

Delta Independent Science Board Report

Summary: Delta Independent Science Board (Delta ISB) Chair Dr. Tracy Collier will report on the Delta ISB's public meetings in April, May, and June.

Delta Independent Science Board (Delta ISB)

Dr. Collier will brief the Council on the Delta ISB's public meetings held on April 22-23, May 17 (teleconference), and June 19-20, 2013.

The main topics of discussion at the April 22-23 meeting were:

- The Delta ISB's comment letter to the Council titled "BDCP Chapter 7 and Section 6 of Chapter 3, drafts of March 2013" (Attachment 1).

The Delta ISB's review of BDCP chapters 7 and 3 was conducted at the request of the Chair of the Council, Phil Isenberg. The chapters discuss the implementation structure for BDCP and adaptive management. The Delta ISB's comment letter "encourages BDCP to work closely with the Delta Science Program" and makes the following recommendations:

1. Integrate BDCP's science and monitoring into the Delta Science Plan.
2. Structure science and monitoring for independence from short-term interests.
3. Rethink the rules for the Adaptive Management Team.
4. Differentiate and elaborate the structure of the science-management interfaces.

Dr. Collier will present the contents of this letter in more detail at the Council meeting.

- The Delta ISB's review of the administrative draft of the BDCP DEIR/S.

Dr. Richard Norgaard, Past Chair, wrote a brief memo to Jerry Meral (Deputy Secretary, California Natural Resources Agency) titled "Administrative v. public draft BDCP Environmental Impact Report/Statement" (Attachment 2). The memo requested that a summary or red-lined version of the public draft be provided that shows the differences between the administrative and public versions of the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Statement.

- The Delta ISB's science program review report titled "Habitat Restoration in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and Suisun Marsh: A Review of Science Programs" (Attachment 3).

This report is the first of the Delta ISB's reviews of science programs in the Delta. The report includes the following recommendations for habitat restoration in the Delta:

1. Coordinate and integrate the planning and implementation of habitat restoration projects to capitalize on synergies and complementarities among projects.
2. Include considerations of climate change and environmental uncertainty in the design and implementation of restoration projects.
3. Prioritize restoration projects.
4. Coordinate and integrate science to inform and guide restoration actions, adaptive management, and prioritization.

This report will be presented in greater detail to the Council at a later time.

- The Delta ISB's next review of science programs in the Delta, Fish and Flows. ISB members discussed the process used to collect information for the habitat restoration report and how they will modify the process for the Fish and Flows thematic review. Three members – Dr. Judy Meyer, Dr. Jay Lund, and Dr. Harindra (Joe) Fernando – will lead the review.

The main topics of discussion at the May 17 teleconference were:

- The administrative draft of the BDCP EIR/S. ISB members discussed their review assignments for the BDCP DEIR/S (Attachment 4), the charge questions from Lead Scientist Peter Goodwin (Attachment 5), which they accepted, and their overall impressions of the administrative draft of the EIR/S which they decided to formalize in a memo to the Delta Stewardship Council. The memo will be finalized at the June meeting.
- Dr. Ed Houde's resignation from the ISB. Goodwin will initiate the replacement process to fill the vacancy created by Houde's resignation. In the interim, ISB members and Goodwin agreed to ask Dr. Michael Healey, a former ISB member and Lead Scientist, to help the Board address fisheries issues.

At the June 19-20 meeting, Delta ISB members continued to prepare for their review of the BDCP DEIR/S, which included approval of their comment letter on the administrative DEIR/S (Attachment 6) and discussion of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the Natural Communities Conservation Planning program (NCCP). The Delta ISB also discussed the Fish and Flows program review and the draft Delta Science Plan.

List of Attachments

Attachment 1: BDCP Chapter 7 and Section 6 of Chapter 3, drafts of March 2013

Attachment 2: Memo to Jerry Meral, Deputy Secretary, California Natural Resources Agency. Administrative v. public draft BDCP Environmental Impact Report/Statement

Attachment 3: Habitat Restoration in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and Suisun Marsh: A Review of Science Programs

Attachment 4: Tentative Delta ISB Review Assignments for the BDCP EIR/EIS

Attachment 5: Charge to Delta ISB for Review of the Draft BDCP EIR/S

Attachment 6: DISB comments on current administrative draft of BDCP documents

Contact

Dr. Tracy Collier, Chair
Delta Independent Science Board

Phone: (916) 445-5511