



ACTION ITEM

Consideration and Possible Adoption of the Delta Plan Five-Year Review Report

Summary

Delta Stewardship Council (Council) staff will present the Delta Plan Five-Year Review 2024 Report (Report) summarizing the findings and recommendations of a five-year review of the Delta Plan, as required pursuant to Water Code section 85300, subdivision (c). Council staff recommends that the Council adopt the Report.

Requested Action

Following a Council staff presentation and public comment on the Report, staff recommends the Council adopt proposed Resolution 2024-08 adopting the Report and its recommendations.

Background

As required by the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Reform Act (Wat. Code, § 85000 et seq.), the Council is conducting a five-year review to evaluate progress implementing Delta Plan policies, recommendations, and performance measures. The five-year review process represents a feedback loop in adaptively managing the Delta Plan and informs the Council's next set of near-term priorities. The Council completed the first Delta Plan Five-Year Review in 2019 and has worked toward implementing the priority actions recommended in the 2019 Review. Council staff has now completed a second five-year review in 2024 with the following objectives: 1) Evaluate progress implementing the Delta Plan using performance measures; 2) Identify where progress toward Delta Plan objectives has been made; 3) Identify where progress is needed to achieve Delta Plan objectives; and 4) Focus and prioritize the Council's near-term Delta Plan implementation efforts.

Delta Plan Five-Year Review 2024 Report

The full Report ((Attachment 1) is organized into four parts:

Part 1 presents key Council accomplishments from the past five years connected to the priorities identified in the 2019 review.

Part 2 presents progress report cards for Delta Plan chapters informed by Delta Plan Performance Measures and describes key findings and issue spotlights from performance measure assessments. The technical details for the performance report cards are summarized in the Report's appendix (Attachment 2).

Part 3 provides a regulatory analysis and review of covered actions submitted to the Council since 2013 by state and local public agencies, considers the applicability of Delta Plan regulatory policies to covered actions and appeals, and recommends actions and emerging topics to ensure that the Delta Plan responds to contemporary issues and opportunities.

Part 4 lists recommended actions the Council could take in the next five years to further progress towards achieving the objectives of the Delta Plan and affirm the Council's regulatory roles. These recommendations may also guide the Council in developing potential future amendments to the Delta Plan and implementation strategies.

Council staff presented the draft Delta Plan Five-Year Review report (draft report) at the April 25, 2024, Council meeting. The draft report was available for public comments from April 25 to June 10, 2024. Most public comments on the draft report addressed the technical aspects of performance measure assessments and requested additional methodology descriptions.

Council staff presented the draft report to the Delta Independent Science Board (Delta ISB) in May 2024. The Delta ISB reviewed the draft report and sent a letter (Available here: <https://deltacouncil.ca.gov/pdf/isb/products/2024-06-26-isb-comments-five-year-review.pdf>) to the Council in June 2024 providing general comments regarding the overall approach to evaluating the performance of the Delta Plan as well as specific comments on key sections of the draft report.

Responses to Comments

In response to comments received during the public comment period, the Delta ISB comments, and Councilmember input, Council staff made the following key revisions to the draft report:

Revised Recommendation #2, Accelerate Ecosystem Restoration, by adding details that focus on implementing the Delta Plan Ecosystem Amendment, adopted by the Council at the June 23, 2022, meeting, and the role of the Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee to advance ecosystem restoration and institutional coordination.

Revised Recommendation #3, Accelerate Subsidence Reversal Efforts, by expanding the recommended actions to include securing funding for landowners to offset rice and wetland conversion costs, and increasing outreach about carbon market opportunities.

Revised Recommendation #6, Consider and Implement Performance Measure Updates, by proposing to develop an expanded set of Delta socioeconomic metrics that leverage existing federal, State, and local agency data.

Added a summary of hydrologic and climate drivers observed that magnify, diminish, and obscure the effects of management actions.

Added a table depicting the implementation status of the emerging issues and priority topics identified in the 2019 review.

Revised the technical appendix to add additional clarifying details about the performance assessment methodology and expand upon the limitations of the analysis. Specifically, details were added to performance assessment sections for harmful algal blooms, measurable toxicity, and salinity. Additionally, some recommendations for future performance measure refinements were revised in the water supply reliability and water quality sections of the technical appendix.

Today's Meeting

At today's meeting, Council staff will summarize responses to public comments received on the draft report and the Report's recommended actions the Council

may pursue over the next five years to improve performance and regulatory areas (Attachment 1), ask the Council for consideration of these recommended actions, and recommend that the Council approve the Report.

Fiscal Information

Not applicable.

List of Attachments

Attachment 1: Delta Plan Five-Year Review 2024 Report

Attachment 2: Technical Appendix to the Delta Plan Five-Year Review 2024 Report

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