

Appointment of New Lead Scientist

Requested Action: Review the recommendation from the Delta Independent Science Board and appoint Dr. Clifford N. Dahm as Lead Scientist for the Delta Science Program.

Recommendation

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Reform Act of 2009 requires the Council to appoint a Lead Scientist for the Delta Science Program after consultation with the Delta Independent Science Board (ISB) (Water Code § 85280 (b)). The Delta ISB recommends that the Council appoint Dr. Clifford N. Dahm as Lead Scientist for the Delta Science Program.

Background

Water Code § 85280(b) requires that the Council appoint a Lead Scientist after consultation with the Delta Independent Science Board. Dr. Peter Goodwin's Lead Scientist term ended in January 2015; however, he agreed to continue as Lead Scientist through the Lead Scientist recruitment period. Members of the Delta ISB and key science and policy leaders from Delta agencies and stakeholders formulated a robust interview panel. Three candidates were interviewed but no offer was made, and the recruitment process will continue. In the interim, Dr. Clifford (Cliff) Dahm offered to fill the position of Delta Lead Scientist. The Delta ISB unanimously voted to recommend the Delta Stewardship Council appoint Dr. Dahm as Delta Lead Scientist on August 14, 2015 (Attachment 1).

Nominee

Dr. Cliff Dahm previously served one term as Lead Scientist with the CALFED Bay-Delta Program (2008 – 2010) and the Delta Stewardship Council (2010 – 2012). He is Professor Emeritus at the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico. The scope of his research has extended to regional, national and international levels, with particular contributions in the field of resource issues and emerging problems in ecosystem restoration and water management. Dr. Dahm also served as the Program Director for the Integrative Graduate Education Research Traineeship (IGERT), an interdisciplinary (aquatic ecology, hydrology and geochemistry) and inter-institutional (with the University of Alabama) project that has produced numerous high-quality publications and successful scientific careers.

Dr. Dahm currently serves on the scientific committee for the Catalan Water Research Institute (ICRA) in Spain, the international working group on Intermittent River Biodiversity Analysis and Synthesis (IRBAS) in France, and is a member of the science

advisory board for GLOBAQUA, a major European Union project looking at the impact of multiple stressors on rivers on Mediterranean rivers.

Recruitment and Interview Process

The Lead Scientist recruitment process included direct recruitment by the Delta ISB members, the Delta Lead Scientist and members of the scientific community. These recruitment efforts targeted candidates that met the qualifications as defined in statute (Water Code § 85280(b) (1)):

- (A) Hold an advanced degree in a field related to water or ecosystem management.
- (B) Have a strong record of scientific research and publication in peer-reviewed scientific journals in a field related to water or ecosystem management.
- (C) Have experience advising high-level managers in science-based decisionmaking in the areas of water management and ecosystem restoration.
- (D) Have the capability to guide the application of an adaptive management process to resource management policy decisions in the Delta.

The recruitment efforts concluded in the identification of Dr. Cliff Dahm as a qualified candidate. The Delta ISB is recommending that Dr. Dahm be appointed to the position of Lead Scientist to fulfill a second term. If appointed by the Council, Dr. Dahm would be hired directly through the USGS in September 2015 and serve a 1 – 2 year term.

Fiscal Information

Funding for the Lead Scientist is provided by the U.S. Geological Survey as the federal partner of the Delta Science Program. The Lead Scientist is a USGS employee.

List of Attachments

Attachment 1: Letter of Recommendation from the Delta ISB
Attachment 2: Dr. Cliff Dahm's Curriculum Vitae

Contact

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