



INFORMATION ITEM

Snapshot Progress Summary of the 2022-2026 Science Action Agenda

Summary

In the face of recent funding challenges, including state budget problems, delays in solicitations, and reduced funding participation from other agencies, it's critical that the Council's Delta Science Program (DSP) is funding impactful, interdisciplinary research to ensure effective implementation of the 2022-2026 Science Action Agenda (SAA).

To understand the progress made to date, the DSP is working on a Snapshot Progress Summary (Snapshot) to evaluate implementation of the 2022-2026 SAA and inventory the number of projects contributing to each Science Action, the progress of each project, and the amount of funding invested in the 2022-2026 SAA by the DSP and funding partners thus far. Findings from the Snapshot will be critical to informing who future DSP funding can prioritize remaining gaps in the SAA. The Snapshot, along with other Council-led efforts like the Research Impact Assessment which looks at outcomes from past funded projects, communicates the Council's funding transparency and efficacy to the Delta community.

Background

The SAA is a Council-led document created by and for the Delta community that was made to address concerns over the lack of transparency and guidance regarding Delta research and its funding. The SAA acts as a road map to organize, integrate, and prioritize research in the Delta, and it identifies priority science actions that address management needs, fill knowledge gaps, and guide science investments in the Delta. Examples from our current iteration include management needs that focus on climate change resilience and managing the Delta as a social-ecological system.

By aligning scientific actions with Delta management needs, the SAA advances DSP's mission of providing the best possible unbiased scientific information to

inform water and environmental decision-making in the Delta. ((Cal. Wat. Code section 85280(4)).

The SAA is a key part of DSP's Delta Science Strategy and is intended to promote the vision of 'One Delta, One Science,' which emphasizes collaboration and a unified approach to scientific research. The SAA guides DSP funding, including competitive research solicitations, directed actions, and other programmatic efforts such as the Delta Synthesis [Working Groups](https://bit.ly/4fKbaEy) (<https://bit.ly/4fKbaEy>) [Cyanobacterial Harmful Algal Bloom Monitoring Strategy for the Delta](https://bit.ly/47qQPCj) (<https://bit.ly/47qQPCj>), and the [State of Bay Delta Science](https://sbds.deltacouncil.ca.gov/) (<https://sbds.deltacouncil.ca.gov/>).

Snapshot Progress Summary Approach

The Snapshot evaluated 38 projects:

1. Eight 2022 Delta Science Fellows (DSF) projects
2. Six 2025 Delta Science Fellows (DSF) projects
3. Eight 2025 Delta Research Awards (DRA)
4. Eight Directed Actions (more information available: <https://bit.ly/3UIFDJw>)
5. Eight State Water Contractors (SWC) funded projects

These projects were selected because they were required to demonstrate how their research contributes to the implementation of the SAA in their proposals. Given that the SAA is the guiding document for priority Delta research, it's important that DSP funded projects clearly contribute to implementation and help advance the mission of best-available science. A future final progress summary will include other projects, particularly non-DSP projects, to capture the full range of progress across the Delta in implementing the SAA.

For the Snapshot, staff:

- Reviewed DSP-funded proposals by thoroughly evaluating the Science Actions selected by the lead researchers.
- Assigned a primary, secondary, and tertiary Science Action for each proposal.

- Noted the status of each project (initiated, ongoing, completed) and the amount of funding allocated to each project.

Following the review of proposals, staff analyzed the data and generated figures to convey the results.

Findings

The staff review found that 22 of the 25 Science Actions are being advanced by funded projects.

Science Actions receiving the most contributions are:

- 5B “Identify thresholds in the survival and health of managed fish and wildlife species”;
- 2A “Evaluate and update monitoring programs to ensure their ability to track and inform”; and
- 1A “Establish publicly accessible repositories, interactive platforms, and protocols”.
- Science Actions not currently advancing are: 2C “Enhance flood risk models through a co-production process with Delta communities”;
- 6B “Evaluate individual and cumulative impacts and tradeoffs of drought management actions”; and
- 6C “Evaluate the possible multi-benefits of management actions that promote groundwater recharge.”

The status of projects is evenly distributed across “initiated,” “ongoing” and “completed.” Initiated projects, make up 37% of total projects, ongoing projects comprise 29%, and completed projects make up the remaining 34%. Most completed projects were two-year DSF projects funded in 2022. The ongoing projects are predominately funded by SWC and began in 2023. Initiated projects are mostly 2025 DSF and DRA projects which began this spring. **Given that two-thirds of the projects are not yet complete, and half of those are only just beginning, the overall progress of implementing the SAA is in the earlier stages.**

The total amount of funding allocated to implement the 2022-2026 SAA to date is over \$16 million, whereas funding for the 2017-2021 SAA received roughly \$42

million in total. State budget challenges, delays in solicitations, and reduced funding from other agencies have limited the implementation progress to date for this iteration of the SAA. With less than two years remaining to implement the 2022-2026 SAA this Snapshot will help inform future actions aimed at leveraging future research funds.

Next Steps

Staff will keep the Council informed on further SAA implementation efforts in the future.

Fiscal Information

Not applicable.

List of Attachments

No attachments.

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