits. An incremental approach composed of small steps then evaluation and another small step towards those goals does not recognize the crisis we face in the Delta from neither a biological productivity standpoint nor a water supply reliability point of view. We need informed long-term decisions that are adaptable and have the best chance for sustaining values of the Delta. These decisions need to address the conflicts between fish and water movement through the Delta and the long-term issues regarding predicted sea level rise, higher peak flood flows, seismic vulnerability and land subsidence.

This new approach is being applied by the Bay Delta Conservation Plan process (BDCP). There are three fundamental implementation phases (beyond immediate actions that are currently underway) by which participants are considering staging the implementation of actions. The three implementation phases are: (1) interim, (2) early implementation, and (3) long-term. Implementation of the interim actions includes the recent court ruling and expected new biological opinions as well as other actions (sometimes referred to as “no regrets” actions). Interim actions are expected to be initiated prior to the completion of the BDCP. The implementation schedules for the Governor’s immediate and interim actions are listed in Tables 1 and 2, respectively. Early implementation actions are taking shape through the BDCP process and will include actions that can be implemented after the BDCP is completed but before a long-term compressive fix is in place. Lastly, the long-term actions are being considered by the BDCP process. Implementation times have been estimated for these potential long-term solutions.

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<b>Table 1 - Immediate Actions</b> Actions underway or beginning immediately	<b>Projected Completion</b>
<b>Help Prevent Spread of Invasive Species</b> - \$1.0 million Department of Fish and Game and Food and Agriculture are leading this effort as an extension of an annual program.	June 2008
<b>Improve Scientific Understanding of Smelt</b> – \$1.145 million This action extends the contract with UCD for three years and provides continued culturing of smelt for test purposes and refuge. Additional facilities are being prepared now for immediate use.	7/30/07
<b>Screen Delta Intakes on Sherman and Twitchell</b> -- \$1.1 million Up to 10 intakes need to be surveyed, designed, and constructed with new fish screens.	Fall 2009
<b>Restore Habitat at Cache Slough</b> -- \$12 million Exact scope of this effort is being discussed with Department of Fish and Game. Mitigation project funded partially by SWP and unknown funds.	Fall 2012
<b>Improve Ability to Respond to Delta Emergencies</b> – \$10 million This is the Early Implementation of the larger Delta Emergency Response effort.	2/28/08
<b>Franks Tract Project</b> -- \$1.2 million Project planning and environmental documentation is underway. Permitting and construction to follow.	Fall 2012

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<b>Table 2 - Interim Delta Actions</b> Part of a Proposed Comprehensive Water Package	<b>Projected Completion</b>
<b>Restore Additional Delta Habitat</b> -- \$48 million Environmental docs for Dutch slough are nearly ready for public review.	Fall 2011
<b>Improve Ability to Respond to Delta Emergencies</b> -- \$74 million This larger effort requires stakeholder coordination and environmental documentation and construction.	June 2009
<b>Offer Water Management Assistance</b> -- \$5 million for 07-08 Additional work above what was already underway lacks funding and positions	Early 2009
<b>Low Flow Screen at SWP Delta Intake</b> -- \$2.25 million for 07-08 study Project needs definition prior to moving into the public scoping process.	Fall 2010
<b>Franks Tract Project</b> -- \$0.3 million for additional staff	12/15/07
<b>Subsidence and Sequestration</b> -- \$3.5 million for 07-08 This additional effort to try rice farming on 180 acres is being evaluated for feasibility.	June 2008

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The BDCP Steering Committee has developed four water conveyance options around which the comprehensive conservation program will be based. They are listed below with their respective estimated implementation times. It is assumed that the actions have received executive and legislative approval and that the current regulatory requirements are static. The implementation estimates include planning, regulatory compliance, land acquisition, design and construction.

Estimates of individual implementation phases for long-term Delta conveyance options (e.g. planning, design and construction) have not been developed. The implementation phases will likely run concurrently and are therefore not additive. Detailed schedules will be developed for the option chosen to be moved forward as part of the BDCP conservation strategy framework.

It is important to remain aware of the several considerations when reviewing the estimated implementation times. The planning, construction, and final implementation of any project that provides a solution for water supply reliability and ecosystem restoration can be difficult to determine. A project of this type and magnitude, in particular, has not been implemented in California for several decades. There are many unforeseeable aspects of project implementation that can affect an implementation timeline (e.g. regulatory and mitigation requirements, financing, land acquisition, potential litigation, below-grade engineering challenges, etc).

**Option 1.** Existing pumping and associated facilities would be used. Restoration opportunities would be primarily in the northern and western Delta.

***Implementation Time:*** Changes in project operations could be implemented immediately. Restoration projects would need to undergo CEQA/NEPA review as well as other permitting. The Department of Fish and Game has provided the Task Force with possible implementation times for such projects.

**Option 2.** Operable physical channel barriers, siphons, and a hydraulic inter-tie would be constructed in the southern Delta to create flow corridors separating Old River in the central Delta from Middle River. Restoration opportunities would include those identified in Option 1 plus additional opportunities in the Old River area.

***Implementation Time:*** Implementation of through-Delta water conveyance could take between 6 – 10 years or longer depending on many factors including implementation staging. Restoration projects would need to undergo CEQA/NEPA review as well as other permitting. The Department of Fish and Game has provided the Task Force with possible implementation times for such projects.

**Option 4.** All SWP and CVP diversions would occur at a new facility on the Sacramento River with a state-of-the-art positive barrier fish screen and water would be conveyed via an isolated aqueduct that would move all SWP/CVP water instead of using the Delta channels. Opportunities for habitat restoration and enhancement under Option 4 could be

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applied Delta-wide. Fluctuating salinity conditions could be implemented with the greatest flexibility and extent among the four options.

***Implementation Time:*** Implementation of isolated conveyance could take from 8 – 10 years assuming innovative planning and construction methods are employed. Restoration projects would need to undergo CEQA/NEPA review as well as other permitting. The Department of Fish and Game has provided the Task Force with possible implementation times for such projects.

**Option 3.** The facilities alterations under this option would include those identified in Option 2, plus Option 4, in a dual water conveyance system. Habitat restoration and enhancement would be similar to that under Option 2.

***Implementation Time:*** The facilities could take from 8 – 10 years to put in place; or longer depending on implementation schedules. Restoration projects would need to undergo CEQA/NEPA review as well as other permitting. The Department of Fish and Game has provided the Task Force with possible implementation times for such projects.