

Information Item

Discussion of Potential Prioritization of State Investments in Delta Levees as Part of the Delta Levees Investment Strategy

Summary: The Delta Levees Investment Strategy (DLIS) will inform prioritization of State investments in levee operations, maintenance, and improvements in the Delta in accordance with Water Code section 85305. Staff will discuss with the Council a range of potential prioritizations of State investments in Delta levees based on risk to State interests.

Background

Over the past few months, the project team has provided the Council updates on the interrelationships between State interests protected by the Delta's levees and estimates of risk to those levees. At the April 2016 Council meeting, the DLIS team presented maps showing where State interests are protected by levees within the Delta and Suisun Marsh and also where potential tidal habitats could be restored if levees were altered. At the May 2016 Council meeting, the project team presented maps showing where risks to those levees had been identified within the Delta and Suisun Marsh.

At the June Council meeting, staff updated the Council regarding recent outreach efforts with stakeholders and the public. These latest outreach efforts were intended to solicit feedback about the assets and risk maps represented in the decision-support tool and also to provide additional opportunities for public participation including input from participants in developing a risk-based, tiered listing of islands. Of the 50 participants that staff met with in June, 12 provided feedback on how they would prioritize investments. Of these 12, seven ranked life as the highest priority for protection. Property was ranked as the second highest priority for protection by five respondents. The loss of non-tidal habitat and damage to legacy towns each received four votes as the lowest on the list of interests to protect.

General Update

For today's briefing, the DLIS team will use the decision-support tool to present potential prioritizations of State investments in Delta levees based on risk to State interests. Prioritizations can be based on risk to life, risk to property, risk to water supply, risk to habitat, and Delta as a Place. The presentation will show how varying approaches identify tradeoffs between State levee investments can affect the potential prioritization of islands and tracts for receiving State funding. Each prioritization is based on risk to State interest, which has been evaluated as the probability of a levee failure multiplied by the consequences of that failure.

Based on today's discussion and feedback received from Council members and stakeholders, staff will bring a draft recommendation on prioritization of State investments in Delta levees and other levee-related provisions to the August Council meeting.

Also, in response to questions from stakeholders, the DLIS team has developed an updated Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) sheet (Attachment 1). This FAQ is organized by topic, allowing the public and stakeholders to quickly access information specific to their area of interest.

Next Steps

In August, staff will present an initial recommendation on prioritization of State investments in Delta levees and other potential new, levee-related Delta Plan provisions. In September, the Council will be asked to take action on these draft recommendations so that staff can use the draft recommendations in public outreach sessions to solicit input and comments. Per the Council's request, an updated timeline of the actions necessary to complete the amendment process is included as Attachment 2 to this report.

Fiscal Information

Not applicable.

List of Attachments

Attachment 1: Frequently Asked Questions (*FAQ to be provided at Council Meeting*)
Attachment 2: Delta Levees Investment Strategy – Project Schedule

Contact

Dustin Jones
Supervising Engineer

Phone: (916) 445-5891