

Tuolumne River Voluntary Agreement

October 3, 2022

Stanislaus County Ag Advisory Board



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Background

- On December 12, 2018, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWB) adopted amendments to the Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan (Plan) and Final Substitute Environmental Document (SED).
- The Plan includes new and revised narrative and numeric flow and water quality objectives for the Lower San Joaquin River (LSJR), including the Stanislaus, Tuolumne, and Merced Rivers, a revised salinity water quality objective in the southern Delta, and a program of implementation to achieve the objectives.
- SWB also recognized and encouraged ongoing negotiations between interested stakeholders and various State agencies to achieve voluntary agreements (VA) to “incorporate a mix of flow and non-flow measures that meet or exceed the new and revised water quality objectives and protect fish and wildlife beneficial uses, and to present those voluntary agreements to the State Water Board for its review as soon as feasible.”

VA Negotiations

- Over the last few years, MID along with our Tuolumne River partners, Turlock Irrigation District (TID) and City and County of San Francisco (CCSF), have actively pursued a VA with the State.
- Governor Newsom confirmed intention to complete efforts to reach VAs.
- March 1, 2019 – California Department of Fish & Wildlife and Department of Water Resources entered into planning agreement for proposing project description and procedures for finalization of VAs.
- March 29, 2022 – Several State agencies along with the State and Federal Water Contractors and many Sacramento Valley water agencies signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to advance VAs to update and implement the Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan.
- August 31, 2022 – Tuolumne River partners negotiated a draft term sheet for a VA with the State that would allow MID, TID, and CCSF to become signatories to the March 2022 MOU.
- Signing the MOU is a positive step forward, but it's not the last step in the VA process.

Next Steps

- State to craft and publicly release the Tuolumne River-specific addendum based on points that have been agreed upon in principle by all agencies.
- MID and Tuolumne River partners to participate in workgroups to develop a detailed, Tuolumne-specific VA, subject to adoption by the SWB, that would replace the Bay-Delta Plan Update.
- Any final VA to be reviewed and approved by MID Board.
- Ongoing related litigation to continue in parallel until a final VA replaces the SWB's Bay-Delta Plan Update.

Questions?