

Delta Levees Investment Strategy Update

Summary: The Delta Levees Investment Strategy (DLIS) will inform prioritization of State investments in levee operation, maintenance, and improvements in the Delta in accordance with Water Code section 85306. Staff will provide an update on activities leading to the development of the Delta Levees Investment Strategy.

Background

In July 2015 an Independent Scientific Review Panel (Panel) submitted the report from its review of the DLIS methodology. The charge to the Panel was to review the scientific basis for the methodology developed in support of the Delta Levees Investment Strategy and to provide advice to ensure that the approach taken was transparent, robust, and sufficiently sensitive to quantify and prioritize the assets and risks to State interests associated with each leveed island and tract in the Delta. Staff brought a summary of the recommendations received to the Council in August.

Council staff have been reviewing the Panel comments with our agency partners and determining an agreed-upon course of action to address these comments. For today's briefing, staff will provide updates on this process as well as on several outreach activities.

Delta Levees Investment Strategy Update

Response to Independent Scientific Review Panel Report

Council staff and the ARCADIS team, along with key partner agencies including the Department of Water Resources (DWR), have been reviewing the recommendations made by the Panel. Specifically, staff have been:

- Confirming with key partner agencies that the water supply disruption metric, that allows us to access risk to water supplies from a levee failure, is adequate given currently available data/information
- Verifying, with key stakeholders, the islands that are important to water supply disruption as identified by the decision-support tool
- Conducting additional analysis (outside of the decision-support tool) of the likelihood and effects of levee failures on multiple islands

The goal has been to reach an agreement on how best to address the Panel's comments using available information and within the time and scope of the project. Any changes to the methodology will be incorporated in the decision-support tool as appropriate. Although no formal response to the Panel report is required, Council staff

and the ARCADIS team have been preparing responses to the recommendations and these will be made public upon completion of our discussions with DWR.

Outreach and Coordination

On November 30, Council staff and the ARCADIS team met with California Department of Fish and Wildlife Director Chuck Bonham, Central Valley Flood Protection Board President Bill Edgar, DWR Director Mark Cowin, and other key staff to discuss DLIS project status and updates. Council staff also provided an overview of the DLIS decision-support tool.

On December 11, Council staff and the ARCADIS team met with representatives of local flood control agencies, Delta water agencies, Delta residents and other key stakeholders to provide an update of recent DLIS activities and to discuss the methodology used by the decision-support tool and expected activities for 2016.

On December 15, Council staff participated in DWR's Small Communities Flood Risk Reduction workshop. This was an opportunity to demonstrate the coordination of efforts between agencies.

Next Steps

DLIS Decision-support Tool

In in the coming months, Council staff will undertake the following activities:

- Incorporate, as feasible, additional sources of data/information (per stakeholder comments at the October 12 DLIS workshop) including information on habitat protection easements and discuss with North Delta water users which islands are key to protecting their water supply.
- Continue QA/QC of data currently in the decision-support tool.
- Use the decision-support tool to evaluate with focus groups and the public the importance of Delta islands' levees to managing risk to levees, property, and state interests.
- Recommend a list of Delta islands/tracts ranked by risk for Council consideration and approval. This list will form the basis for developing alternative levee investment concepts.
- Develop levee improvement investment concepts (e.g., levee armoring, set-back levees and other "green" improvements, increased height/width improvements, etc.), through an interactive process with stakeholder groups (e.g., flood management experts, water users, environmental groups, and others). Information will be used to assess and rank alternative investment concepts' effectiveness in reducing risks to key Delta assets.

In early- to mid-2016, staff will present alternative investment portfolios as an output of the decision-support tool to the Council and stakeholders. These investment portfolios will inform further discussion and deliberations regarding overall risk-reduction, cost-

effectiveness and tradeoffs. Results of these discussions and subsequent Council guidance on preferred investment portfolios will inform a draft investment strategy and alternatives, including a preferred alternative, to include in the draft Environmental Impact Report.

Non-structural Alternatives

Over the coming months, staff will follow up with state and local emergency managers to gather information on the suite of potential and proven non-structural measures and estimates of how the cost and risk reduction potential of these alternatives compare to more traditional levee investments.

Staff will also coordinate with county flood management staff who are responsible for National Flood Insurance Program implementation to determine how expanded participation in the Community Rating System could be encouraged to possibly reduce flood insurance rates.

List of Attachments

Attachment 1: Project Schedule

Contact

Dustin Jones
Supervising Engineer

Phone: (916) 445-5891