

# Delta Independent Science Board Educational Briefing Questionnaire

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Please provide short written responses to the following:

1. Program Title: Delta Levees Program (Program)

2. Lead Agency/Department for Program:

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) funds and administers the Program. Under an interagency agreement with DWR, the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) performs the mandated activities below.

3. Brief Description of Program:

The Program cost-shares with reclamation districts to maintain and improve the Delta levee system, and to protect and enhance fish and wildlife resources. The Program is required by the Water Code (starting at Section 12300) to provide no net loss and long-term improvement of fish and wildlife habitat in conjunction with levee work.

The Water Code specifically requires DFG to inspect habitat levels that may be affected by levee maintenance and improvement projects. DFG reviews and authorizes expenditures of funds for levee work only after it determines that full mitigation and net habitat improvement have been provided.

Working with DWR staff and about 75 reclamation districts, DFG performs assessments of existing habitats, determines potential impacts of levee work, identifies avoidance and mitigation measures, assists with the preparation of reclamation district plans, and provides advice early in the planning process on larger projects. In cooperation with DWR staff and reclamation districts, DFG designs and implements habitat restoration and monitoring plans, habitat enhancement projects, and invasive plant control measures.

4. Purpose and Objectives of Program:

The Program is mandated to maintain and improve Delta levees in conjunction with habitat improvement. DFG and DWR accomplish this by assuring that reclamation districts fully mitigate significant impacts to habitat and participate in programmatic habitat enhancement projects.

5. Timeline for Program Objectives:

The timeline is ongoing. Subject to DFG approval, DWR reimburses the cost share to the reclamation districts for levee maintenance work (Subventions) each fiscal year. Also with DFG approval, DWR reimburses reclamation districts for larger projects (Special Projects) under separate funding.

6. Current Status of Program:

Portions of the Program must be extended by legislation in 2013.

7. Contact Information for Lead Staff of this Program:

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Title	Program Supervisor, DFG
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8. Associated Total Annual Budget for Program:

The DFG annual budget is \$1,209,135. (Please refer to DWR response for the total budget of the Delta Levees Program.)

9. URL, if a Website is Available: N/A

10. How does adaptive management play a role in your program?

In conjunction with reclamation districts and DWR, DFG monitors the success of mitigation and enhancement sites to assure that goals and objectives are being met.

From the biological success of these sites, information from larger planning efforts, the literature, and successes in similar habitats in other programs, we propose or require new or adjusted measures in future mitigation and enhancement efforts.

11. Any additional information that would be helpful to understand the program:

The Program's unique dual commitment (in concept and in funding) to levees and to fish and wildlife resources is the foundation for the collaboration between the local districts, DWR, and DFG. Districts and their respective engineers work closely with DFG in the early phases of their projects to be assured of no surprises. DFG strives to be responsive to all parties involved in this process and this results in a streamlined regulatory process and long-term habitat protection.

**Thank you very much for taking the time to respond to this questionnaire. Please return your completed questionnaire to Gina Ford ([gina.ford@deltacouncil.ca.gov](mailto:gina.ford@deltacouncil.ca.gov)) no later than October 6, 2011.**