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Press Release

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Collaborative Science and Research Efforts Lead to More Effective Delta Ecosystem Management

New Science, Monitoring of Delta Smelt Support Adaptive Management of Water Operations

Sacramento, CA – The State Water Contractors (SWC) support the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service’s (USFWS) decision regarding new actions to continue protections for endangered species and more effectively manage water for the State Water Project and Central Valley Project this fall. Based on new research and the best available science, regulatory agencies are adjusting one of the most restrictive water supply regulations, known as Fall X2, without reducing protections for Delta Smelt.

“We’re glad to see years of collaboration, research and science driving smart solutions for endangered species that also support California’s water supply,” said Jennifer Pierre, general manager of the State Water Contractors. “Our water agencies are committed to the health of the Delta and reliable water supplies for people, businesses and farms.”

As background, X2 represents the location where freshwater from the Sierra watershed and saltwater from the San Francisco Bay meet in the Delta. It has been hypothesized that moving this intersection of salt and fresh waters would lead to increased Delta Smelt populations. New scientific research, based on years of collaborative science efforts, has been underway to address this question, and the USFWS is using this research to update its older decisions.

Recent work by Delta scientists have identified several possible causes of the smelt population decline, including a sharp decrease in food availability in the Delta, invasive plants and aquatic animals, and toxic runoff from pesticides.

“We are dedicated to continuing our research efforts and collaboration with regulatory agencies and universities to improve our understanding of Delta Smelt, so we better protect the Delta’s endangered species and California’s water supplies,” Pierre said.

**Jennifer Pierre
General Manager
State Water Contractors**

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The State Water Contractors is a statewide, non-profit association of 27 public agencies from Northern, Central and Southern California that purchase water under contract from the California State Water Project. Collectively the State Water Contractors deliver water to more than 27 million residents throughout the state and more than 750,000 acres of agricultural land. For more information on the State Water Contractors, please visit www.swc.org.