



## CALIFORNIA DELTA SCIENCE PROGRAM SEEKS LEAD SCIENTIST

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and the Delta Stewardship Council (Council) are seeking an internationally recognized scientist to become the Lead Scientist of the [Delta Science Program](#).

### THE DELTA

The Delta of the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers in California, 2800 km<sup>2</sup> in area, is one of the most significant water and environmental management challenges in the world. The Delta is the hub of California's water system, serving 25 million people, millions of acres of irrigated land, and is an engine of California's economy, the fifth largest in the world. The Delta is also home to more than 700 native species, over 30 of which are listed under the Federal or California Endangered Species Acts. Some of California's fastest growing urban areas are at the margins of the Delta, while the Delta itself supports significant agriculture and recreation. In 2009, the California legislature adopted the [Sacramento and San Joaquin Delta Reform Act](#), which established providing a reliable water supply and protecting, restoring, and enhancing the Delta ecosystem as coequal goals for managing the Delta. Under this act, the [Council](#) created the *Delta Plan* as a map to achieving these coequal goals. The Council's Delta Science Program published the 2013 *Delta Science Plan* (updated 2019), which set the vision of "One Delta, One Science" for acquiring, synthesizing, coordinating, and communicating best available science. The Delta Science Program supports scientific research in the Delta through competitive research solicitations and fellowships, and recently awarded nearly \$10 million in competitive funding for Delta science.

### THE POSITION

The Delta Lead Scientist "shall oversee the implementation of the Delta Science Program. In carrying out that responsibility, the Delta Lead Scientist shall regularly consult with the agencies participating in the program." (CA Water Code Section 85280 (b)(3)). "The mission of the Delta Science Program shall be to provide the best possible unbiased scientific information to inform water and environmental decision making in the Delta. That mission shall be carried out through funding research, synthesizing and communicating scientific information to policymakers and decision makers, promoting independent scientific peer review, and coordinating with Delta agencies to promote science-based adaptive management. The Delta Science Program shall assist with development and periodic updates of the Delta Plan's adaptive management program." (CA Water Code Section 85280(b)(4)).

## **Job Summary:**

The Delta Lead Scientist is responsible for providing unbiased science expertise to the Council, the Delta Science Program, and the Delta science community, by upholding the highest possible standards of scientific integrity and credibility and for providing scientific leadership to achieve the vision of “One Delta, One Science” set forth in the Delta Science Plan.

The Lead Scientist must at all times maintain an unbiased, independent, policy-neutral perspective that equally serves all Delta interests while impartially presenting the best available scientific information relating to relevant issues of concern.

## **The Responsibilities of the Lead Scientist are to:**

- Provide independent science leadership, oversight, and guidance for the Delta Science Program;
- Hold primary responsibility for the quality of scientific products produced by the Delta Science Program and for maintaining an unbiased, independent perspective that equally serves all Delta interests while impartially identifying the best available scientific information for Delta decision makers;
- Ensure quality control of scientific synthesis products (e.g., State of Bay-Delta Science and the Science Action Agenda) and processes (e.g., independent peer-review panels) facilitated by the Delta Science Program;
- Anticipate upcoming issues of scientific concern and guide the Delta Science Program and Delta science community to consider research to address them;
- Promote the use of integrated science for Delta planning, management, and ecosystem restoration to top-level regional, State, and Federal staff and legislators;
- Serve as the principal science advisor to the Council and actively participate in providing high-level technical advice on complex and controversial Delta hydrologic and ecosystem issues;
- Advise the Council on Federal- and State-led science in the Delta and work with representatives from regional, State, and Federal agencies and partners to facilitate communication between the agencies, create a common vision, and use scientific information to forge a middle ground between the sometimes conflicting needs of regulatory and management agencies;
- Serve as the principal science liaison between the Council, the Delta Science Program, and the Delta Independent Science Board;
- Regularly meet with local, State, and Federal partner agencies engaged in the Delta;
- Oversee the scientific review of key and sometimes controversial scientific issues relevant to State, Federal, and stakeholder proposals for activities in the Delta;
- Facilitate the exchange and synthesis of scientific information in response to management and regulatory needs;
- Ensure that the Delta Plan and Delta Science Plan support adaptive management of the Delta, which depends on unbiased science and informed monitoring;
- Oversee the scientific content of, and scientific support for, Delta Plan amendments;
- Oversee implementation of the Delta Science Plan and its components, and work collaboratively to make periodic updates to the Delta Science Plan;
- Through an open solicitation, solicit nominations and applications for vacancies on the Delta Independent Science Board and make recommendations to the Council for appointment;

- Guide (1) the annual work plan for the Delta Science Program and (2) the Delta Science Program's research grant and fellowship programs, in coordination with the Council's executive officer;
- Consult with the Council's executive officer, chief deputy, and the deputy executive officer for science who are responsible for day-to-day management of Delta Science Program staff and budget; and
- Advise and mentor Delta Science Program staff, primarily to assist them in their advancement as scientists.

## THE INDIVIDUAL

California law sets forth the basic qualification requirements of the Delta Lead Scientist (CA Water Code sections 85280(b)(1)). The Lead Scientist shall meet all of the following qualifications:

1. Hold an advanced degree in a field related to water or ecosystem management.
2. Have a strong record of scientific research and publication in peer-reviewed scientific journals in a field related to water or ecosystem management.
3. Have experience advising high-level managers in science-based decision making in the areas of water management and ecosystem restoration.
4. Have the capability to guide the application of an adaptive management process to resource management policy decisions in the Delta.

## THE APPOINTMENT

The Lead Scientist is secured through a multi-year appointment with the USGS. The appointment can be either (1) an assignment to the USGS from any public university or non-profit institution via the Intergovernmental Personnel Act Mobility Program; or (2) as a limited-duration USGS position. The Lead Scientist will work at the Council offices in downtown Sacramento, California.

## TO APPLY

Please send a Letter of Interest and Curriculum Vitae to Mike Chotkowski at [mchotkowski@usgs.gov](mailto:mchotkowski@usgs.gov). For additional information, please call Mike at 916-203-5580. Applications received by October 15, 2019 will receive priority consideration. The Lead Scientist position begins in fall 2020.



*The Delta Stewardship Council strives to be an inclusive organization that values diversity at all levels of the organization and is committed to fostering an environment in which employees from a variety of backgrounds, cultures, and personal experiences are welcomed and can thrive.*