

**DELTA STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL  
2020 PRIORITIES: PROGRESS REPORT**

TIMEFRAME

2020

JANUARY 2021: PROGRESS UPDATE

**STRENGTHEN AND IMPLEMENT THE DELTA PLAN**

Delta Levees Investment Strategy (DLIS)	2014- 2020	To be determined following review of comments on rulemaking				DLIS rulemaking was withdrawn in March 2020 to evaluate new levee condition (LiDAR elevation) data. Council staff anticipates presenting the results of the evaluation to the Council in Spring 2021. Staff is also considering revisions to proposed regulatory language and will begin seeking stakeholder feedback in early 2021.
Delta Plan Ecosystem Amendment	2017-2021	End of public review period	Initiation of CEQA		Draft EIR	The review period for the November 2019 Preliminary Draft Ecosystem Amendment concluded in January 2020. Staff presented a revised draft to the Council in May 2020, which serves as the project description for the Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff anticipates releasing a Draft PEIR for public review in Spring 2021, and presenting a Final PEIR and Ecosystem Amendment to the Council in Summer 2021.
Delta Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Strategy	2018-2021			Completion of Phase 1: Vulnerability Assessment	Stakeholder engagement and outreach	This effort has been rebranded as "Delta Adapts." Following two years of analysis, and supported by extensive stakeholder engagement, the Council will release a draft Vulnerability Assessment in January 2021 for public review and comment, and will initiate the second-phase Adaptation Strategy. Council staff have developed numerous communication tools to support Delta Adapts, including blog posts, an informational video, and interactive mapping tools.
Implementation of the Delta Plan Five-Year Review Report	2020	Administrative Procedures Workshops	Engagement in water planning guidelines (WRR1)	Updated Covered Actions web portal	Performance Measures outreach	<p><b>Administrative Procedures.</b> Updates to the Council's Administrative Procedures for Appeals are currently planned for 2021.</p> <p><b>Water Planning Guidelines.</b> The Department of Water Resources (DWR) has released draft guidebooks for the preparation of Urban Water Management Plans and Agricultural Water Management Plans that include provisions describing how water suppliers may demonstrate reduced reliance on Delta water supplies. Staff coordinated extensively with DWR on the preparation of these guidelines.</p> <p><b>Covered Actions Web Portal.</b> Council Staff completed and released a comprehensive update to the Council's Covered Actions web portal in April 2020.</p> <p><b>Performance Measures Outreach.</b> Council Staff completed data updates and enhancements to the online Performance Measures Dashboard and coordinated with several agencies to update Administrative Performance Measures.</p>
Covered Actions	Ongoing	Covered action early consultation, certifications, and appeals as received				<p>In 2020, the Council received seven certifications of consistency for covered actions. One appeal was submitted by the Solano County Water Agency against the Westland Water District's Lower Yolo Ranch Restoration Project and was subsequently withdrawn.</p> <p>Additionally, Council staff distributed 20 detailed comment letters to identify potential covered actions and to ensure state and local agencies are aware of the Delta Plan's requirements and how they may apply to their work. This outreach is part of our early consultation process, which successfully engages state and local agencies regarding certification of consistency requirements.</p>

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**BUILD CAPACITY FOR ONE DELTA ONE SCIENCE**

2021-2025 Science Action Agenda (SAA)	2020-2021	Identification of management needs*			Begin development of draft SAA	<p>The Council hosted a collaborative workshop in September 2020 to identify priority management questions, after receiving nearly 1,300 suggested management questions via broad community input. Through the workshop and multiple online surveys, the initial list of management questions was distilled to 75 questions. These top questions provide the foundation for priority science actions to be included in 2022 - 2026 Science Action Agenda. The Delta Science Program will host a second community workshop in Spring 2021 to identify clear science actions to be included in the updated document.</p>
Science Funding and Governance Initiative - Recommendations and Actions	2018-2021		Development of Science Tracker	Develop scope for critical review of science funding	<p>Science Needs Assessment Workshop</p> <p>Report to DPIIC</p>	<p><b>Science Tracker:</b> The Council awarded a contract to develop the Science Tracker in April 2020. Five interagency advisory team workshops were held in Summer and Fall 2020 to scope the design and functions of the Science Tracker. A prototype for the tool is expected in Spring 2021.</p> <p><b>Science Needs Assessment.</b> The workshop was held virtual October 5-6, 2020 and was preceded by four virtual discussions focused on workshop topics. The workshop was attended by over 150 people and the virtual discussions saw 75-125 participants each.</p> <p><b>Develop Scope for Critical Review of Science Funding.</b> With the ongoing development and implementation of the Science Needs Assessment, the timing of this activity will be reassessed following completion of Science Needs Assessment.</p>
Implementation of additional Delta Science Plan Actions <i>see Funding for Critical Science Investigations, Delta Science Funding and Governance Initiative, Science Action Agenda, and Other Major Events for additional details</i>	2020		Release of Final Social Science Task Force Strategy Report			<p><b>Spring 2020:</b> Social Science Task Force Report released. Briefings from Task Force members to the Delta Stewardship Council and DPIIC.</p> <p><b>December 2020:</b> In a partnership with California Sea Grant, the Council hires a Social Scientist Extension specialist (Dr. Jessica Rudnick) to further a social science agenda for the Delta and integrate social sciences with natural sciences. (Science Plan Action 3.2).</p> <p><b>Summer - Fall 2020:</b> Formation of the State of the Bay-Delta Science Editorial Board for the 2022 edition, which will focus on the "Services and Disservices of Plants and Algae in the Bay-Delta." (Science Plan Action 2.3).</p>
Fund Critical Science Investigations	Ongoing				Announcement of solicitation	<p>The Council released the 2021 Solicitation for Delta Science Proposals on November 9, 2020, with an expectation to award \$9 Million to high quality research with pooled funds from the Delta Science Program and the Bureau of Reclamation. In December 2020, the Council received 134 Letters of Intent to submit full proposals, due on February 12, 2021. This early signal of high interest in the Solicitation indicates that nearly \$80 Million in research funds will be requested. In early summer 2021, the Delta Science Program expects to present to the Council members with these funding recommendations.</p>

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**STRENGTHEN LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNICATIONS**

<p>Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee (DPIIC) <i>see Delta Science Funding and Governance Initiative Recommendations and Actions for additional details</i></p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Meeting #13</p>	<p>Meeting #14</p>		<p>Meeting #15</p>	<p>DPIIC met three times: in-person in March and virtually in July and October. The March meeting focused on the Delta Science Funding and Governance Initiative; draft recommendations from the Social Science Task Force; ecosystem-based management; and aquatic weed control. The July meeting continued the discussion on ecosystem-based management as well as actions to achieve ongoing, consistent, and reliable science funding. The October meeting included an update on the Science Needs Assessment and a panel discussion on climate resilience efforts in the Delta, the Bay, and statewide.</p>
<p>Other Major Events and Milestones</p>	<p>2019-2020</p>	<p>Release of Draft Water Portfolio  Implementation of Communication Strategy begins  Council review and endorsement of Public Participation Plan</p>	<p>Green Tape Initiative</p>		<p>Science Communications Workshop</p>	<p><b>Release of Water Resilience Portfolio.</b> Released in summer 2020, this document directs state agencies to pursue a number of actions critical to furthering the coequal goals including: completion of the Council's Delta Adapts work; addition of reduced reliance element to water management plans; and implementation of Delta ISB's guidance to improve Delta monitoring.</p> <p><b>Green Tape Initiative.</b> Led by the Natural Resources Agency, this initiative intends to increase the pace and scale of ecological restoration and stewardship. The report, which was released in fall 2020, includes several recommendations for improving regulatory processes for projects that benefit the environment.</p> <p><b>Communications Strategy.</b> Council staff finalized and began implementing a process-driven Communications Strategy to guide communication efforts and the development of project-specific communications. Templates have been developed to provide greater support and standardization to all Council materials.</p> <p><b>Public Participation Plan.</b> The Council approved the public participation plan and staff is working closely with all divisions to integrate public participation into all aspects of our work. This includes the development of project-specific public participation plans to work in coordination with communication efforts.</p> <p><b>Science Communications Workshop.</b> While preliminary scoping discussions among Council staff took place, this workshop did not occur in 2020, but will be considered as a possible priority for 2021.</p>

\* In coordination with Delta Science Funding and Governance Initiative Recommendations and Actions and DPIIC