

Delta Levee Investment Strategy Update

Summary: This report provides an update on the Delta Stewardship Council's (Council) activities related to the Delta Levee Investment Strategy. Staff will report on progress to date including: development of an initial outreach plan and webpage for this project, a risk reduction policy paper, and formation of an independent peer-review panel.

Background

The Delta Reform Act requires "The council, in consultation with the Central Valley Flood Protection Board, shall recommend in the Delta Plan priorities for State investments in levee operation, maintenance, and improvements in the Delta, including both levees that are a part of the State Plan of Flood Control and non-project levees" (Water Code Section 85306). In the Delta Plan, the Council directs itself, in consultation with the Department of Water Resources (DWR), the Central Valley Flood Protection Board (CVFPB), the Delta Protection Commission (DPC), local agencies, and the California Water Commission to implement Water Code Section 85306 by developing funding priorities for State investments in Delta levees by January 1, 2015 (Delta Plan recommendation RR R4 *Actions for the Prioritization of State Investments in Delta Levees*).

Progress to Date

In May 2014, the Council delegated authority to the Executive Officer to enter into a contract with ARCADIS to complete work on the levee investment strategy. A contract in the amount of \$1,981,491 was executed in June 2014. Prior to the contract being finalized, Council staff began work on several tasks related to initial outreach efforts, a risk reduction policy paper and the independent peer-review panel. This work includes:

- Developing an initial outreach plan that identifies many of the key Delta stakeholders that have extensive experience with and knowledge of the Delta's levees and who should be engaged early in this process. These meetings will commence over the next month.
- Developing draft charters for three working groups to help ensure successful completion of this project. These groups include; a technical group (to assist with technical review and assessment for the project's tasks), an interagency project management group (to monitor progress of project) and an interagency policy group (to review and discuss policy-level questions or issues that arise during project).

- Developing a two-page handout that provides an overview of the levee investment strategy for use as part of the outreach efforts (Attachment 1).
- Drafting an outline for a risk reduction policy paper that addresses the Council's overall Delta risk reduction vision and identifies how the Delta Levee Investment Strategy fits into this vision.
- Coordinating two planning meetings in preparation for selecting an independent peer-review panel. These meetings focused on gathering nominations for panel members and on drafting a charge for the panel. The Council's Lead Scientist for the Delta Science Program will select the panel members and Science Program staff will conduct the peer-review process.

In addition to the efforts describe above, staff along with the ARCADIS team have been planning for an internal "kick-off" meeting in late July to:

- Communicate and discuss staff expectations for this project with the ARCADIS team. Discuss and address questions from the ARCADIS team related to project tasks.
- Brief all Council staff with a role in this project on the details of the tasks and deliverables for the project.
- Discuss in detail each task in the project's scope of work to confirm all milestones, timelines, format of deliverables and task administration.
- Discuss the full-scale communication strategy including public meetings, outreach materials and timelines.

During the month of July, the ARCADIS team is focusing on two primary tasks: 1) compiling necessary data to begin developing the methodology for prioritizing state investments in Delta levees; and, 2) developing a full-scale communication plan that incorporates the staff's initial outreach plan.

Next Steps

Staff and the ARCADIS team will continue work on, or begin work on, the following tasks starting in July and will report to the Council monthly on the status of these efforts and other tasks as described in the scope of work for this project. Immediate next steps for this project include:

- Continue initial meetings with key Delta stakeholders and complete full-scale communication plan for ongoing outreach efforts.
- Develop a project webpage on the Council's website for sharing information such as, meeting notices and other outreach activities and important documents and draft reports as the project progresses.
- Compile data for methodology development.
- Begin drafting a risk reduction policy paper.
- Select and invite individuals to participate on the independent peer-review panel for this project.

List of Attachments

Attachment 1: Delta Levee Investment Strategy

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