

# Central Valley Business Times

Taking a new shot at Delta tunnels

SACRAMENTO

June 14, 2015 9:01pm

- Might have five intakes – or one
- Strips out much of the restoration aspect of BDCP



The administration of Jerry Brown, aided by the federal government, is trying yet again to come up with a passable plan to divert some of the Sacramento River away from the California Delta and to directly to customers south of the Delta.

The newest effort is signaled by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and the California Department of Water Resources filing an official “notice of intent to prepare to recirculate” another environmental impact report and statement for the so-called Bay Delta Conservation Plan.

At the heart of the plan is some way to divert fresh water from the Sacramento River into massive, twin tunnels to send it on a 35-mile trip beneath the California Delta to the State Water Project.

That water is sold to farmers in the semi-arid west side of the San Joaquin Valley, to Los Angeles and to Silicon Valley.

The two plumbing projects are currently fed by water after it has flowed through at least a portion of the Delta, mixing with effluent from swage plants and the San Joaquin River and smaller rivers.

The tunnels would send cleaner, fresher water needing less treatment to the projects.

The revised federal EIR and state EIS are to describe and analyze “refinement of the resource area analyses, alternatives, and actions, including additional alternatives that describe conveyance alternatives.”

Three new tunnel alternatives are to will be evaluated:

- Alternative 4A with three intakes,
- Alternative 2D with five intakes, and
- Alternative 5A with one intake.

The revised plan strips out much of the previous plan’s efforts to restore habitat in the Delta.

It’s unclear what the revised plan might cost. The previous BDCP tunnels plan might have cost \$68 billion to finance, build and maintain, putting the cost of water it conveyed beyond financial viability for farmers by some estimates.