

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

P.O. BOX 942836
SACRAMENTO, CA 94236-0001
(916) 653-5791



Dr. Laurel Larsen, Delta Lead Scientist
Delta Science Program, Delta Stewardship Council
715 P Street, 15-300
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Independent Letter Review of the Methodology for the Delta Smelt Summer-Fall Habitat Action Monitoring and Science Plans

Dear Dr. Larsen:

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) requests the Delta Science Program's (DSP) assistance in conducting an external, independent panel review of the subject topic. The 2020 Incidental Take Permit (ITP) for Long-Term Operation of the State Water Project in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta issued by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) requires development of science and monitoring plans to evaluate actions taken to improve Delta smelt habitat in the summer and fall seasons. These actions include, among others, operation of the Suisun Marsh Salinity Control Gates and support of a food subsidy for Delta smelt during the summer and fall. Additionally, the 2020 ITP requires independent review of the Summer-Fall Habitat Action (SFHA) and the science used to inform its efficacy in 2024 (Condition 3.13.8 of the 2020 ITP). DWR works with the interagency Delta Coordination Group to develop science and monitoring plans and engage in a structured decision-making approach to recommend SFHA implementation.

DWR would like to use the DSP's established independent scientific peer review and advice processes to receive feedback from subject matter experts on the SFHA science monitoring plans and approach. DWR would like the DSP to convene and facilitate a panel of subject matter experts to review the science and monitoring plans and decision approach for the SFHA. DWR would like each subject matter expert to provide a letter by summer of 2024 presenting their findings and recommendations for improvement of the materials to best inform evaluation of the SFHA. DWR will use the reviewers' findings to improve the scientific approach to inform adaptive management of the SFHA.

If you have any questions regarding this request, please contact Brittany Davis at Brittany.E.Davis@water.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

 Ted Craddock 3/15/2023

Ted Craddock
State Water Project Deputy Director
California Department of Water Resources