

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

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(916) 653-5791



April 21, 2015

Mr. Jim Starr
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Bay-Delta Region
2109 Arch Airport Road
Stockton, California 95215

RE: Refinements/Updates to the Notification of a Streambed Alteration Agreement Pursuant to Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code for the Emergency Drought Barrier Project

Dear Mr. Starr:

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) is submitting this letter to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife in order to comply with Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code, and is intended to highlight project refinements/updates for the Emergency Drought Barrier Project (EDB or Project).

In spring 2014, DWR submitted a notification for a Streambed Alteration Agreement (SAA) to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). Since the submittal, DWR has refined and updated several project components, which include the following:

- **Number of Barriers:** The Project consists of placing one rock barrier–False River–designed to control saltwater intrusion into the Sacramento River-San Joaquin River Delta (Delta) with reduced reservoir releases while continuing to meet federal and state regulatory requirements.
- **Geotechnical Exploration:** Geologic exploration would potentially occur within the 5-year term. Geotechnical exploration is required to reduce uncertainty associated with the underlying ground that would support the barriers, locate poor foundation soils like peat, and better estimate engineering design parameters.
- **CEQA and Basin Plan:** The Governor issued an Executive Order in March 2015. The Executive Order suspends Division 13 (commencing with Section 21000) of the Public Resources Code (related to the CEQA) and regulations adopted pursuant to that Division, as well as Section 13247 (related to compliance with approved or adopted water quality control plans) and Chapter 3 of Part 3 (commencing with Section 85225 related to preparing a written certification of consistency with the Delta Plan) of the Water Code.

Mr. Jim Starr
April 21, 2015
Page 2

Please note that the bullet points only highlight the significant project refinements/updates. Please refer to the enclosed Incidental Take Permit Application (ITP) (April 2015) for a complete updated project description.

In order for CDFW to issue an SAA, DWR has updated the ITP application (Attachment A), Form FG 2023 (Attachment B). For convenience, DWR has also provided electronically the Aquatic Biological Assessment (BA) (Attachment C), Terrestrial BA (Attachment D), and revised design drawings (Attachment E).

We appreciate your expedient processing of the SAA notification so that DWR may commence installation in May 2015.

We look forward to working with you to obtain an incidental take permit and streambed alteration agreement for this significant Project to protect the Delta from impaired water quality. If you have any questions or need further information please contact me at (916) 653-9883 or Jacob.mcquirk@water.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Jacob McQuirk, Project Manager
Emergency Drought Barriers Project

Enclosures

cc: Mr. Scott Wilson
Regional Manager
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
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