

Demystifying The Delta Plan

Presentation to Association of California Water Agencies

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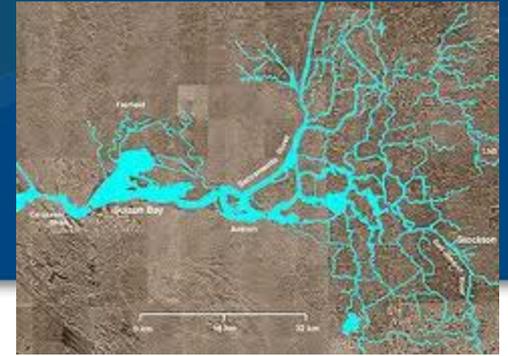


History of California Water Development



-  Local Projects
-  Regional Projects
-  Statewide Projects (SWP/CVP)

The Importance of the Delta



- California's "Water Hub", transfers North to South, Bay Area
- 27 million Californians depend on the Delta for part of their drinking water
- Over 3 million acres of agricultural land irrigated by Delta water
- West coast's largest estuary
- The Delta is a unique place to live, work, and recreate



The Delta at a Crossroads



- Unreliable Delta exports
- Native fish populations crashing
- Systemic problems: ecosystem degradation, flood risk, water quality problems
- The stakes are high: tremendous risk to California's economy, environment, agriculture industry and Delta residents

2009 Delta Reform Act – A Legislative Milestone

-  Bipartisan support for a new Delta Council and the development of a legally-enforceable Delta Plan
-  ACWA's support played critical role
-  Landmark changes to California water management:
 - *Establishment of the coequal goals – putting the protection of the ecosystem on equal footing with water supplies*
 - *Requirement for “reduced reliance on the Delta for future water supplies”*
 - *A seven member independent council with actual authority to achieve the coequal goals*

A New Legislative Mandate for the Water Management

State policy for the Delta:

“Coequal goals means the two goals of providing a more reliable water supply for California and protecting, restoring and enhancing the Delta ecosystem. The coequal goals must be achieved in a manner that protects and enhances the unique cultural, recreational, natural resource and agricultural values of the Delta as an evolving place.”

State Water Code §85054

Delta Stewardship Council created to:

- 🌊 Develop a “legally enforceable plan”, not a report
- 🌊 Perform a synthesizing and coordinating role among various agencies – not a *super-regulatory agency*
- 🌊 Ensure best available science informs all processes and projects
- 🌊 Serve as an independent decision-making body to mediate the state’s interests, not California’s water wars



**ENTERING
CALIFORNIA DELTA**

What is the Delta Plan?

-  The Delta Plan is:
 - **Foundational:** Lays the groundwork for near-term actions and focuses on the avoidance of further harm or increased risk to the Delta.
 - **Adaptable:** Builds on other plans and new information as it becomes available – and portions of the Plan that do not meet stated goals over time will be refined or revised.

What is the Delta Plan? (continued)

-  The Delta Plan is:
 - **Practical:** Builds on years of planning and incorporates actions, recommendations, and strategies developed by others who have invested countless hours on Delta issues.
 - **Enforceable:** Contains a set of integrated and legally enforceable regulatory policies that apply to certain proposed plans, projects, or programs that are known in the Plan as “covered actions”.



Why this Approach for the Delta Plan?

- When you are in a hole: **STOP DIGGING!**
- Multiple problems need multiple and simultaneous solutions: **TRIAGE!**
- Limitations on funding and resources means: **PRIORITIZE!**
- We don't have all the info we need but can't afford further delay: **ACT & ADAPT!**





TOP TEN ACTIONS:

What does the Delta Plan DO?

1. **SETS DEADLINES** for completion of BDCP and for the State Board to update Delta flow objectives
2. **PROTECTS** high priority restoration areas from development & **PRIORITIZES** top five habitat restoration areas
3. **PRESERVES & PROTECTS** critical floodplains and encourages setback levees
4. **REDUCES RISK** by requiring new development to have adequate flood protection/levees

TOP TEN ACTIONS:

What else does the Delta Plan DO?

5. **INCREASES WATER SUPPLY RELIABILITY** by requiring users of Delta water to implement local plans to diversify supplies, increase reliability & reduce pressure on the Delta
6. **IMPROVES TRANSPARENCY** by requiring that transfers of Delta water and contracts for Delta water must be done openly and transparently
7. **REDUCES STRESSORS** with specific recommendations to address toxics, nutrients, invasives & **PRIORITIZES** State & Regional Water Board actions

TOP TEN ACTIONS:

What does the Delta Plan DO? (continued)

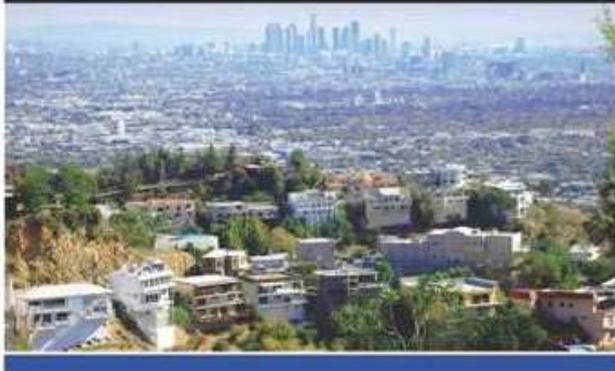
8. Requires **ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT** for significant ecosystem and water management projects
9. **ENSURES FAIRNESS** by using the financing principles of beneficiary pays and stressors pay
10. **RECOGNIZES** that all actions must be done in a manner that protects and enhances the Delta as an evolving place

Reducing Reliance & Increasing Reliability: One Water Agency's Story



California
Department of Water Resources

**Guidebook to Assist Urban Water
Suppliers to Prepare a 2010 Urban
Water Management Plan**



What Do We Mean By Water Supply Reliability?

-  Improved conveyance
 - *BDCP is addressing this, Delta Plan anticipates its success*
-  Improving conservation & efficiency
 - *This can happen now*
 - *Everyone must increase their efficiency, both ag and urban*
-  Diversify local and regional water supplies
 - *Delta Plan emphasizes the importance of local water planning and retaining **local flexibility** – (UWMPs and AgWMPs)*

The West Basin Example: Increasing Reliability

- West Basin's Strategic Plan echoes coequal goals
- Implementing *Water Reliability 2020*
 - *Goal: reduce reliance on imported water from 66% today to 33% by the year 2020*
 - *How: double recycled water & conservation, some new desal*



Closing Points about the Delta Plan

-  Decades of conflict have yielded little progress
-  Product of thousands of public comments, best available science and information
-  Sets a common-sense path forward
-  Focuses on action, rather than additional delay
-  It will NOT give any interest group everything they want, nor should it
-  It is foundational and adaptive, and will change over time

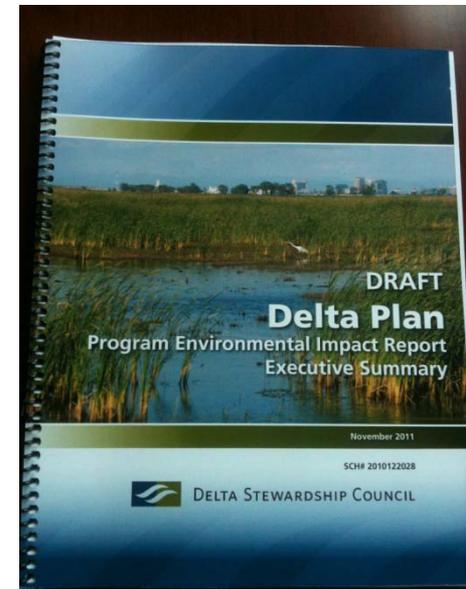
Next Steps for the Delta Plan

- EIR comment period goes until **February 2, 2012**
- Sixth staff draft Delta Plan anticipated in **March 2012**
- Final EIR certified, final Delta Plan adopted in **Spring 2012**
- Delta Plan policies become enforceable state regulations after state rulemaking process is completed
- Delta Plan implementation begins



How Can You Get Informed or Involved?

- Comment on the EIR
- Comment on the Plan
- Watch live or archived meetings on our website
- Attend one of our meetings or EIR hearings
- Contact Council staff directly with questions
- Read the draft Delta Plan for yourself!



To Learn More ...

www.deltacouncil.ca.gov

The Delta Stewardship Council was created in legislation to achieve the state mandated coequal goals for the Delta. "Coequal goals" means the two goals of providing a more reliable water supply for California and protecting, restoring, and enhancing the Delta ecosystem. The coequal goals shall be achieved in a manner that protects and enhances the unique cultural, recreational, natural resource, and agricultural values of the Delta as an evolving place." (CA Water Code §85054)

DELTA STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

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Why is flood risk so high in California?
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VIDEO CREDIT
Department of Water Resources - FloodSAFE
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