

Delta Independent Science Board Report

Summary: Delta Independent Science Board (Delta ISB) Chair Dr. Richard Norgaard will report on the Delta ISB's public meetings in July and August.

Delta Independent Science Board (Delta ISB)

Dr. Norgaard will brief the Council on the Delta ISB's public meetings on July 9-10, July 30 (teleconference), and August 16-17.

The main topics of discussion at the meetings in July were:

- The Delta ISB's reviews of the scientific research, monitoring, and assessment programs that support adaptive management of the Delta, as required by the Delta Reform Act of 2009. This discussion included an overview of science programs in the Delta that support adaptive management, identification of other reviewing agencies and how they conduct their reviews, and planning for how the Delta ISB will conduct its reviews.
- The Delta ISB's review of the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS).

As a result of these discussions, the Delta ISB decided to:

- Approach its reviews of science programs in the Delta by grouping programs by key themes. The first thematic review will focus on habitat restoration activities and on how adaptive management and climate change are incorporated into these activities. The Board will also review the structure of, and coordination among, programs.
- Develop a strategy for reviewing the BDCP Draft EIR/EIS when it is released for public review. This consisted of determining which chapters should be reviewed and by which member and identifying the need for consultant augmentation where members felt the Board's collective expertise would not be sufficient. In addition, each Board member present agreed to look at one chapter available as part of the BDCP Administrative Draft EIR/EIS to determine the level of effort that would be needed to conduct the review.

During the August meeting, the Delta ISB began its review of habitat restoration programs. Delta ISB members discussed habitat restoration programs with managers from the following state and non-profit agencies:

- Department of Water Resources (DWR), Division of Environmental Services (DES)
- DWR, FloodSAFE Environmental Stewardship and Statewide Resources Office (FESSRO)
- Department of Fish and Game (DFG), Bay-Delta Region and Ecosystem Restoration Program

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- Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy
- State and Federal Contractors Water Agency
- The Nature Conservancy

The Board did not reach any conclusions or take any actions as the information it obtained will be folded into its report to the Delta Stewardship Council (DSC).

After hearing from agency managers, the Delta ISB adjourned the public meeting and separated into two-member teams to meet with state agency (DWR DES and FESSRO, and DFG) staff at their offices.

On the second day of the August meeting, Delta ISB members discussed:

- Attending the Bay-Delta Science Conference in October and using the conference as an opportunity to meet managers and staff associated with science programs in the Delta.
The Board decided that at its September teleconference it will determine which conference sessions each Board member should attend in order to avoid duplicating efforts.
- Review of the Delta Science Program's draft Strategic Plan.
Three members – Resh, Mount, and Meyer – will be asked to conduct the review when the draft Strategic Plan is available.
- The Delta ISB Work Plan (Attachment 1)
Members liked the timeline prepared by staff but requested that it be revised to include all the activities that the Board will be engaged in through 2015.
- Review of the BDCP Draft EIR/EIS
Five of the members reported on the chapters of the BDCP Administrative Draft EIR/EIS they had looked at. They agreed that they will need consultant support, that it is difficult to read only one chapter as each refers to other chapters, that they will need to focus on the big issues in each chapter, and ultimately, they will need to determine if the BDCP Plan is based on sound science.

The Delta ISB meeting notices and materials are posted online at:

<http://www.deltacouncil.ca.gov/science-board/isb-meetings>.

List of Attachments

Attachment 1: Delta Independent Science Board Work Plan

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