The Delta Plan

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The Problem: Water Supply vs. Demand
Water conservation has room for improvement

California has been using more water than nature provides

Overusing groundwater in key regions is a major problem

The Delta ecosystem is in trouble

Flood Risk in the Delta is very high

Delta ecosystem must be improved to ensure reliable water supplies
California’s Delta has long been a battleground for many competing interests
Efforts in recent years have yielded only incremental progress toward a comprehensive solution
Bipartisan passage of the Delta Reform Act of 2009 and companion legislation set forth groundbreaking new state policy
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
The Delta Reform Act created the Delta Stewardship Council (DSC) to develop a legally enforceable Delta Plan, guided by the coequal goals.

Independent state agency with seven members statewide with diverse backgrounds.

Delta Stewardship Council to adopt a legally enforceable Delta Plan to achieve those goals no later than Jan. 1, 2012.
What is the Delta Plan?

- Delta Plan seeks to achieve the coequal goals through long- and near-term actions.
- Coequal goals will be achieved in manner that is mindful of:
  - *Those who live, work, and recreate in the Delta region*
  - *Other statewide efforts to ensure the state’s water supply reliability*
Delta Plan draws upon existing state and federal laws and policies and ongoing programs to chart a course needed to achieve the coequal goals.

The Delta Plan is:

- Foundational
- Adaptable
- Practical
- Enforceable
Delta Plan Highlights (cont’d)

Water Resource Management

- Must live within our means
- Diversify and augment local and regional water supplies
- Complete BDCP
- Conservation, technology, wastewater recycling, stormwater capture, local storage, ground water remediation, interregional planning, desalinization and more
Delta Plan Highlights (cont’d)

Water Reliability and BDCP

– Exported water supplies are at risk
– Some water users are dependent on Delta water supplies without alternatives
– Investment in ecosystem to aid species recovery
– BDCP addressing these issues – needs to be completed
Delta Plan Highlights (cont’d)

Delta Flow Objectives

- Flow criteria needed to protect the ecosystem
- Needed to determine reliable levels for urban and agriculture allocations
- Set flow objectives will allow for conveyance options to be considered
Ecosystem Restoration

– 150 years of human modification
– Plan envisions a healthy ecosystem that supports viable populations of native species
  • A More Natural flow regime
  • Adequate habitat for native species
  • Other Stressors
Reduce Flood Risk

- Reduce risk to people, property and state interests in the Delta
- Require land use be connected to standardized levels of flood protection
- Increase public awareness
- 200-year level of protection for new development
- Locally controlled levee assessment district
 Improve Water Quality

– Salinity – levels negatively impact fish and degrade water quality for agriculture and municipal uses

– Drinking Water Quality – the Delta receives soils and sediments from many sources that degrade drinking water supplies

– Environmental Water Quality – pollutants that impair the Delta ecosystem are discharged into the Delta from numerous nonpoint sources
The Delta as an Evolving Place

- Economic Sustainability – economic development planning must occur while achieving the coequal goals
- Land Use and Resource Management – there must be an orderly and balanced process for conservation and development within the Delta
- Natural, Agricultural and Cultural Heritage must be protected and enhanced while achieving the coequal goals
Delta Plan Highlights (cont’d)

Financial Plan

– Achievement of the coequal goals requires a significant and sustained investment
– Requires legislative action
Summary

- 14 proposed regulatory policies are included in the Draft Delta Plan, 58 recommendations
- Encourages state and local agencies to implement local and regional projects
- Is dependent on other plans which are coming and will be updated as new information is available
- Sets direction necessary to achieve the coequal goals
Next Steps

- Complete environmental review process
- Analyze alternatives, including those presented by other organizations
- Develop specific financing options
- Submit Delta Plan to the Office of Administrative Law
- Complete final plan and present it to the legislature by Jan. 2012
- Begin near-term actions