



DELTA INDEPENDENT SCIENCE BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Chair Richard Norgaard

To get a feel for how much experience Delta Independent Science Board (ISB) Chair Richard Norgaard has, consider this: his curriculum vitae is 35 pages long.

Over four decades of an academic career as an agricultural, environmental and now ecological economist, the Berkeley professor has studied a broad range of issues including pesticide use, the environment in developing countries, petroleum scarcity, biodiversity loss and climate change. He has completed research on all these topics while serving as professor, editorial board member and advisor, consultant and chair to countless scientific organizations. If that's not enough, he's also the father of twin teenagers.



Richard Norgaard,
chair of the Delta Independent Science Board, draws on a wealth of scientific knowledge and experience to ensure that the Council uses the "best available science" in the Delta Plan.

Photo courtesy of the Delta Stewardship Council

"The consistent thing about my career, the perspective that makes it look less erratic, is that I have consistently tackled big, complex, and controversial issues," Norgaard said. "From testifying in Federal Court on the use of benefit-cost analysis and helping the Department of Water Resources update the California Water Plan in the 1970s, to working in Brazil on Amazon deforestation in the 80s, water policy consistently pops up in my work. You cannot address the economy or the environment without including water; certainly not in the arid West."

Norgaard now serves as the chair of the 10-member Delta ISB, which was created by the 2009 Delta Reform Act to "provide oversight of the scientific research, monitoring and assessment programs that support adaptive

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COUNCIL SET TO NAVIGATE OAL PROCESS

Continuing its process of open communication and transparency, the Delta Stewardship Council explained at a recent meeting the process by which the proposed policies in its Delta Plan will become regulations and part of state law.

The 2009 legislation that created the Council mandated that the DSC develop a "legally enforceable" Delta Plan. Part of the process to make it enforceable involves a review by the state's Office of Administrative Law (OAL).

According to the Council's chief attorney, Chris Stevens, all proposed regulations must be approved by the OAL and are required to be "clear, necessary, legally valid, and available to the public" before they become law.

"The whole idea of the state rule-making process is to involve the public," Stevens said. "This is consistent with the Council's transparent process."

Stevens said that the process is not only designed to encourage public participation in the preparation of rules or regulations, but also to inform potentially regulated entities and individuals what kind of rules exist.

Council Executive Officer Joe Grindstaff made sure to clarify that the Delta Plan has a limited number of proposed regulations.

How Regulations Become Law



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FIFTH STAFF DRAFT COMMENTS DUE SEPT. 30

Latest Document to Form Basis of Environmental Impact Report

The Delta Stewardship Council continues to improve and shape the Delta Plan with the release of the fifth staff draft. The document contains considerable changes from previous drafts, with fewer regulatory policies and more recommendations.

The document, which was posted on the DSC website on August 2, will also serve as the foundation for an environmental impact report, which will be released later this month.

The fifth staff draft includes 12 proposed regulatory policies and 61 proposed recommendations. There are also two new recommendations in the chapter on water resources. The first relates to developing specific information in the California Water Plan Update to help support the water resources' Performance Measures in the Delta Plan, while the second relates to improving water use and water conservation at state-owned facilities.

Various chapters have been improved as a result of public comment and Council direction. As with previous drafts, comment letters from a broad range of stakeholders and public entities have offered advice, revisions, corrections and additions on nearly every aspect of the Plan.



Courtesy of the Department of Water Resources

STATE PARKS PROPOSES EXPANDED PLANS FOR DELTA

Citing significant economic value that could result, the California Department of Parks and Recreation recommends expanding recreation areas throughout the Delta and Suisun Marsh and creating four new parks to serve the region.

The Delta Reform Act of 2009 required the State Department of Parks and Recreation to draft a proposal to expand within the Delta the network of state recreation areas, and present it to the Delta Protection Commission.

Dan Ray, Chief of the State Parks planning division, briefed the Council on the proposal at the August meeting. He explained that the proposal also calls for making improvements to recreation wildlife habitat areas, publicly-owned levees, scenic highways, state recreational trails and other public lands. He said the proposal also seeks coordination of recreation and tourism efforts and better cooperation between state, local and federal agencies.

“When you add in multiplier effects, recreation contributes nearly \$40 billion to California’s economy...”

**Dan Ray, Chief,
Planning Division,
California State Parks**

Ray said these recommendations would enhance the value of the Delta in numerous ways. Ninety-four percent of Californians visited a park last year and the Delta provides a wide assortment of outdoor opportunities.

“When you add in multiplier effects, recreation contributes nearly \$40 billion to California’s economy,” Ray said.

The recommendations are part of the Parks’ “Gateway-Base Camp-Adventure strategy.” In brief, a community on the edge of the Delta serves as a “gateway” to the area, providing information to visitors. A park, resort or town serves as a “base camp,” offering services and facilities. The “adventures” are scenic drives, hiking, angling, hunting, boating and many other activities. In addition the State Parks would be used to educate the public about the environment.

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COUNCIL TAKES ACTION ON PROJECTS

The Delta Stewardship Council has approved the implementation of five projects aimed at protecting and repairing Delta levees near a key Bay Area water supply aqueduct.

By a unanimous 5-0 vote during its July meeting, the Council approved projects that will protect islands on the Mokelumne Aqueduct operated by the East Bay Municipal Utilities District (East Bay MUD).

The projects will be funded by the Department of Water Resources with funds provided by Proposition 84, approved by voters in 2006. Prop. 84 required that the California Bay-Delta Authority or its successor – now the Delta Stewardship Council – approve the projects.

Eileen White, manager of Operations and Maintenance at East Bay MUD, explained to the Council the importance of the levee projects.

“There are multiple beneficiaries to these projects – potentially the water supply to 20 million people in California,” White said.

The five projects each consist of adding fill to specific levee areas and landslide slopes, as well as creating stockpiles of quarry stone and aggregate base material for emergency response. Trees will also be planted along the waterside of the levee to enhance the ecosystem.

Gail Newton, Chief of the FloodSAFE Environmental Stewardship and Statewide Resource program for the Department of Water Resources (DWR), underscored the importance of the Council’s decision.

“On average, each of these five projects is creating about 2,000 linear feet of water side vegetation,” she said. “The best case scenario is that these five projects will create about 10,000 linear feet of new habitat, which is pretty tremendous for the Delta.”

DWR identified 10 projects as eligible to receive state funds under the Disaster Preparedness and Flood Prevention Bond Act of 2006. Five additional projects will be brought before the Council pending completion of an environmental review and biological assessment.

To view Delta Aqueduct Protection Projects agenda materials, click [HERE](#).

To view all agenda materials from past meetings, click [HERE](#).

DO YOU TWEET? MAYBE YOU SHOULD COUNCIL ACTIVATES ITS SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLS



With Twitter and Facebook, the Council now has two more avenues to interact with the public.

Whether it’s incorporating thousands of public comments into its Draft Delta Plan, or holding community workshops with diverse interest groups, the Delta Stewardship Council relishes the opportunity to interact with the public.

Since it began operations in February of last year, the Council has been lauded for its commitment to transparency. To make even more stakeholders know when and how to engage, the Council is now “tweeting” and “posting” on its newly established Twitter and Facebook accounts.

“It’s wonderful. I’m amazed at how much extra exposure we’re getting. Local reporters are ‘re-tweeting’ (reposting) our message, so we’re being read by thousands of people who might otherwise not be tuned in to the Council,” said Eric Alvarez, Public Information Officer for the Council. “More and more people are getting their information through social media so this is just one more way the Council can reach out and keep stakeholders informed about ways to engage with us.”

Nearly all of the material that hits the “Twitosphere” is available on the Council’s website, but the social media tools allow immediate contact with members of the public who might not visit the DSC site on a regular basis.

“We’re gaining followers rapidly and we’re finding that folks are interested in the message that the Council has to offer,” Alvarez said.

To follow the Council on Twitter or become a fan on Facebook, click the links below or the logos above.

[Twitter](#) – [Facebook](#)

CLIFF DAHM DEPARTS

A “changing of the guard” is underway in the Delta Stewardship Council Science Department as Lead Scientist Dr. Cliff Dahm departs the DSC and resumes his full-time duties as a professor at the University of New Mexico.



Delta Science Program Lead Scientist Cliff Dahm

Photo courtesy of the Delta Stewardship Council

Dr. Dahm, an internationally recognized expert in aquatic ecology, climatology, and restoration biology, began his term with the Delta Science Program (then known as CALFED) in July 2008. During his tenure, he oversaw a staff of 14 who are providing the scientific basis used in the development of the Delta Plan. The Plan is a comprehensive management tool for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta that will guide state and local agencies to help achieve the coequal goals of providing a more reliable water supply for California and protecting, restoring, and enhancing the Delta ecosystem.

Dr. Dahm also helped establish the Delta Independent Science Board (ISB). This group of nationally recognized scientists is mandated by the Delta Reform Act of 2009 to provide oversight of the scientific research, monitoring, and assessment programs that support adaptive management of the Delta.

“Providing the science support to the Council has been a highlight (during my tenure),” said Dr. Dahm. “We have been able to fund new badly-needed research, invest in some new young investigators, and take leadership roles in the development of parts of the Delta Plan.”

“Dr. Dahm has been an invaluable asset,” said DSC Chair Phil Isenberg. “His extensive background in water issues has had a fundamental impact in the development of the Delta Plan.”

Another colleague found Dahm’s involvement to be rewarding on a personal level.

“Cliff’s become a true mentor to me and many others in the Delta science world,” said Anke Mueller-Solger, Lead Scientist for the Interagency Ecological Program. “I particularly appreciate his efforts in mentoring and supporting women in science.”

The Council is now in the process of recruiting a new Lead Scientist. During the transition Dr. Dahm will support the DSC’s science efforts about four days a month.

Please visit the latest issue of [SCIENCE NEWS](#) to read an in-depth interview with Dr. Dahm.

State Parks, Continued from Page 2

State Parks wants to make full use of Delta lands and waterways. Twenty-five percent of the Delta is public property.

“The Delta can be a playground,” Ray said.

But there are other concerns to consider. Council Chair Phil Isenberg noted that “many of the recreational opportunities are in flood-threatened areas of the Delta that will remain flood threatened.”

Ray responded that the most important recreational assets would need to be identified and protected with the best flood protection that can be afforded, but he also added that it would be a mistake to let these opportunities slip away.

Ray also added that the recommendations would make the best use of existing lands, which would keep the costs down and help preserve the balance between ecosystem restoration and water supply reliability.

While economics is an important part of recreation, the environment is as well, Ray reminded the Council. He added that the Council needs to pay more attention to the benefits of recreation.

“Right now, the latest draft [of the Delta Plan] doesn’t even mention state or local parks,” he said. “Remember that recreation is an important part of the Delta.”

Councilmember Hank Nordhoff agreed, saying, “We have a tendency to gloss over recreation.”

“This discussion provides us a way to change the conversation about the Delta,” Ray said. “Too often, it’s the water buffalos versus the environmental extremists.”

To learn more about the Parks proposal click [HERE](#).



Courtesy of the Department of Water Resources

Dan Ray, Chief of the State Parks planning division, told the Council that his agency advocates making full use of Delta lands and waterways for recreational purposes.

Member Spotlight, Continued from Page 1

management of the Delta through periodic reviews of each of those programs.”

He says the Board is “seriously engaged” in its task of providing an independent scientific review of the Delta Plan. As the chair, he sees his greatest asset as a facilitator and problem solver.

“We have a very experienced combination of scientists, some who know the Delta well and some who bring important insights from other estuaries. I am pretty good at working with natural and social scientists who provide diverse – sometimes contradictory – perspectives and information to a problem,” he said.

Norgaard’s measured, thoughtful demeanor belies his expedient pursuit of solutions to problems in the Delta. But he knows that writing a plan based on the best available science, as the Council is charged to do, will not be an easy task and requires commitment to adaptive management.

“There are not right answers ‘out there,’ or pieces of right answers, for individual scientists to discover,” he said. “Rather, if we can come to understand problems together, we can act together. But, because we are in a very dynamic situation, we also need to keep learning, together.”

To view the Delta ISB’s homepage for meetings and member profiles, click [HERE](#).

OAL Process, Continued from Page 1

“In [the fifth staff draft of the Delta Plan], which is over 500 pages, there are only four pages of proposed regulations,” Grindstaff said.

Grindstaff stressed that the Council will not present the final proposed regulations in its plan to the OAL until an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has been released and reviewed by the public for 45 days. Once that is done, the Council will submit its regulations to the OAL for a different 45-day public review.

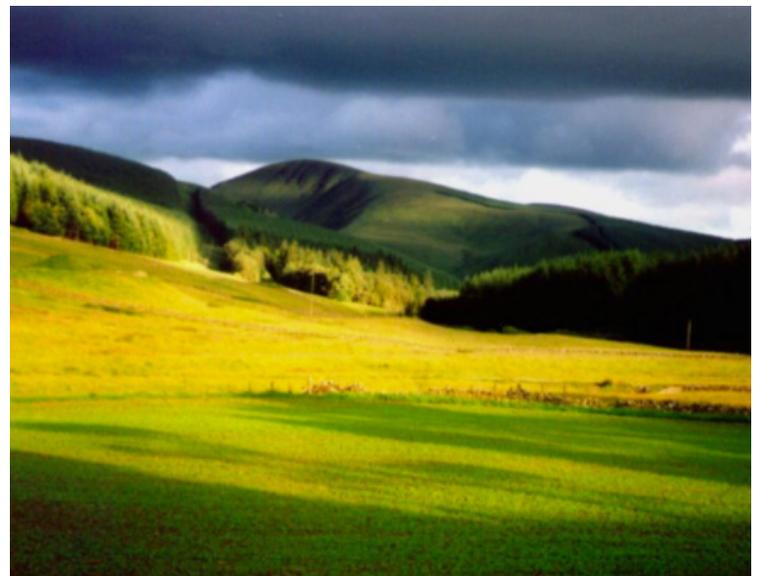
If the OAL approves the proposed regulations set forth in the Plan, the policies are then moved to the secretary of state for final approval.

To review the current draft of the Delta Plan, click [HERE](#).



Courtesy of the Department of Water Resources

If the Office of Administrative Law approves the proposed regulations set forth in the Delta Plan, the policies would then be moved to the secretary of state for final approval.

SNAPSHOTS OF THE DELTA

Photos Courtesy of the Department of Water Resources