

## Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee Meeting Report

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**Summary:** The Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee met for the third time on May 11, 2015, pursuant to Water Code Section 85204. Staff will report to the Council on the meeting and its outcomes. Agenda items and discussions focused on furthering progress on the coequal goals and actionable science.

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### **Background**

The Delta Stewardship Council established the Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee (DPIIC/Committee) after adoption of the Delta Plan in 2013 and continues to coordinate and oversee its activities as required by the Delta Reform Act. The third meeting of the DPIIC took place on Monday, May 11, 2015.

The Committee strives to facilitate Delta Plan implementation through increased coordination and integration in support of shared national, statewide and local goals for the Delta. Maintaining focus on the intersection of Delta Plan and *California Water Action Plan* implementation with federal interests in the Delta, Council staff aims to craft a balanced agenda that highlights progress on achieving the coequal goals through four key elements: water supply reliability, Delta ecosystem health and restoration, Delta as a Place, and best available science in support of “One Delta, One Science”. The May 11 meeting included agenda items and discussions on new momentum in habitat restoration, actionable science, funding criteria for water storage projects, interagency coordination to eradicate invasive aquatic vegetation, and flood and ecosystem integration efforts in the Yolo Bypass.

### **DPIIC Endorsed High-Impact Science Actions for Near-term Implementation:**

Last November, the Committee accepted the Interim Science Action Agenda (ISAA) as a reference for guiding regional science activities in support of policy and management decisions in the Delta. Upon acceptance of the ISAA, DPIIC members agreed to commit science and policy managers to:

- 1) Secure a cross-agency understanding of priority science needs in the Delta, and
- 2) Identify a short list of high-impact, multi-benefit science actions for immediate implementation in 2015-2016 and report back to the DPIIC at the next meeting.

Through two facilitated workgroup meetings of key policy and science managers using the ISAA as the foundation, a draft list was developed that recommends a suite of high-impact science actions that will allow for joint implementation efforts among various agencies and members of the Delta science community.

The suite of actions supports the following four priority topic areas:

- Assessing drought-related effects on the Delta
- Effectiveness and implications of habitat restoration actions
- Science support for management of estuarine and migratory species
- Science supporting flood risk reduction and the economies of Delta communities

Dr. Peter Goodwin and Council staff presented the workgroup outcomes and secured DPIIC endorsement, a consensus-based action that allows the workgroup to pursue joint implementation of the suite of high-impact science actions.

### **California Water Commission: Funding for Water Storage**

Joseph Byrne, Chair of the California Water Commission, provided information on the Commission's role and current activities for improving statewide water storage. With the passage of Proposition 1, the Commission is developing the competitive public process to allocate \$2.7 billion in funding for the public benefits of water storage projects. Clarifying questions on the part of several DPIIC members led to discussion around the range of water storage projects eligible for funding and the categories of public benefits suitable for funding, i.e. emergency response.

### **Interagency Efforts to Eradicate Invasive Aquatic Vegetation:**

Dr. Patrick Moran, USDA-Agricultural Research Service, and Acting Deputy Director Christopher Conlin, California State Parks-Division of Boating and Waterways, presented on State and federal coordination activities to combat invasive aquatic weeds and their impact on the Delta.

The extreme nuisance and economic hardship resulting from non-native weeds clogging pumps, limiting water operations, inundating marinas, and blocking key waterways has required emergency mechanical removal and application of herbicides. Over the past year, State and federal agencies, along with local governments and stakeholders, have come together to address management and funding challenges to eradicate these prolific floating and stationary invasive species. Most DPIIC member agencies are impacted by this issue and discussed the need not just to respond to the problem, but to get ahead of it, identify a strategy to manage these invasive species in the long term, and secure a more consistent source of funding to do so. The need for agencies to work together on this issue was evident and DPIIC members lauded Division of Boating and Waterways and USDA-Agricultural Research Service for their leadership.

### **Flood and Ecosystem Integration Efforts in the Yolo Bypass:**

At the DPIIC inaugural meeting in April 2014, Central Valley Flood Protection Board President Bill Edgar commented on the need for improved integration of flood and ecosystem planning in the Yolo Bypass. A year later, under the leadership of Kris Tjernell at the Natural Resources Agency, a panel of local, State and federal representatives reported on the coordination work in the Yolo Bypass to date and how this will tie into the Governor's California EcoRestore program.

David van Rijn with US Bureau of Reclamation, Jeremy Arrich with California Department of Water Resources (Division of Flood Management) and Jim Provenza, Yolo County Board of Supervisor, all provided information on how their respective agencies are interacting and working together in the Bypass. In particular, Yolo Project and State flood teams are holding regular meetings as of 2015 to coordinate and assess integration options. Specific goals and objectives are being drafted and development of a unifying framework for principal agencies and stakeholders is underway.

Chair Fiorini expressed his view that the Yolo Bypass is a valuable testing ground for the challenges of program integration and permitting. DPIIC members collectively expressed their continued support for this effort and look to receiving a report at the next meeting on November 16, 2015.

#### **Meeting Outcomes:**

Chair Fiorini reviewed the meeting outcomes and identified the following issues as requiring follow up at the next DPIIC meeting:

- **High-Impact Science Actions Implementation Report** – Staff was directed to provide an update on progress toward implementing the endorsed list of high-impact Delta science actions. Chair Fiorini expressed the importance of DPIIC members to use this effort to work to better coordinate state and federal budget processes in support of science.
- **Yolo Bypass Partnership Update** – It was agreed that DPIIC presents a good opportunity for the interested and affected agencies to be updated on progress and impediments to integrating flood and ecosystem planning in the Yolo Bypass. This partnership effort is being highlighted as a model for future public agency alignment, the needs of which are imminent due to the Administration's recent announcement of California EcoRestore program.
- **Collaborative Work on Eradicating Invasive Aquatic Vegetation** – Chair Fiorini has asked for a written summary update in November to inform DPIIC of progress to manage non-native aquatic vegetation eradication and better utilize resources that are and can be made available in the near-term.
- **Delta Levee Investment Strategy Update** – Council staff will brief DPIIC on the development of its draft strategy to prioritize investments in Delta levees as it enters the final project phases.
- **Progress Report on Landscape Scale Restoration Planning** – Campbell Ingram with the Delta Conservancy offered to provide a progress report on the first regional strategy developing the Northeast Delta Cosumnes Corridor, stating that it is a template of how agencies and stakeholders do collaborative, coordinated, and integrated restoration planning.

- **DPIIC Agency Accountability** – DPIIC member recommendation to Chair Fiorini is to have DPIIC members come prepared to report out on each agenda topic as it relates to their agency in order to show accountability, foster dialogue among members and discuss how member agencies are and can continue to be part of the solution.
- **NEXT MEETING:** Monday, **November 16, 2015**, Sheraton Grand Hotel, 1230 J Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

**In attendance:** (alphabetical)

Gordon Burns, Undersecretary, CalEPA (*for Secretary Matt Rodriguez*)

Joe Calcara, Senior Executive, South Pacific Division, USACE

Scott Cantrell, Water Branch Chief, CDFW (*for Director Chuck Bonham*)

Dan Castleberry, Asst. Regional Director, USFWS (*for Regional Director Ren Lohofener*)

Mark Cowin, Director, DWR

Bill Edgar, President, CVFPB

Randy Fiorini, Council and DPIIC Chair

Dr. Peter Goodwin, Lead Scientist, Council Delta Science Program

Campbell Ingram, Executive Officer, Delta Conservancy

Felicia Marcus, Chair, SWRCB

David Murillo, Regional Director, Mid-Pacific Region, USBR

Karla Nemeth, Deputy Secretary for Water Policy, CNRA (*for Secretary John Laird*)

Mary Piepho, Chair, DPC

Maria Rea, Asst. Regional Administrator, NOAA Fisheries (*for Reg. Administrator Will Stelle*)

Karen Ross, Secretary, CDFA

Mark Sogge, Pacific Regional Director, USGS

**Contact**

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