

## Teleconference Summary

**March 27, 2013 (10:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. PDT)**

### 1. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 10:36 a.m., March 27, 2013, by the Chair of the Delta Independent Science Board (ISB or the Board), Dr. Richard Norgaard. Two members of the Board were physically present at the teleconference location in Sacramento: Richard Norgaard and Jay Lund. Eight members attended by phone: Brian Atwater, Elizabeth Canuel, Tracy Collier, Harindra (Joe) Fernando, Edward Houde, Judy Meyer (delayed), Vince Resh, and John Wiens.

None of the Delta ISB members made any new disclosures.

Delta Science Program (DSP) Staff in attendance were: Lauren Hastings, Peter Goodwin, and Joanne Vinton. Marina Brand attended by phone.

### 2. Discuss and finalize the report titled “DISB review of science programs that include habitat restoration in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and Suisun Marsh”

Canuel reorganized the [habitat restoration report](#) based on the key attributes of a successful restoration program, as defined by the Society for Ecological Restoration, and edited the text based on recommendations from the rest of the Board. She asked for comments on the section about research needs and said that the section needs additional examples.

Houde said that the report is lacking in science—the report advocates for restoration instead of recommending research that needs to be done. It was not clear to him what was meant by “independent science body”. Examples in the section on research needs should include integration and coordination.

Wiens stated that it is difficult to prescribe how science should be used. They do not want to recommend yet another review committee, but it is clear that there is no integration among the habitat restoration projects.

Through a written comment, Meyer said that she does not think that the report should have a research needs section. The Board’s charge is to review, not to design. She suggested calling for a workshop to set research needs with broad participation from those involved in Delta restoration. There was broad agreement with this suggestion.

Resh asked for more examples for the section on research needs. Depending on what Board members send to him, he will either expand the section or delete it. He and Canuel might add a recommendation to hold a workshop to discuss research priorities. Goodwin suggested that the Board consider how a workshop would fit the broader, more comprehensive science framework being developed in the Delta Science Plan.

Lund said that it would be useful to see presentations on, or have copies of, science plans for the Interagency Ecological Program, Department of Water Resources, State Water Contractors, and other organizations.

Houde said that the paragraphs about modeling should be strengthened by removing the phrase “when appropriate.”

Delta Independent Science Board Meeting  
March 27, 2013

Through written comments, Meyer suggested the following:

- Leave in the section on crediting. The crediting process needs to be based on clear scientific guidelines. That is part of science-based restoration practices. The report notes how the crediting process could bias or alter the goals of a project.
- Add a paragraph about the need for a more complete and continuously updated map of restoration projects. Katie Morrice, a State Fellow with the DSP, has been compiling information to produce a map, but the data are incomplete, and agencies are not yet comfortable with releasing it to the public.

The Board decided to wait until the April meeting to approve the report. Canuel, Resh, and Wiens will revise the report and will also write a short paper about their suggestions for future reviews.

**3. Discuss and finalize the Comment Letter titled “Comment Letter – Bay-Delta Plan SED” (State Water Resources Control Board’s Bay Delta Plan Draft Substitute Environmental Document for San Joaquin River Flows and Southern Delta Water Quality)**

Houde asked Diane Riddle, Environmental Program Manager, Division of Water Rights Hearings and Special Programs Section, to confirm a statement in the ISB’s [comment letter](#): “The ability to adaptively manage flow depends on the success of the San Joaquin River Monitoring and Evaluation Program.”

Riddle said that the ISB’s comment is correct. The SED and development of a monitoring plan will need to be implemented through the Regional Water Quality Control Boards, and issuance of water rights permits . The SED is only a planning document and was structured to maintain flexibility.

**Public Comment**

Audrey Patterson, representing the San Joaquin Tributaries Association (SJTA), referred to a statement in the ISB’s comment letter that points out that 60 percent of unimpaired flow provides the greatest benefit to salmon. She said that the State Water Resources Control Board’s (SWRCB) SED relies on its Technical Report as a scientific basis to support the general concept that more flow equals more fish. The Technical Report directly bases this theory on the Department of Fish and Wildlife’s Salmon Model 1.6. Doug Demko of FISHBIO ran Model 1.6 at 35 percent unimpaired flow and presented the [results](#) to the SWRCB at its informational hearing on March 20 and 21, 2013. The modeled results predict that fewer salmon return over a 10-year period compared with existing conditions. Over the last ten years actual returns yielded approximately 19,300 salmon; Model 1.6 predicted that over the last 10 years at 35 percent unimpaired flow, approximately 16,000 salmon would return. The model, therefore, predicted 3,300 fewer salmon returning under a 35 percent flow regime over the past 10 years. This shows that Model 1.6 is unreliable and suggests that conclusions in the Technical Report (and therefore the SED) are flawed. The SWRCB did not run the model, which is the foundation of its proposed unimpaired flow objectives, and is proposing objectives that predict less benefit to fish resources at an enormous cost to the region’s water supply. The SED does not analyze dry year impacts to either fish resources or water supply. These serious impacts are smoothed into an 82-year average, which illustrates less significant impacts than what would actually occur.

Riddle responded and said that they did not run the model and therefore the SED does not rely on Model 1.6’s results. The flow requirements are minimums. She agrees that they do not know the benefits and are proposing actions in an adaptive management framework.

Delta Independent Science Board Meeting  
March 27, 2013

Patterson countered that the SED indirectly relies on Model 1.6. She referred to the appendices as support for her position.

Fernando asked Patterson to send the SJTA analysis, and she agreed to send it.

The Board approved the comment letter with minor edits. Norgaard and Collier will finish the letter and submit it to the State Water Resources Control Board by the deadline at noon on March 29.

**4. Discuss and finalize the Comment Letter titled “Review of BDCP Chapter 7, Administrative Draft of December 12, 2012”**

The Board received three comment letters on its [review of BDCP Chapter 7](#):

- From William D. Phillimore, Coalition for a Sustainable Delta: [Comments on Delta ISB draft memo regarding Bay Delta Conservation Plan Chapter 7](#).
- From California Water Impact Network, California Sportfishing Protection Alliance, and AquAlliance: [Comments on Independent Science Board Draft Letter of 2/12/13 on BDCP Administrative Draft Chapter 7](#).
- From Director Mark Cowin, Department of Water Resources: [Draft Review of BDCP Chapter 7](#).

A new version of the administrative draft of Chapter 7 was released on March 27, so the Board decided to read the new versions of Chapter 7 and the related Chapter 3, revise its comment letter, and approve it at the April meeting.

**5. Review the Delta ISB workplan**

Fernando, Houde, Lund, and Meyer will lead the foodwebs and flows review. The schedule for this review will depend on release of the BDCP EIR/EIS. In the meantime, staff will schedule a brainstorming meeting with the four members who will lead this effort prior to the next ISB meeting.

Canuel, Resh, and Wiens will write a short paper about their suggestions for future reviews based on experiences with the habitat restoration review.

**6. Public Comment (For matters that were not on the agenda, but within subject matter jurisdiction of the Delta ISB.)**

Burt Wilson, Public Water News Service, told the Board that flows past Chipps Island in the Delta need to be 11,000 cubic feet per second to keep salinity out of the Delta. He asked if the Board has the authority to set flows. Norgaard said no. Wilson then asked if the Board has the authority to recommend flows. Norgaard said that the Board can comment on the science and on the quality of the science used.

**7. Prepare for the next Delta ISB meeting**

The next meeting is on April 22-23 at the Lake Natoma Inn in Folsom. Topics will include the habitat review report and debriefing on lessons learned, the Board’s review of BDCP Chapter 7 and Chapter 3.6, and planning for the foodwebs and flows review.

Delta Independent Science Board Meeting  
March 27, 2013

**12:05 p.m. – Adjourned**