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# News Release

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## Delta Plan Takes Effect Sept. 1

*Office of Administrative Law approves portfolio of regulations to improve water supply reliability, preserve and restore the ecosystem, and protect and enhance the Delta*

SACRAMENTO – The State Office of Administrative Law (OAL) has approved the 14 regulations to implement the Delta Plan, which will take effect on September 1. The Delta Stewardship Council (Council) adopted the Delta Plan on May 16, and then submitted the proposed rules for review to the OAL, the state agency that ensures that proposed regulations are clear, necessary, legally valid, and available to the public.

“These 14 regulations help to ensure state and local agency compliance with the Coequal Goals of state law: providing a more reliable water supply for California and restoring the Delta ecosystem in a manner, done in a way that protects and enhances the Delta as an evolving place,” said Delta Stewardship Council Chair Phil Isenberg. “While the regulations are important, they are a relatively small portion of the Delta Plan, which also includes 73 recommendations dealing with a wide range of issues from groundwater management and surface storage improvement to the successful completion of the Bay Delta Conservation Plan and the designation of the Delta as a Natural Heritage Area.”

The new regulations apply to projects undertaken by state and local agencies that occur at least in part in the Delta. The Council has scheduled training sessions for those state agencies later this month and for cities and counties and other local government entities in September.

“State law told us to develop a legally enforceable Delta Plan that will guide state and local agency actions on water use and the Delta environment,” said Delta Stewardship Council Executive Officer Chris Knopp. “These regulations are a tool to accomplish that. Equally important, however, is the Council’s role in coordinating actions across the Delta, integrating best available science into day-to-day decision making and ensuring that progress is being made to achieve the state’s coequal goals of a statewide reliable water supply and a restored and enhanced Delta Ecosystem.”

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*“Coequal goals” means the two goals of providing a more reliable water supply for California and protecting, restoring, and enhancing the Delta ecosystem. The coequal goals shall be achieved in a manner that protects and enhances the unique cultural, recreational, natural resource, and agricultural values of the Delta as an evolving place.”*

– CA Water Code §85054

Another tool, Knopp said, will be a committee made up of agencies that are responsible for implementing the actions proposed in the Delta Plan. Governor Brown appointed Taryn Ravazzini, an attorney and former staffer for the Association of California Water Agencies, as the Council's Coordinator of the Delta Plan Implementation Committee on August 9. The new Committee will likely hold its first meeting in October.

The Delta Plan is *California's* plan for the Delta and ensures:

- A single blueprint for state and local agencies' actions to provide a more reliable water supply for California, and protect, restore and enhance the Delta ecosystem;
- A unified science initiative and improved accountability to achieve the co-equal goals in the Delta;
- An effective interagency coordination body to implement the portfolio of actions detailed in the Delta Plan; and
- That significant state and local agency actions occurring wholly or partly within the Delta are consistent with the Delta Plan, with the Council as an appellate body to enforce those rules in a fair and timely manner.

The 14 regulatory policies approved by the OAL include:

- Requiring those who use water from the Delta to certify in their water management plans that they are implementing all feasible efforts to use water efficiently and are developing additional local and regional water supplies;
- Reserving six high-priority areas for habitat restoration;
- Protecting agricultural land by requiring developers to locate new residential, commercial, or industrial development in areas planned for urban use;
- Requiring state and local agencies to locate, when feasible, water management facilities, ecosystem projects, and flood management infrastructure in ways that would reduce or avoid conflicts with agriculture and other existing planned uses; and requiring those agencies to consider locating the facilities on public land before using private land;
- Prohibiting encroachment on floodways and floodplains;
- Requiring developers of on new residential subdivisions to include a level of flood protection that anticipates sea levels rising due to climate change; and
- Setting priorities for State investment in Delta flood levees.

Among the 73 recommendations in the Delta Plan are:

- Updating statewide water-use efficiency goals, groundwater management plans for areas using Delta water, streamlining water transfer procedures and developing a statewide system for reporting how much water is used;
- Having the State Water Resources Control Board update water quality objectives for the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers, controlling or reducing other Delta stressors such as contaminants and invasive species, expanding floodplains and riparian habitats and locating habitat restoration to accommodate sea-level rise;
- Encouraging agritourism, wildlife friendly farming practices, and recreational opportunities in the Delta; and
- Creating a Delta Flood Risk Management District to provide adequate funding for flood control and emergency preparedness.

To view a copy of the Final Delta Plan, [please click here](#).

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#### ***About the Council***

Created by the legislature in 2009, the Delta Stewardship Council is composed of members who represent different parts of the state and offer diverse expertise in fields such as agriculture, science, the environment, and public service. Of the seven, four are appointed by the Governor, one each by the Senate and Assembly, and the seventh is the Chair of the Delta Protection Commission. For more information visit <http://deltacouncil.ca.gov/>