



CALIFORNIA DELTA SCIENCE PROGRAM SEEKS SCIENTIFIC LEAD

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

THE PROJECT:

The Delta of the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers in California, 2800 km² in area, is one of the largest and most significant water and environmental management projects in the world. The Delta is the hub of California's water system, serving 25 million people, millions of acres of irrigated land, and an engine of California's economy, the 6th largest in the world. The Delta is also home to more than 700 native species, 31 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 [Delta Stewardship Council](#) (Council) created the Delta Plan as a map to achieving these coequal goals. As a key first step in implementing the Delta Plan, the Council's Delta Science Program (Program) published the 2013 *Delta Science Plan* as a roadmap for the scientific community to take on the high-stakes science tasks and grand challenges of the Delta. With "One Delta, One Science" as a guiding vision, the Delta Science Program is a driving force within the scientific community for acquiring, synthesizing, and communicating best-available 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)).

The responsibilities of the Lead Scientist are to:

- Anticipate upcoming issues of scientific concern and guide the Delta Science Program (Program) and Bay-Delta science community to consider research to address them;
- Promote the use of integrated science for Bay-Delta planning, management, and ecosystem restoration to top-level regional, State, and Federal staff and legislators;
- Prepare scientific papers, memoranda, and reports on complex and controversial technical issues in the Bay-Delta for science-based management. Synthesize and summarize research related to the Bay-Delta;

- Regularly meet with the State, Federal and local partner agencies engaged in the Delta to identify where independent science can inform regulatory and management actions and to integrate scientific efforts among the partners;
- Work with regional partners to identify opportunities for the Program to coordinate independent scientific reviews.
- Oversee the scientific review of key and sometimes controversial scientific issues relevant to State, Federal and stakeholder proposals for activities in the Bay-Delta;
- Identify opportunities for dialogues and public discussions of technical ecosystem issues and oversee their communication, through public workshops and seminars, to bring new scientific results and ideas to the forefront;
- Facilitate the exchange and synthesis of scientific information in response to management and regulatory needs;
- Advise the Council on Federal- and State-led science in the Bay-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 advisor to the Council and actively participate in providing high-level technical advice on complex and controversial Bay-Delta hydrologic and ecosystem issues;
- Ensure that the *Delta Plan* and *Delta Science Plan* support adaptive management of the Bay-Delta, which depend on excellent science;
- Oversee implementation of the Council's *Delta Science Plan* and its components, and work collaboratively to make periodic updates to the *Delta Science Plan*;
- Serve as the principal science liaison between the Council, the [Delta Independent Science Board](#) (Delta ISB), and the Program;
- Through an open solicitation, solicit nominations and applications for vacancies on the Delta ISB and make recommendations to the Council for appointment;
- Provide independent science leadership, oversight, and guidance for the Program;
- Hold primary responsibility for the quality of scientific products produced by the Program and for maintaining an unbiased, independent perspective that equally serves all Bay-Delta interests while impartially identifying the best available scientific information for Delta decision makers;
- Coordinate with the Council's Executive Officer to guide (1) the annual work plan for the Program and (2) the Program's research grant and fellowship programs;
- Consult with the Council's Executive Officer and the Deputy Executive Officer for Science who are responsible for the day-to-day management of Program staff and the Science Program budget; and
- Motivate, advise, and mentor Program staff.

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 U.S. Geological Survey. 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 USGS position. The Lead Scientist will work at the Delta Stewardship Council office in downtown Sacramento, California.

TO APPLY

Please send a Letter of Interest and Curriculum Vitae to Michelle Shouse at mkshouse@usgs.gov. For additional information please call Michelle at 916-278-9560.