

SEC Member Question/Comment Tracking Log Updated 08.26.2020

ID #	Date	Requester	Questions/Comments	Response	Responder	Response Date	Response Status
10.01	7/22/2020	Jim Wallace	Is the Through-Delta alternative the same as the No-Project alternative under CEQA? It was said in the presentation that CEQA is a methodology to inform decision making but DWR is the project proponent, the lead agency, and the decision maker. Will the decisions being made be fair and not heavily politicized?	The alternatives in the "Through Delta" category include specific levee or structural improvements within the Delta. The purpose of the EIR is to clearly analyze and document the environmental impacts and mitigation for the proposed project and alternatives; DWR's goal is to make this document transparent and understandable for consideration during decision-making. The Governor will make a final decision that is informed by the EIR.	Carrie Buckman	8/26/2020	Responded
10.02	7/22/2020	Gil Cosio	A comment was made to move intakes to Sherman Island and it's not shown on the presentation with dual conveyances or isolated conveyance. Was it put somewhere else?	The Alternative Points of Diversion alternative grouping includes different options for diversion locations, such as Sherman Island. The concept for a Sherman Island diversion is also similar to the Western Delta Intake concept discussed during the alternatives presentation.	Carrie Buckman	8/26/2020	Responded
10.03	7/22/2020	Barbara Barrigan-Parrilla	On the isolated conveyance alternatives, does that include the dismantling of the existing pumps and their infrastructure?	Some of the isolated conveyance concepts would continue use of Banks Pumping Plant but would only accept water from a new diversion facility and not continue diversions from Clifton Court.	Carrie Buckman	8/26/2020	Responded
10.04	7/22/2020	Dr. Mel Lytle	The SEC's interaction with DWR has been limited to design and construction issues, with no discussion of CEQA. Now, the SEC is being presented a preview of CEQA alternatives and being asked for our comments. How will these comments be handled? Are they actual CEQA document comments that will be reported based on feedback from the SEC? It would be helpful to understand the flavor of this discussion.	DWR will ask the DCA to design alternatives that move forward for more detailed analysis in the EIR. The DCA anticipates working with the SEC on any new alternatives in the same way that it has presented conceptual designs to date. It would be difficult to involve the SEC in alternative design if the SEC does not understand the context of the origin of this alternative. Today's presentation is an opportunity for transparency of the process and dialogue, but the comments are not a part of the official CEQA process.	Carrie Buckman	8/26/2020	Responded
10.05	7/22/2020	Dr. Mel Lytle	Discussing CEQA now, in a way, disqualifies earlier discussion where individuals wanted to discuss CEQA components but were forbidden to. It seems unfair that the SEC has been asked to stay within certain parameters for discussion, then that suddenly changes based on what you want for discussion going forward. It seems irregular if you want genuine input from the SEC that this is sprung on us.	DWR and the DCA have committed to being transparent during the planning process. This conversation is contextualizing the DCA's work. DWR will provide the DCA with alternatives to analyze and providing some additional information is helpful to the conversation. The goal of the presentation was to give opportunity to everyone to understand the work being done at greater depth.	Carrie Buckman	8/26/2020	Responded
10.06	7/22/2020	Sean Wirth	Since the Central Tunnel and the Eastern Tunnel are being so highly considered, will alternatives be considered for the various components of the infrastructure? Will the SEC be considering alternatives for intakes and various shaft sites? This doesn't necessarily work for the intakes. There is no input for the intake siting.	The process to refine site locations has been taking place within the SEC. As DWR moves through the environmental process, the analysis may identify environmental effects that could be avoided by moving sites. There will be an iterative process to consider any changes that may occur as part of this process.	Carrie Buckman	8/26/2020	Responded
10.07	7/22/2020	Karen Mann	From where did these lists of alternatives derive?	The main source of alternatives was scoping comments. Additional alternatives were identified from past projects and technical experts working on the project.	Carrie Buckman	8/26/2020	Responded
10.08	7/22/2020	Cecilia Giacomini	A yellow pipeline going across Sherman Island was shown for the Garamendi alternative, does that go under or over the island? My concern is that the yellow alternative will go right under the largest community on Sherman Island. Will it impact the surface?	The yellow and orange lines are pipelines. In construction and as currently contemplated, the pipeline trench would be excavated, the pipe would be installed, and the trench would be covered. The pipeline would tunnel under waterways. Construction could affect surface features and would be considered in the EIR.	Carrie Buckman	8/26/2020	Responded

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10.09	7/22/2020	Gil Cosio	Removing Sherman because of water quality impacts due to sea level rise, is it assumed that state and federal water projects will not be responsible for maintaining water quality in the Delta in the future, as they are now?	The assumption is that regulations about water quality in the Delta will continue to govern operations. As the sea level rises, the ability of the CVP and SWP to modify operations to meet requirements may be more limited. Sherman Island may have increased concern in the future, which makes it not as desirable of a location when trying to be resilient to climate change and sea level rise.	Carrie Buckman	8/26/2020	Responded
10.10	7/22/2020	Barbara Barrigan-Parrilla	What data are you using for seismic resilience? This has been a hard issue for the people in the Delta. It feels like the data being used is not recent and does not deal with proximity of earthquakes or past tests results of active fault lines. Can you discuss all the parameters for determining seismic resilience? Has the DCA considered or updated those standards so that it's using criteria that's more comprehensive? In regards to the statement about DWR being the operator of the State Water Project, how does this match up with the DWR's mission including being the provider and steward of water resources for all of California? That also includes people that do not draw water from the State Water Project.	For alternative screening, seismic resilience is being considered at a conceptual level. More detailed evaluation and data will be included in the EIR. At this point, the alternative formulation process is considering whether an alternative, at a conceptual level, has the potential to provide seismic resilience for the SWP. In other words, if there is an earthquake in or near the Delta that causes a water quality problem, does the alternative help keep the SWP operational or help the SWP return to operations as soon as possible? DWR's mission is "to sustainably manage the water resources of California, in cooperation with other agencies, to benefit the state's people and protect, restore, and enhance the natural and human environments." DWR considers many projects to satisfy this mission. For the Delta Conveyance Project, DWR's goal is to maintain function of the SWP into the future when faced with multiple challenges.	Carrie Buckman	8/26/2020	Responded
10.11	7/22/2020	Douglas Hsia	Could the Garamendi alternative reduce the impact on farmers' use of water on the Sacramento River?	It is a constraint for all alternatives that they cannot affect the water rights of downstream water users. If a project moves forward, the next step would be to petition the State Water Resources Control Board to change the SWP point of diversion (by adding another diversion location). In order to approve a project and stated at a very high level, DWR needs to document that the project would not negatively impact water rights for legal users of water. The EIR will also consider potential effects to water supplies.	Carrie Buckman	8/26/2020	Responded
10.12	7/22/2020	Barbara Barrigan-Parrilla	Based on this evaluation, it's been decided that these alternatives don't address the water quality criteria for the SWP but there is no description about how water quality challenges are going to be addressed in the Delta. Impacts from operations haven't been addressed yet. Completing analysis for the SWP is disallowing for the consideration from the non-SWP users that have equal duty to be protected. Confused that impacts on water quality aren't a part of the analysis.	The EIR will analyze the potential for the proposed project and alternatives to adversely effect water quality based primarily on standards set by the State Water Resources Control Board. The EIR will discuss water quality concerns and assess if there is a potential for alternatives to worsen conditions, consistent with those standards. If there is a potential to cause significant impacts to water quality, the EIR will include mitigation measures to avoid or reduce that significant effect.	Carrie Buckman	8/26/2020	Responded
10.13	7/22/2020	Jim Wallace	The No-Tunnel alternative doesn't meet climate or seismic resiliency. It seems that water will only be taken when it's available. If these alternatives don't meet the project objectives, does that mean that SWP water will be taken out of the intakes in the north Delta to ensure mitigation of water quality issues? It seems contradictory. This is going to become an operational issue that has yet to be answered.	Dual conveyance alternatives (such as the proposed project) would continue operations of both the existing south Delta pumping facilities and a new diversion facility in coordination. Providing an alternate point of diversion would allow SWP diversions to continue at times that south Delta pumping is constrained. Dual conveyance will be studied further through operational modeling.	Carrie Buckman	8/26/2020	Responded

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10.14	7/22/2020	Karen Mann	It seems that that the concern is more for the people in the south, rather than for the people who moved here intentionally because this water provides life. The scope of the decision making includes water quality. The SEC needs to know the definition. The presentation mentioned that this would only be used occasionally. It's concerning that this would be expensive to only use it on occasion.	Existing water quality concerns are very important but it is not an objective of the proposed project; the State Water Resources Control Board has responsibility for regulating water quality in California. Improving water quality is not a project objective for the Delta Conveyance Project, but the EIR will analyze potential water quality impacts (and mitigate potential significant impacts if feasible). Project operational criteria will be developed in coordination with the fishery agencies to avoid or minimize potential significant impacts to sensitive species. These criteria likely will limit the amount of water that could be diverted at a new diversion point based on, among other things, flow in the Sacramento River. To focus back on the project objectives, the purpose of this project is to make the SWP more resilient to a future that has risks of potential seismic activity, climate change, or sea level rise.	Carrie Buckman	8/26/2020	Responded
10.15	7/22/2020	David Gloski	It's concerning that this alternative was just eliminated from the start from future analysis. It seems like the focus of this project is to keep state water running, rather than address larger environmental issues. There is the ability to affect algae problem, with less water flowing through that will be more of a problem. It seems like the desire to not keep the current conveyance and just jump into the next.	See previous response.	Carrie Buckman	8/26/2020	Responded
10.16	7/22/2020	Cecilia Giacomia	With the existing message of removing water from the Delta and sending it south, the water quality is already degraded around Sherman Island due to excessive removal of water. How will it be ensured that this doesn't worsen? How will the people there and their water be protected?	The EIR will include an extensive modeling effort to assess potential water quality effects throughout the Delta. Modeling will indicate if an alternative could significantly affect water quality near Sherman Island or other locations. If the assessment identifies the potential for significant impacts, the EIR will evaluate feasible mitigation measures to avoid or reduce these effects. All feasible mitigation must be adopted consistent with the requirements of CEQA.	Carrie Buckman	8/26/2020	Responded
10.17	7/22/2020	Michael Moran	Specific to the Bethany Alternative, is the size of the existing reservoir going to increase? Does the function or purpose then change? If more capacity is offered for this particular project, might that mean that water has to be diverted in a more consistent fashion? Water would not be able to be stored as much at Bethany than it would at a Forebay, therefore the tunnel has to be operating more often?	Based on preliminary considerations, it does not look like Bethany Reservoir would need to expand to accommodate the Bethany Alternative. The DCA is just starting to study this alternative and will share more information with the SEC as it is developed.	Carrie Buckman	8/26/2020	Responded
10.18	7/22/2020	Anna Swenson	Why are the sensitive receptors in Hood, Courtland, or other areas less valuable or less considered than those in Clarksburg? It seems like these alternatives were stacked up with rationale as to why they couldn't be considered. How does any of this lessen the dependence on the Delta? There are no eliminations of alternatives or intakes, so how can the dependence on the Delta be rationalized?	The distance from Intake 5 to Courtland is greater than the distance from Intake 2 to Clarksburg, so the sensitive receptor concerns regarding noise would not be the same. Hood, unfortunately, has the potential to be affected by the noise from Intake 3, so the DCA is working on design considerations to minimize noise and construction impacts to the maximum extent possible. The issue of reduced reliance will be evaluated during the environmental permitting process.	Carrie Buckman	8/26/2020	Responded

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10.19	7/22/2020	Barbara Barrigan-Parrilla	The No-Project alternative is still going to be analyzed because it is a requirement under CEQA. The main complaint from the SEC at the past meeting was that the analysis for the No-Tunnel alternative dropped things and dismissed them as to why they won't work. If there is still a No-Tunnel alternative, will it include things that the SEC believes should be included? Or will everything be analyzed status quo? This will end up in the same fight from four years ago. The No-Tunnel included new fish screens and levee repairs. If the analysis is done because it is a requirement but the SEC's requests are dismissed, will it end up back to square one?	DWR is working to identify projects to include in the No Project Alternative that could be considered if the proposed Delta Conveyance Project or Alternatives are not approved. Some projects, like levee improvements, are part of the baseline and are planned to move forward with or without the proposed Delta Conveyance Project. The No Project Alternative will not focus on these types of projects, but will focus on the potential projects that would not move forward if the Delta Conveyance Project were implemented.	Carrie Buckman	8/26/2020	Responded
10.20	7/22/2020	Anna Swenson	Concerned about the compaction and how it will affect the domestic wells. Abandoned water infrastructure was mentioned, but there is no such thing in the Delta, so whose water infrastructure will be used? Who decides what is lost and kept? Where will the tunnel muck be stored? How do you know that taking a layer of tunnel muck and putting the top soil back will lead to productive farmland? Major water infrastructure is being put on top of farmland, they can't live there, fields will be taken, and soil will be ruined. What happens to the year of non-productive farming? What will happen to the people there during this time? It's not a year or two, it's a long period of time. The Twin Cities borrow is not purchased land, but the plan is to make it a borrow pit. Can it be clarified whether or not the land being discussed is land that the project already owns?	<p>For each property, the need to remove or continue to use water infrastructure would be determined based upon the constructed facilities at that location. Existing wells could continue to be used with withdrawals not greater than existing withdrawal rates. If existing drainage facilities also serve adjacent properties, facilities would be constructed to maintain drainage conveyance to properties not involved in the construction. Water generated on the construction site (including stormwater flows) would be reused on-site to the extent possible.</p> <p>The Post-Construction Land Restoration would be applied to the portion of the site where construction equipment and materials would be removed following construction. On sites where soil would be excavated, such as the Twin Cities Complex, RTM would be used to fill the excavation borrow and topsoil initially removed prior to construction would be placed over the RTM. The Post-Construction Land Restoration approach is a concept being considered for incorporation into the CEQA environmental impact analysis.</p> <p>At this stage, no project has been selected and therefore land has not been acquired. Following adoption of a project, the land would be acquired by DWR prior to construction.</p>	Graham Bradner	8/26/2020	Responded
10.21	7/22/2020	Sean Wirth	Would this reclamation be considered avoidance minimization or mitigation in CEQA? Who would own the reclaimed land? It would make sense for large portions of the north Delta to be restored to an agricultural cover type that these impacted species can utilize. If it's private land, this would require row crops. Both habitat and mitigation can be accomplished for a lot of the project's footprint. If you have 100 acres, then you reclaim that 100 acres, have 100 acres of mitigation already been provided as part of the project? Then 100 acres of reclamation is added additionally? Who would own the land?	DWR is planning to include any land reclamation as part of the proposed project so that the effects of the entire project are considered. Reclaiming the land so it can be returned to a useful purpose will be part of the proposed project. DWR will look at each parcel, the activities of the parcel, and assess potential impacts and mitigation. The owner of the land after the project is not clear at this point in project development.	Carrie Buckman	8/26/2020	Responded

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10.22	7/22/2020	Cecilia Giacomia	What is the timeline of this restoration and is there intent to use adaptive management? The graphic shown earlier in the presentation that showed a large yellow to red area, is there a key to understand the different colors?	<p>The restoration activities at specific construction locations would occur immediately following completion of construction activities and generally be completed within a year. Adaptive management would be part of the process since the actual effects induced by construction would be best understood following completion of site activities. Pilot studies are also being considered to validate the initial approach described for post-construction land restoration.</p> <p>The colors on the map show different peat thickness in the Delta is based on publicly-available information. A few references are provided below.</p> <p>See page 26 of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Atlas: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/bay_delta/california_waterfix/exhibits/exhibit3/rdeir_sdeis_comments/RECIRC_2646_ATT%203.pdf</p> <p>See page 25 of the Delta Risk Management Strategy Phase 2 Report: https://deltarevision.com/2011_docs/drms-again/DRMS_Phase2_Report_Section9.pdf</p>	Graham Bradner	8/26/2020	Responded
10.23	7/22/2020	Lindsey Liebig	A lot of us in the agricultural community don't believe this tunnel muck will be reusable as proper agricultural land after it's restored. Compaction is a major concern with using that land. A lot of prime farmland is being taken out of production and turning it back into a low-value crop is going to have a disproportionate effect on the ag economy. Only taking 12 inches of top soil isn't enough, the amount won't make a difference post construction. The adjacent land use, especially for intakes, in one of the graphics, for example, there was a large square of land with a u-shape around it. Yes, that can be restored but is it really farmable? Something like having an ag base plus having environmental access for terrestrial species would be great. I'm hopeful that this land can be turned back into productive ag land. Still, there are a lot of concerns to see how this is going to affect the productivity of the ag community as a whole. These approaches still need to be discussed and talked about with farmer engagement.	The Post-Construction Land Restoration approach will continue to be discussed with the local agricultural community and refined. Pilot studies are also being considered to validate the concepts described in the post-construction land use approach. Input and engagement from the agricultural community will be very important for the success of potential pilot studies.	Graham Bradner	8/26/2020	Responded
10.24	7/22/2020	Michael Moran	I encourage consulting with the Farm Bureau. Ms. Mallon's comment about proof of concept is very encouraging. With the unprecedented scale of this project, there is an unprecedented amount of study and funding for it for this to be done through mitigation. If we're going to use this as a project base, the same approach should be taken for studying it.	Feedback from farming communities will be considered when developing mitigation.	Carrie Buckman	8/26/2020	Responded

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10.25	7/22/2020	Dr. Mel Lytle	Engaging with the ag community is very important as well as offices in that area and maybe local universities. This would allow for a better understanding of RTM and how many acres of land you estimate to be reclaimed. If you have any familiarity with mine land reclamation principles, reclaiming lands that have been impacted by construction, you can be more sophisticated with impacts on the overlying soils, how nutrients move and dynamics, and developing lists of crops that can live in this type of soil. You need to actually try what crops would thrive in the artificial soil. Need to conduct these studies. The original part of the "we don't own any lands, et.c" there are some islands that are already owned by state water contractors. It's a unique opportunity in that you already have land and use the properties for pilots so that when you're trying to reclaim lands you know that these steps are credible.	The approach described will continue to be discussed with the local agricultural community and refined. Pilot studies are also being considered to validate the concepts described in the post-construction land use approach. Input and engagement from the agricultural community will be very important for the success of potential pilot studies.	Graham Bradner	8/26/2020	Responded
10.26	7/22/2020	Jim Cox	How much top soil on top of the muck is being considered? I suggest taking a good look at Fossum City, it is built from reclaimed bay water with a topsoil and bay muck underneath. There's about 40 years of growth there that can be studied.	The initial approach for post-construction land restoration currently under review assumes placing approximately 12 inches of topsoil for discing and reintroduction of local organic material. The thickness of topsoil will be a subject of future study likely as part of site-specific pilot studies or proof of concept studies.	Graham Bradner	8/26/2020	Responded
10.27	7/22/2020	Douglas Hsia	Who would restore the land? The SCFB or the end user? Also, today there was talk about using the RTM to recover the ground, but there was discussion at the last meeting that there would not be enough RTM to do so.	The initial restoration activities would be completed as part of construction activities. The final site preparation activities would be dependent upon the ultimate land owner. For example, different site preparation would occur for pasture versus orchards or habitat. The quantity of available RTM would vary based on tunnel diameter and alignment. For the smallest tunnel diameter under current review, the quantity of RTM is not sufficient to construct the Southern Forebay, so additional imported fill would be required for the Southern Forebay. However, RTM generated at the launch sites, such as the Twin Cities Complex, would be used to fill the borrow areas.	Graham Bradner	8/26/2020	Responded
10.28	7/22/2020	Anna Swenson	On the Twin Cities slide, what happened to the intermediate forebay that was supposed to be near that site? Is it no longer a part of the consideration? Is that then balanced and accounted for in terms of not being able to restore the land?	Results of hydraulic analyses completed in late 2019 indicated that the Intermediate Forebay was not needed, and that the hydraulics in the tunnel would be improved without inclusion of the Intermediate Forebay. Therefore, this facility is not included in the conceptual options currently being developed by DCA.	Gwen Buchholz	8/26/2020	Responded

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10.29	7/22/2020	Cecilia Giacomina	A reminder that rich farmland is a living organism so when you scrape it up and store it, it dies. There is no returning fertile land to agricultural use, you need to rebuild that.	The Post-Construction Land Restoration approach would include deep ripping of the soil following removal of above-ground facilities and ground cover, and would probably include application of nutrients during the deep ripping activities. These plans will continue to be discussed with the local agricultural community and refined. Pilot studies are also being considered to validate the concepts described in the post-construction land use approach. Input and engagement from the agricultural community will be very important for the success of potential pilot studies.	Graham Bradner	8/26/2020	Responded
10.30	7/22/2020	Michael Moran	Is it correct that the majority of the conditioners are applied inside the machine? The CO2 that it is converted to when it comes to the surface, is that an amount of concern? Even if it's not toxic, it's not adding nutrients to the muck, correct?	Soil conditioning is used to improve TBM performance and to modify ground conditions to provide better control of the tunneling operation. The addition of conditioning agents may be introduced at various points in the tunneling process, including: at the cutterhead/ground interface, within the cutterhead chamber, in the screw conveyor and around the outside of the tunneling shield. The additives used for soil conditioning in TBM operations will be non-toxic and biodegradable so that the amount of CO2 that is naturally produced will have negligible impact on the environment.	Steve Dubnewych	8/26/2020	Responded
10.31	7/22/2020	Peter Robertson	For Mandeville Island, the diameter is reduced from 82 feet to 70 feet. Is there an anticipated figure for how long it will take to do the project on Mandeville Island?	The proposed shaft on Mandeville Island would be used to perform maintenance on the TBM which could last several weeks. Once maintenance is completed the TBM would move on and would continue to excavate the tunnel drive. It would take approximately 18 months to construct the 82 foot diameter shaft. The schedule and time to construct the 70 foot diameter shaft is currently being developed.	Steve Dubnewych	8/26/2020	Responded
10.32	7/22/2020	Cecilia Giacomina	I have input from Delta stakeholders stating that the DCA should discontinue the evaluation of the 3000 cfs intakes previously proposed because they cannot reasonably protect fish and other aquatic species. They have significant impacts on Delta legacy communities. A smaller design should be worked on to allow salmon to be exposed to the intakes for no more than 15 minutes. A smaller intake would also allow for more flexibility on where to put them.	Several of the options include intakes with a design capacity of 1,500 cfs, and the potential changes to aquatic resources and other environmental resources would be analyzed in the EIR. The use of a an intake with a design capacity of 3,000 cfs was used as a basis of most options to minimize the number of intakes along the riverbank.	Phil Ryan Gwen Buchholz	8/26/2020	Responded
10.33	7/22/2020	Douglas Hsia	Some of our constituents are farmers within the water burrows, they know that the DCA has already identified some property for boring tests. They are wondering when people are going to be contacted regarding the tests?	DWR will be contacting land owners by phone beginning in mid-August, which will be followed with a letter from the DCA in late August. The letter will provide details on the subsurface exploration program and will provide specific contact details for each owner.	Andrew Finney Karen Askeland	8/26/2020	Responded

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10.34	7/22/2020	David Gloski	In the email before the meeting, there was an attachment with a list of 23 different alternatives but I'm confused. We discussed four alternatives and one we are talking about again. It looks like a couple were dismissed. I would just be expecting more tables and numbers for CEQA process analysis. Constituents encourage to send in their comments to CEQA process. If it's at the level of response seen today, that would be disappointing.	DWR document the full consideration of all alternatives suggested through scoping in an alternatives formulation appendix to the EIR. Today's presentation was a preview of the process and results of that appendix, but it will include a substantive description of each alternative, the screening process, and screening results.	Carrie Buckman	8/26/2020	Responded
10.35	7/22/2020	Michael Moran	If the SEC could get a synopsis of what DCA or DWR thinks of different alternatives, even just a paragraph. As far as addressing concerns, that and some reference points would be very useful. How did DWR come to their conclusions? It would help clarify that the goal is to disseminate information instead of dismiss ideas.	See previous response.	Carrie Buckman	8/26/2020	Responded
10.36	7/22/2020	Sean Wirth	The environmental community has a lot of interest in working on the mitigations for the regional impacts of this project. We want to maintain and gain new regional approaches to mitigation.	DWR appreciates the collaboration of the SEC members.	Carrie Buckman	8/26/2020	Responded
10.37	7/22/2020	Barbara Barrigan Parilla	Observation: 10 feet perimeter levee seems too low to protect RTM with flood at Twin Cities Rd.	The perimeter levee at Twin Cities was designed to protect against the 100-year flood elevation of Elevation 19.0 feet with 1.5 feet freeboard. Ground elevations at the Twin Cities Complex site range from approximately Elevation 10 to 15 feet, therefore, the levee height would range from 5.5 to 10.5 feet.	Graham Bradner	8/26/2020	Responded