

2014 Winter Season Preview

Summary: The purpose of this agenda item is to provide information regarding the potential for flood conditions in the upcoming year and a status assessment of the Delta's flood readiness. Two panels will provide presentations on: (1) the long range weather forecast for the upcoming year; (2) the benefits and use of short-term forecasts for reservoir operations and decision-making, and; (3) a status assessment of the Delta's flood readiness. This first panel is comprised of representatives from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR). The second panel is comprised of representatives from the Department of Water Resources (DWR), the San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services, and the Sacramento County Office of Emergency Services (OES).

Background

In order to accomplish the Delta Reform Act's requirement that "*the Delta Plan shall attempt to reduce risk to people, property, and state interests in the Delta by promoting effective emergency preparedness, appropriate land uses, and strategic levee investments*" (Water Code Section 85305 (a)), the Council must consider the role and track activities of key federal, state and local agencies responsible for flood emergency preparedness, as well as response and recovery in the Delta. An understanding of potential impacts of weather conditions is also beneficial to planning. For example, while wet conditions can result in flooding and possible levee overtopping in the Delta, a levee breach during drought conditions could be equally devastating due to the lack of available fresh water to maintain water quality in the Delta. Knowing possible weather conditions as far in advance as possible helps to inform both reservoir operations and emergency preparedness.

Today's Briefing

To better inform the Council about these issues and their potential impacts to the Delta, we have organized two panels comprised of representatives from multiple agencies.

Members of the first panel include:

1. Cindy Matthews, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
2. David LeBlanc, US Bureau of Reclamation

Members of the second panel include:

1. Dave Mraz, Department of Water Resources
2. John Paasch, Department of Water Resources
3. Michael Cockrell, San Joaquin County OES
4. Roger Ince, Sacramento County OES

During the panel's presentation or in follow-up discussion, the Council may wish to consider these questions:

1. How can coordinated and/or modified reservoir operations benefit the Delta and water supply during this time of drought?
2. How can the Council contribute to emergency preparedness in the Delta?

Staff Recommendations for Next Steps

1. Utilize outcomes of this panel discussion to guide direction for Council's work to address Water Code Section 85305(a) related to effective emergency preparedness.
2. The Council may provide needed assistance and coordination to participating agencies as these needs are clearly identified.

Contact

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