

## **Voluntary Agreements & State Water Project**

The Voluntary Agreements (VAs) between state, federal and local water agencies represent a transformational new approach to water management in the Delta and our rivers. Below is an overview of what it means for State Water Project (SWP) contractors.

### **Benefits of the VAs to the SWP**

- A watershed wide approach, bringing in more parties and resources to address the needs of the Delta
- Creates a path to resolve ongoing litigation related to state and federal endangered species acts
- Centers on science-based decision-making for flows and habitat restoration
- Creates a space for collaboration and creativity within the bounds of available resources
- Stabilizes Delta operations for at least 8 years
- Protects SWP reliability
- Avoids adoption of an unimpaired flow requirement by the State Water Board for the SWP

### **Flows**

- Operations continue under the Incidental Take Permit until final approval of the VAs by the State Water Board
- Once approved, the VAs flows include:
  - 62.5 TAF of forgone exports in dry and below normal years (same for CVP)
  - 87.5 TAF of forgone exports in above normal years (same for CVP)
  - 30 TAF in dry, below normal above normal years (compensated from VAs program by willing sellers)

### **Funding**

- \$10/AF diversion fee over the 8-year term of the VAs
  - \$7 to purchase water
  - \$3 to support the habitat and science activities
- \$10/AF diversion fee for 'early implementation' of the VAs until VAs are signed (beginning date TBD)



## Participation

- Participating public water agencies will continue development of the VAs program based on the term sheet, including early implementation actions, VAs assessment metrics and details of the commitments
- A systemwide governance committee will be established during implementation to coordinate across the watershed
- A Delta committee will be established during implementation, and is currently envisioned to be managed through the Collaborative Science and Adaptive Management Program (CSAMP)

## Next Steps

- Participating public water agencies will take the MOU and term sheet to their Boards for approval
- Once approved, the VAs proposal goes to the State Water Board for scientific assessment, environmental review and public input
- The VAs proposal will be analyzed by the State Water Board as an alternative to the Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan update
- If approved by the Water Board, the VAs will become the new Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan and will be implemented through binding agreements with the Department of Water Resources and participating water agencies

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