

Reinitiation of Consultation on Central Valley Project and State Water Project Coordinated Operations Science Peer Reviews

About the Document

Title: Science Peer Review of the Aquatic Sections of the Draft Biological Opinions for the Reinitiation of Consultation on the Coordinated Operations of the Central Valley Project (CVP) and State Water Project (SWP)

Subject and Purpose: The purpose of the Science Peer Review of the Biological Opinions for the Reinitiation of Consultation on the Coordinated Operations of the CVP and SWP is to provide the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) with an independent scientific evaluation of sections of the draft FWS' Biological Opinion and draft NMFS' Biological Opinion (BiOps) for all federal Endangered Species Act-listed aquatic species and designated critical habitat. FWS and NMFS requested the reviews to evaluate the use of best available scientific and commercial information and whether the draft BiOp adequately analyzes the effects of the Proposed Action on federally listed aquatic species and designated critical habitat.

About the Peer Review Process

Type of review: Coordinated individual letters

Number of Reviewers: Six (anticipated). Three for each BiOp.

Panel expertise: Expert qualifications included academic and advisory work in relevant fields including aquatic and fisheries science and hydrodynamics.

Selection of Peer Reviewers: Reviewers were selected by FWS and NMFS based on their qualifications, recommendations, past involvement in independent peer reviews in the Bay-Delta and previous review of an earlier draft of the BiOp.

Schedule for Peer Review: Peer review will begin July 31, 2019 and end August 9, 2019.

About Public Participation

Opportunities for the Public: We will provide the draft documents to the peer reviewers and the Bureau of Reclamation. In addition, the Bureau of Reclamation will provide the documents to the State of California and public water agencies, as required under the Water Infrastructure Improvement Act for the Nation. In addition, we will make the reviews available to members of the public if requested. USFWS and NMFS will take the peer review findings and incorporate into the final BiOps, which are expected to be finalized in August 2019.

Contact: Kaylee Allen, FWS, Bay-Delta Fish and Wildlife Office, Kaylee_allen@fws.gov