

ACCESS SACRAMENTO

Water Team Advocacy Issues Background

Issues

Act on Delta Vision Recommendations

The Delta Vision recommendations are the result of hard work based on sound reasoning, good science and strong policy. The recommendations take into account the concerns and needs of many of the Delta's stakeholders and have laid out a path to achieve a sustainable Delta system.

Use technological solutions to pursue immediate fixes in the Delta

It would be an understatement to say that the Delta's plumbing is clogged. One of the quickest most effective near term actions to ensure reliable water resources will be to physically separate endangered Delta Species from portions of the Delta used for water export. The state should also move to plan alternative forms of conveyance to ensure the reliability of the Delta's water infrastructure.

Support ongoing Delta legislation

Two Southern California legislators are working to implement smart Delta planning strategies. Two bills, AB 13 (Mary Salas – D Chula Vista) and AB 900 (Kevin De Leon – D Los Angeles), take steps to provide non-biased governance of the Delta and accurate information about in Delta pressures to the habitat.

Delta Vision Strategic Plan

-BACKGROUND-

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Delta) is a crucial link in California's water supply system, a sensitive habitat to endemic and endangered species, home to a billion dollar agricultural industry and provides recreation opportunities for hunters, fishers, boaters and more. The health of the Delta is in a fragile state. Many of the Delta's peat moss levees were built over a century ago. Subsequent use of harsh farming techniques and use of the ecosystem to convey water has weakened its ecosystem.

In 2008, a Governor's Blue Ribbon Taskforce concluded its work with a set of immediate and long-term recommendations to address the Delta. The taskforce subsequently spun off Delta Vision, an organization dedicated to implementing the taskforce's recommendations: <http://deltavision.ca.gov/>

The taskforce recommendations are as follows:

1. Legally acknowledge the co-equal goals of restoring the Delta ecosystem and creating a more reliable water supply for California.
2. Recognize and enhance the unique cultural, recreational, and agricultural values of the California Delta as an evolving place, an action critical to achieving the co-equal goals.

3. Restore the Delta ecosystem as the heart of a healthy estuary.
4. Build facilities to improve the existing water conveyance system and expand statewide storage, and operate both to achieve the co-equal goals.
5. Reduce risks to people, property, and state interests in the Delta by effective emergency preparedness, appropriate land uses, and strategic levee investments.
6. Establish a new governance structure with the authority, responsibility, accountability, science support, and secure funding to achieve these goals.

L.A. Area Chamber Position

- The time for action is now: with failure of the Delta's infrastructure and ecosystem becoming increasingly more likely, swift action on the Delta Vision recommendations is critical.

Pursuing Technological Remedies to Support the Delta System

-BACKGROUND-

Water conveyance in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta is in need of a major overhaul. However there are several short and medium term technical solutions that prolong the life of the Delta while over-arching issues are resolved. Some of these projects include:

2-Gate Fish Protection Demonstration Project

Install two tidally operated portable gates south of Franks Tract to separate ESA threatened Delta Smelt from the pumping impacts of the State and Federal export diversions to maintain smelt populations in natural environments, farther from export pumps.

Habitat Restoration Projects

Jump-start habitat restoration for Delta smelt spawning and rearing habitat on publicly owned properties in the Yolo Bypass and Suisun Marsh to restore functioning tidal marsh in the lower Yolo Bypass and critical ecosystem processes including the production of nutrients and food

Delta Cross Channel Non-Intrusive Fish Fence Demonstration Project

Employ a non-intrusive curtain of air bubbles, light, and sound to guide ESA-listed salmon fish away from entering the Delta Cross-Channel in the North Delta. The project will improve salmon survival by reducing salmon moving into the interior of the Delta where losses increase due to added predation, entrainment and contaminants and allows additional in-Delta flows to improve conditions for ESA-listed Delta smelt and reduce exporter water diversion impacts.

Priority Levee Stability & Secure Pathway Program

Improve levees and emergency response programs that facilitate isolation of a freshwater pathway through portions of the south Delta contaminated with salt. Strengthen levees to decrease slumping and help flood fight crews restore and secure water supply pathway after major earthquakes. Reconstruct levees to help protect local populations from catastrophic levee failure. These actions are critical to protect Delta islands with population centers vulnerable to flooding & earthquakes as well as creating a water supply diversion pathway for two-thirds of California residents.

L.A. Area Chamber Position

- Support projects that prepare for Delta emergencies and mitigate environmental damage and establish good scientific information about how to manage the Delta's ecosystem.

Supporting Current Delta Legislation

-BACKGROUND-

AB 13 (Salas)

Establishes a San Joaquin Delta Conservancy to provide policy oversight, manage funds, and implement a delta sustainability program. Establishing a Delta Conservancy was part of the Delta Vision recommendations. A California Assembly legislative analysis of the bill stated, "This bill reflects an emerging consensus that the Delta needs its own conservancy. While the Legislature has considered, in the last decade, several bills related to the Delta's conservancy needs, the recent Delta ecosystem crisis has made that need more urgent, promoting work by agencies and Delta stakeholders to develop the outlines of what kind of conservancy would work.

AB 900 (De Leon)

This bill requires measurement and reporting of water diversions within the Delta to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). The bill repeals the exemption from water reporting requirements that Delta farmers now enjoy and reduces the threshold to report diversions within the legal Delta from 50 cubic feet per second (cfs) to 10 gallons per minute starting January 1, 2011. Accurate information about water use within the Delta is critically needed to understand the impacts of all water diversions. This reporting requirement is currently in effect for other agricultural users outside of the Delta.

L.A. Area Chamber Position

- Support passage of AB 13 and AB 900 to improve Delta governance and information about in Delta diversions.

Delta

FACTS



Sacramento San-Joaquin Delta

FACTS



Population: 515,264 (2000 Census)

Counties: Contra Costa, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Solano, Yolo, Alameda

Major Cities Partly Within the Delta: Sacramento, Stockton, West Sacramento, Oakley, and Rio Vista

Levees (total mileage, 1987): 1,100

Rivers flowing into the Delta: Sacramento, San Joaquin, Mokelumne, Cosumnes, and Calaveras

Diversions Directly from the Delta: State Water Project, Federal Central Valley Project, Contra Costa Canal, North Bay Aqueduct, City of Vallejo, Western Delta Industry, 1,800+ Agricultural Users

Water Supply: Drinking water for 25 million people; supports California's trillion dollar economy (eighth largest in the world) and \$27 billion agricultural industry (nation's number one)

Agriculture (2001): Average Annual Gross Value totals more than \$2 billion. Crops include corn, grain, hay, alfalfa, tomatoes, asparagus, pears, and wine grapes.

Wildlife: 52 mammals, 22 reptiles and amphibian species, 225 birds, and 54 species of fish. The Delta is also home to approximately 260 invasive species of plants and animals.

Recreation: Over 12 million visitors annually. There are 290 shoreline recreational areas, 300 marinas, and about 500,000 boaters. The Delta has 57,000 acres of navigable waterways. (Figures from the Department of Boating and Waterways)

Major Sport Fish:*

- American Shad
- Bass (Striped, Smallmouth, Largemouth, Spotted)
- Black Crappie
- Chinook Salmon
- Catfish (Channel, Blue, White, Black Bullhead, Brown Bullhead)
- Starry Flounder
- Steelhead
- Sunfish (Bluegill, Pumpkinseed, Redear, Green)
- Tule Perch
- Warmouth
- White Sturgeon

Area:

The Bay-Delta is the West Coast's largest estuary, with 57 major reclaimed islands and numerous unleveed channel islands.

Land Use:

- 425,700 acres - irrigated agriculture
- 64,000 acres - urban & commercial
- 61,000 acres - open water

* Before fishing in the Delta, always check with the California Department of Fish & Game (www.dfg.ca.gov) for regulations regarding particular fish species and specific license requirements for the region.

Our Vision for the California Delta

The Delta is in crisis, and each day brings us closer to a major disaster. What the nation learned from New Orleans and Hurricane Katrina is the terrible price of waiting. The Delta's problems can wait no longer:

The health of its ecosystem is not sustainable over the long-term and regional climate change of even one meter above current sea level promises to inundate many Delta towns and its infrastructure of highways, energy corridors, railroads, wildlife resources and its economic base of agriculture and tourism. (See **Figure 2**)

A two-in-three chance of a major earthquake within the next few years in or near the Delta make its levees vulnerable to sudden collapse. In addition, increased urbanization poses an imminent threat to the Delta by placing more residents and their property in a floodplain.

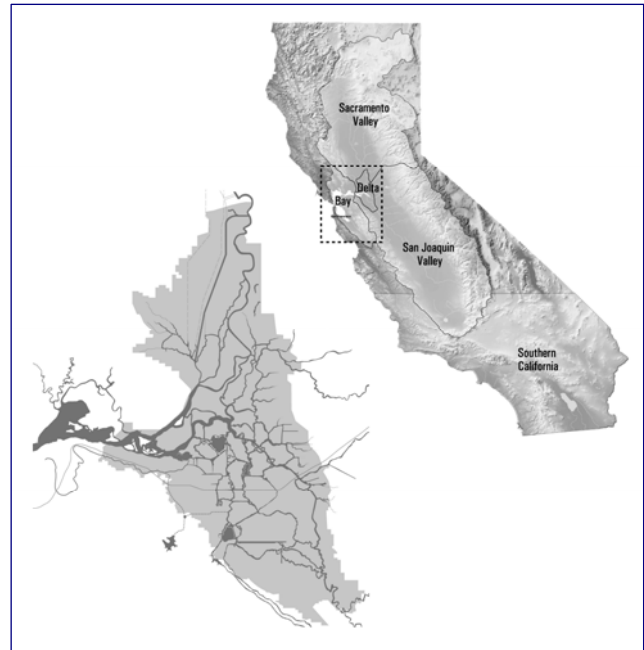
The vision's recommendations are designed to be implemented together as an integrated solution and then work together in an interdependent fashion to achieve success.

An integrated solution is vital as the Delta cannot be "fixed" by any single action. Nor can California's water needs be met by any single action. No matter what policy choices are made, Californians must also change their relationship toward the environment and water. Conservation must become the next great cause toward quality of life, following in the footsteps of energy conservation. Delay in any of the important areas discussed in this vision will only make California's water problems and the Delta's ecosystem woes worsen over the next decades. (See **Figures 10 and 11**)

For those who rush to discuss Delta water conveyance as if no other issue is of importance, the Task Force cautions that decisions about storage and conveyance flow from all 12 recommendations in their vision, and cannot be decided by themselves.

Established by Governor Schwarzenegger's Executive Order S-17-06, the Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force was to "develop a durable vision for sustainable management of the Delta" with the goal of "...managing the Delta over the long term to restore and maintain identified functions and values that are determined to be important to the environmental quality of the Delta and the economic and social well-being of the people of the state."

It also directed the Task Force to develop a Strategic Implementation Plan by October 2008.



The Delta formed by the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers is a critical habitat for more than 500 species, hub of the state's major water conveyance system, and crossed by major transportation and utility corridors.

Delta Vision's 12 Integrated and Linked Recommendations

1. Delta ecosystem and a reliable water supply for California are the primary, co-equal goals for sustainable management of the Delta.
2. The California Delta is a unique and valued area, warranting recognition and special legal status from the State of California.
3. The Delta ecosystem must function as an integral part of a healthy estuary.
4. California's water supply is limited and must be managed with significantly more efficiency to be adequate for its future population, growing economy and vital environment. (See **Figure 5**)
5. The foundation for policy making about California water resources must be the longstanding constitutional principles of "reasonable use" and "public trust;" these principles are particularly important and applicable to the Delta.
6. The goals of conservation, efficiency and sustainable use must drive California water policies.

Our Vision for the California Delta

12 Recommendations (cont.)

7. A revitalized Delta ecosystem will require reduced diversions, or changes in patterns and timing of those diversions, upstream, within the Delta and exported from the Delta at critical times. (See Figures 7a, 7b and 8)
8. New facilities for conveyance and storage, and better linkage between the two, are needed to better manage California's water resources the estuary and exports. (See Figure 9)
9. Major investments in the California Delta and the statewide water management system must be consistent with, and integrate specific policies in this vision. In particular, these strategic investments must strengthen selected levees, improve floodplain management and improve water circulation and quality.
10. The current boundaries and governance system of the Delta must be changed. It is essential to have an independent body with authority to achieve the

This vision was developed over 14 days of public Task Force meetings since March. A 43-member Stakeholder Coordination Group met publicly for 15 days. Task Force recommendations were informed by advice of Delta Science Advisors, by efforts of departments and agencies of the State of California and public comments.

Chaired by Phil Isenberg, other Task Force members are Monica Florian, Richard M. Frank, Thomas McKernan, Sunne Wright McPeak, William K. Reilly and Raymond Seed.

co-equal goals of ecosystem revitalization and adequate water supply for California while also recognizing the importance of the Delta as a unique and valued area. This body must have secure funding and the ability to approve spending, planning and water export levels.

11. Discouraging inappropriate urbanization of the Delta is critical both to preserve the Delta's unique character and to ensure adequate public safety.
12. Institutions and policies for the Delta should be designed for resiliency and adaptation.

Near-Term Actions to Protect the Delta

The Task Force also identified Near-Term Actions that must be taken in the very near future because threats to the Delta and Suisun Marsh are so serious. These focus on preparing for disasters in or around the Delta, protecting its ecosystem and water supply system from urban encroachment, and starting work soon on short-term improvements to both the ecosystem and the water supply system.

These proposed actions should be initiated quickly with an attempt to build upon existing organizations and authorities, but not be bound by existing shortcomings. They are:

1. State government should immediately begin acquiring title or easements to floodplains, establish flood bypasses where feasible and discourage residential building in flood-prone areas. Land that could provide flood protection is being threatened by urban development as this report is being written.
2. The Governor should immediately issue an Executive Order that provides guidance consistent with this vision on inappropriate land development in the Delta.
3. State government should promptly set appropriate standards for all levee improvements to protect

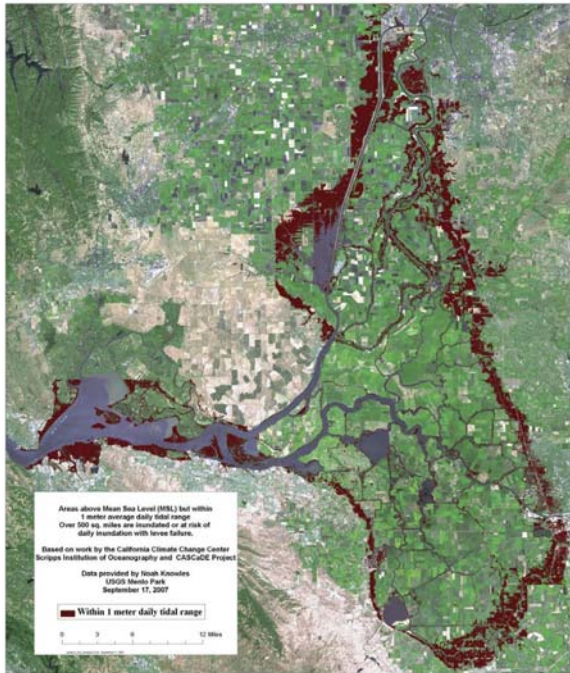
heavily populated areas and key parts of the water delivery system and other infrastructure. The State of California should also use available bond funds to address strategic levee and floodplain improvements.

4. State government should embark upon a comprehensive series of emergency management and preparation actions within a few months. California cannot wait for a flood before planning a response.
5. State government should promptly incorporate expected sea level increases into decision-making and improve knowledge of constructing more secure and affordable levees.
6. High priority ecosystem revitalization projects should be pursued aggressively by the responsible agencies and departments, upon direction by the Governor.
7. Improvements in the current water conveyance and groundwater surface water storage systems should be pursued as rapidly as possible by the responsible agencies and departments, upon direction by the Governor.

The Task Force urges the Governor and the Legislature to incorporate these immediate steps in executive actions, upcoming bond measures or related legislation.

Our Vision for the California Delta

Figure 2. Area of Potential Inundation from a One Meter Rise in Sea Level



Source: U.S. Geological Survey

Figure 5. California Precipitation History

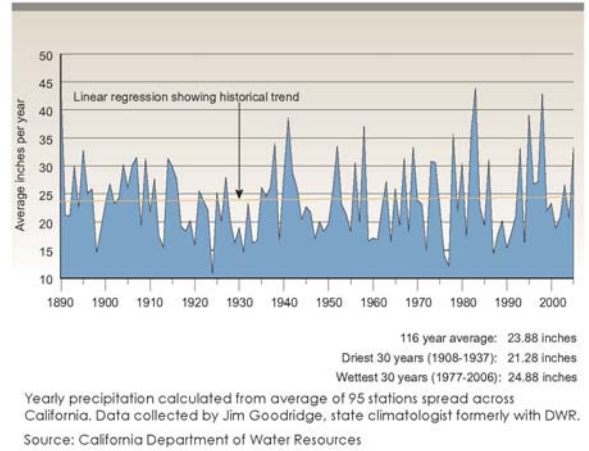
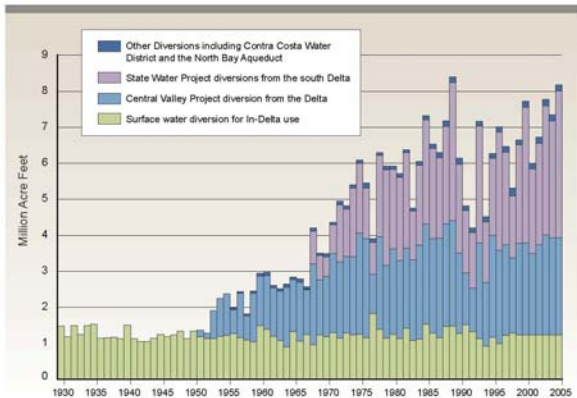
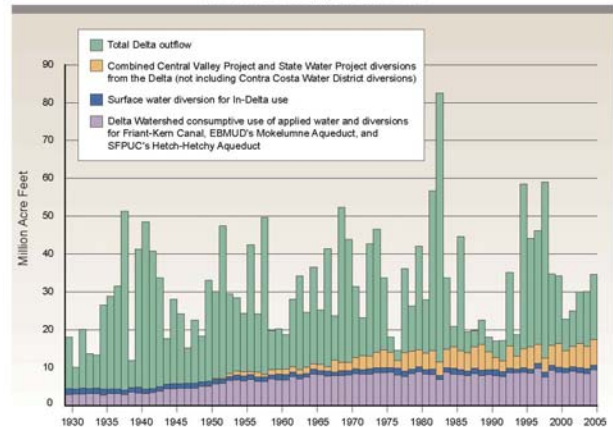


Figure 7a. Historic Diversions from within the Delta



Source: Measured, calculated and modeled from an array of data sources as compiled by Tully & Young, Inc.

Figure 7b. Historic Diversions before the Delta, in-Delta Uses and Exports from the Delta, plus Outflows



Trends in Destinations and Uses

Period	Average Annual Total (MAF)	Outflow	In-Delta	Exports	Delta Watershed
1930 to 1949	25.80	81%	5%	0%	14%
1950 to 1969	31.71	67%	4%	4%	24%
1970 to 1989	34.34	51%	5%	15%	29%
1990 to 2005	32.85	48%	4%	17%	31%

- When the averages of 20-year periods are compared, these data show:
- Outflows to the ocean go down from 81% to 48% of total flows;
- In-Delta uses are essentially constant at 4% to 5% of total flows;
- Exports of water taken in the Delta but conveyed elsewhere go up, from zero to 17% of total flows; and
- In-Delta watershed (before reaching Delta) uses also go up, from 14% to 31% of total flows (some of these are exported from the Delta watershed).

Source: Measured, calculated and modeled data from an array of sources as compiled by Tully & Young, Inc., with data and assistance from DWR, the Bay Institute and the State Water Contractors.

