



Memorandum

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Date: August 24, 2022
To: Mayor and Council Members
From: Michael Rogers, City Manager 
Via: Kul Sharma, Operations & Utilities Department
CC: Midori Lichtwardt, Assistant City Manager
Subject: Delta Conveyance Project Draft EIR for Public Review and Comments

In early July, the State of California (State) released the subject draft EIR for public review and comments. The draft EIR is for State's latest tunnel project involving installing a 33-foot diameter pipe from Sacramento River to Byron Bethany forebay where the delta water is pumped into the Delta Mendota Canal (DMC) and California Aqueduct (CA). The proposed 33 feet diameter water pipeline is a smaller version of the previous ambitious periphery canal project proposed in the mid 1990's. Due to concerns about potential degradation of the delta ecosystem and fisheries and strong opposition from Delta interest groups, neighboring cities and counties, the scope of the project was reduced to install two 33 ft diameter pipes during 2010-2011.

The projects is now further curtailed to one 33 ft diameter water pipeline from Sacramento River to the Byron Bethany forebay. The project as proposed will install a 45-mile-long pipeline approximately 17-20 ft deep. The project will also restore 3,500 acres of wetland to offset damages to the delta. The estimated construction cost of the project is \$10 billion, and the project construction is projected to start in 2028.

There always have been concerns that the additional water delivered to Delta from any of the above projects will be pumped to Southern California who overwhelmingly support this project. The additional water will be delivered to Southern California through DMC and CA. There will be a marginal improvement to the quality of water received from DMC and CA but will not significantly improve the City of Tracy's water quality.

State has not identified the sources of funds for construction of this project at this time except that there could be a statewide bond measure to finance the project. However, it is assumed that ultimately full or partial construction cost of this project will be shared among recipients of Delta water from DMC or CA. The City of Tracy receives approximately half of its water supply from DMC.

State is presently soliciting comments to the draft EIR of the project. All of the project area including the delta is outside the City's jurisdiction and sphere of influence. The project impacts on delta ecosystem and fisheries are specialized in nature and the South Delta Water Agency and

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Delta Counties Coalition (DCC), County of Sacramento, San Joaquin, Contra Costa, Solano, and Yuba counties are already working with their consultants to analyze the impacts of this project and submit comments to the draft EIR. Staff recommends the City support and echo comments of these agencies. In addition, comments on such issues are expected from various agencies and interest groups. However, staff will review the draft EIR and will provide comments at a generic level. The responsibility of sharing the cost will be addressed separately when state makes that determination. The draft EIR generally addresses the environmental impacts and mitigations.

DCC also intends to adopt resolutions from the member counties Board of Supervisors to recommend State to invest in restoring delta ecosystem, improving, and maintaining the delta levees, reducing reliance on delta water, increasing water storage, reusing and capturing the storm water, etc. instead of continuing the proposed one tunnel or pipeline project. DCC further recommends the cities and irrigation districts located near delta also adopt similar resolutions from their legislative bodies. Staff will recommend council adopt such a resolution as well within the next two months. I hope this detailed memo provides you the significant information related to the state's Delta Conveyance Project. Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information.

Thank you.