

Conceptual Alternatives Being Considered for Evaluation in Delta Plan EIR

May 13, 2011

Purpose of Alternatives

- CEQA requires that public agencies evaluate whether policy/project objectives feasibly can be accomplished in ways that minimize harm to the environment
- Therefore, when an agency formulates proposed policies, it must evaluate whether those policies still can be achieved via *alternatives* that are better for the environment

Starting Point for Alternatives

- Fundamentally, an EIR evaluates alternatives to the “Project” being proposed
- For us, the “Project” is the proposed Delta Plan
 - Specifically, the Draft Delta Plan

Alternatives in the Delta Plan EIR in Accordance with CEQA Guidelines (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(a)-(c))

- An EIR shall describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed project
- Which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project
- But would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project
- An EIR is not required to consider alternatives that are infeasible

Conceptual Approach to Alternatives

- Increased Emphasis on Water Supplies from the Delta
 - Less emphasis on local/regional water supplies and more emphasis on providing Delta exports than under Delta Plan
- Increased Emphasis on Delta Ecosystem Restoration
 - More emphasis on aquatic and upland ecosystem restoration than under Delta Plan
- Increased Emphasis on Protection and Enhancement of Delta Communities and Culture
 - More emphasis on protection and maintaining agricultural and recreational uses through levee improvements and less ecosystem restoration

Agenda Item: 10
Meeting Date: May 12-13, 2011
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SUMMARY OF CONCEPTUAL DELTA PLAN EIR ALTERNATIVES (Working Draft May 10, 2011)

	Proposed Project - Delta Plan	Alternative 1 - Increased Emphasis on Use of Delta for Reliable Water Supplies	Alternative 2 - Increased Emphasis on Delta Ecosystem Restoration	Alternative 3 - Increased Emphasis on Protection and Enhancement of Delta Communities and Culture
Reliable Water Supply	<p>As Compared to Existing Conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Increased Emphasis on Local and Regional Water Supplies * Reduced Reliance on Delta Exports * Delta Conveyance: Dual Conveyance - Capacity 3,000 - 15,000 cfs, Range of Delta Flow Criteria with Increased Emphasis on Delta Ecosystem as compared to Operations described in the Progress Report on the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (11/18/10) * New Storage Facilities: Emphasis on Local Storage plus some Major Storage 	<p>As Compared to Proposed Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Reduced Emphasis on Local and Regional Water Supplies * Increased Reliance on Delta Exports * Delta Conveyance: Dual Conveyance - Capacity 9,000 - 15,000 cfs, Range of Delta Flow Criteria with Increased Emphasis on Delta Water Deliveries (similar to Operations described in the Progress Report on the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (11/18/10)) * New Storage Facilities: Reduced Emphasis on Local Storage and Increased Emphasis on Major Storage 	<p>As Compared to Proposed Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Increased Emphasis on Local and Regional Water Supplies * Reduced Reliance on Delta Exports * Delta Conveyance: Isolated Conveyance - Capacity 3,000 - 9,000 cfs, Range of Delta Flow Criteria with Increased Emphasis on Ecosystem Habitat * New Storage Facilities: Similar to Proposed Project but with Increased Emphasis to Improve Ecosystem 	<p>As Compared to Proposed Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Increased Emphasis on Local and Regional Water Supplies (same as Alternative 2) * Reduced Reliance on Delta Exports (same as Alternative 2) * Conveyance: Through-Delta - Capacity 9,000 - 15,000 cfs, Operations with Increased Range of Delta Flow Criteria with Increased Emphasis on Water Quality and Flows for In-Delta Drinking Water and Agricultural Water Users * New Storage Facilities: Similar to Proposed Project but with Increased Emphasis to Improve Delta Flows and Water Quality
Delta Ecosystem Restoration	<p>As Compared to Existing Conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Increased Emphasis on Ecosystem Restoration - More Emphasis than described in Progress Report on the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (11/18/10) * Increased Emphasis on Control of Non-Native Invasive Species 	<p>As Compared to Proposed Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Decreased Emphasis on Ecosystem Habitat Restoration (similar to that described in Progress Report on the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (11/18/10)) * Increased Emphasis on Control of Non-Native Invasive Species 	<p>As Compared to Proposed Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Increased Emphasis on Ecosystem Habitat Restoration * Increased Emphasis on Control of Non-Native Invasive Species 	<p>As Compared to Proposed Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Reduced Emphasis on Ecosystem Restoration (generally less than that described in Progress Report on the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (11/18/10)) * Reduced Emphasis on Control of Non-Native Invasive Species (same as Existing Conditions)
Improve Water Quality	<p>As Compared to Existing Conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Aggressive Schedule for Completion of Flow Criteria for the Delta and Upstream Tributaries, and possibly Flow Objectives, and Increased Emphasis Total Maximum Daily Limits for Possible Contaminants - especially Pyrethroids 	<p>Same as Proposed Project</p>	<p>Same as Proposed Project</p>	<p>As Compared to Proposed Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Less Aggressive Schedule for Completion of Flow Criteria, Flow Objectives, and Total Maximum Daily Limits
Reduce Risk of Floods in the Delta	<p>As Compared to Existing Conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Increased Emphasis on Levee Construction * Design Criteria that are More Stringent than Existing Conditions for Agricultural Areas and Residential Areas with less than 10,000 residents 	<p>As Compared to Proposed Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Same Emphasis on Levee Construction as Proposed Project * Design Criteria More Related to Delta Export Water Quality Protection 	<p>As Compared to Proposed Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Reduced Emphasis on Levee Construction due to increased inundation of Lands for Ecosystem Restoration * Design Criteria More Related to Ecosystem Protection 	<p>As Compared to Proposed Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Increased Emphasis on Levee Construction to protect Existing Land Uses * Design Criteria More Related to Protection of Delta Land Uses and Economic Values

NOTE: Range of Alternatives also will include the No Project Alternative

Proposed Next Steps for EIR

- June Council Meeting – authorize publication of DEIR for public review and comment
- Late June/early July – publish DEIR for 45-day public/stakeholder review and comment
- July – hearing to take public comment on DEIR
- September/October – respond to DEIR comments; revise EIR if necessary; post responses/revisions
- November – Council considers Final EIR for certification as being complete and consistent with CEQA

Conclusion

- Questions from the Council?