

DWR and Reclamation Recirculate Draft Environmental Document for Fremont Weir Adult Fish Passage Modification Project

From the Department of Water Resources and the Bureau of Reclamation:



Fremont Weir (by Patrick Huber)

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) are recirculating for public review the Biological Resources portion (Section 3.5) of the draft Initial Study and Environmental Assessment (IS/EA) and proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the proposed Fremont Weir Adult Fish Passage Modification Project, located in the northern portion of the Yolo Bypass, approximately 8 miles northeast of Woodland in Yolo County. The draft IS/EA and proposed MND was previously circulated for public review and comment February 3 through March 6, 2017 (State Clearinghouse Number 201702212).

The proposed project is being carried out to meet requirements in the 2009 National Marine Fisheries Service's Biological Opinion and Conference Opinion on the Long-Term Operations of the Central Valley Project and State Water Project. The Yolo Bypass, a prominent feature of California's State Plan of Flood Control, provides valuable rearing habitat for downstream migrating juvenile salmon while also providing a fish migration corridor for adult anadromous fish. Structures within the Yolo Bypass have delayed and prevented adult special-status fish species, such as Chinook salmon, steelhead, and green sturgeon from migrating upstream through the Yolo Bypass and returning to the Sacramento River.

The purpose of the proposed project is to improve fish passage at the Fremont Weir and within the Tule Canal. The project would modify an existing fish ladder at the Fremont Weir and improve fish passage within the channel both upstream and downstream of the Fremont Weir. In addition, one downstream agricultural road crossing would be removed and another such crossing would be replaced with a structure that provides improved fish passage within the Tule Canal. Construction is scheduled to begin in the summer of 2017.

The Biological Resources portion of the document is being recirculated to provide public review of changes related to adverse impacts to sensitive species and habitat. Mitigation measures have also been changed to address these impacts. Changes in the draft IS/EA are indicated by underline for new text and strikethrough for deleted text.

The draft IS/EA and proposed MND have been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act and the National Environmental Policy Act. Public comments are only being accepted on the Biological Resources portion of the draft IS/EA, which is available for public review from Monday, May 15, through Tuesday, June 13, 2017.

Copies of the recirculated draft IS/EA and proposed MND, as well as the original draft documents, are available at:

- http://www.water.ca.gov/environmentalservices/yolobypass/projects/yolo_fremont.cfm
- https://www.usbr.gov/mp/nepa/nepa_projdetails.cfm?Project_ID=12670
- <https://www.usbr.gov/mp/BayDeltaOffice/yolo-bypass.html>
- A printed copy is available to view during business hours (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) at the DWR office located at 3500 Industrial Blvd. in West Sacramento and Reclamation's Bay-Delta Office at 801 I St., Suite 140, in Sacramento.

Please submit comments in writing or email to either:

- Karen Enstrom, California Department of Water Resources, 3500 Industrial Blvd., West Sacramento, CA 95691 or Enstrom@water.ca.gov.
- Ben Nelson, Bureau of Reclamation, Bay-Delta Office, 801 I St., Suite 140, Sacramento, CA 95814 or bcnelson@usbr.gov.
- Written comments must be received by close of business Tuesday, June 13, 2017.