

Office of the Delta Watermaster Periodic Update

Jay Ziegler – Delta Watermaster



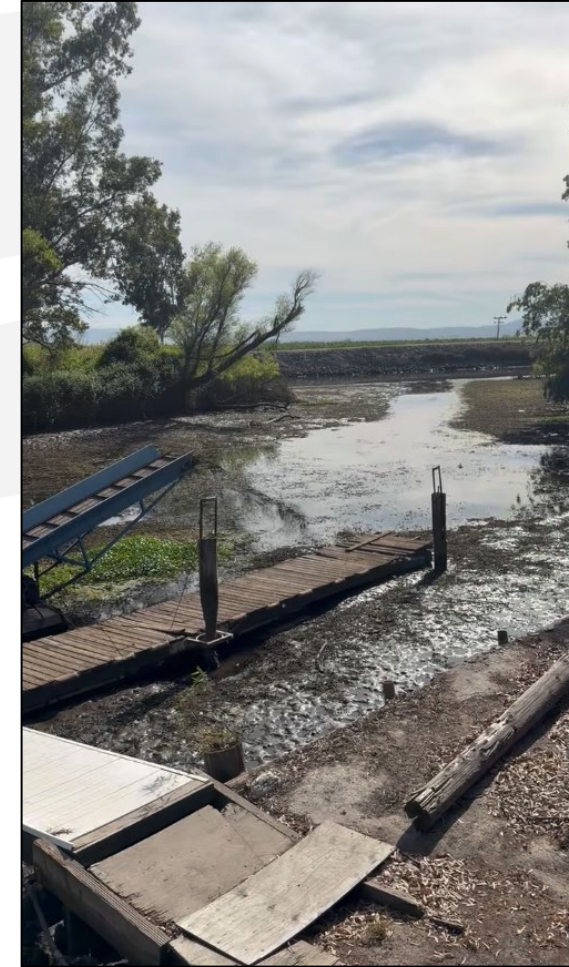
Delta
Stewardship
Council

Office of the Delta Watermaster (ODWM) Summer Report

- South Delta Water Level and Accessibility Issues
- Delta Water Use Reporting
 - Updated SB88 Measurement Regulations
 - Progress in Delta Annual Reporting
- Opportunities for Science Integration
- Delta Updates
 - Channel Maintenance Issues
 - Golden Mussel Response
 - Harmful Algal Bloom conditions
- Retrospective of 15 Years of the Delta Plan

South Delta Water Level Issues

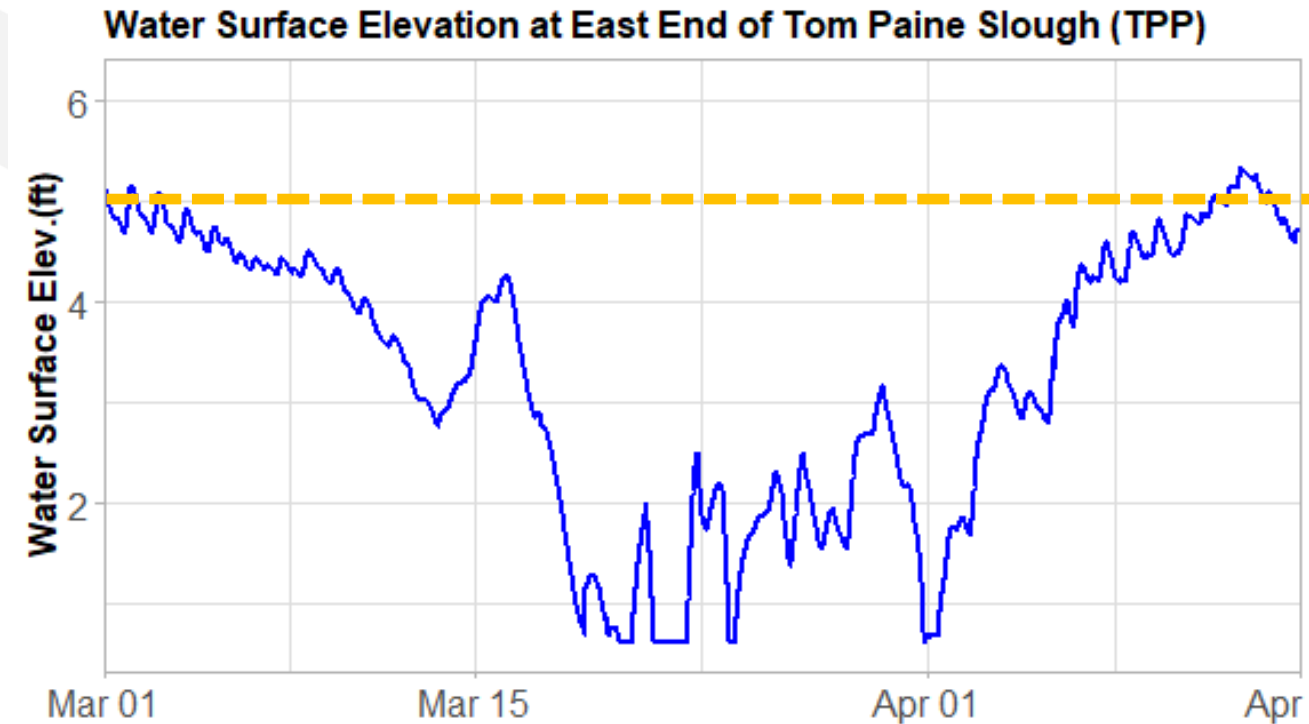
- Middle River & Pescadero RD #2058 Water Accessibility Issues
- South Delta Water Agency (SDWA) actions:
 - Updated bathymetric data
 - Channel surveys
 - Modeling of Tom Paine Slough
 - Actions to limit water deliveries



Low water in Middle River side channel, 4/4/2026

Low Water Levels -- "Perfect Storm" of Spring Events & Summer Challenges

- High temps and “March Parch” drove early-season irrigation demand
- Summer accessibility issues—
 - Sedimentation in channels
 - Hyacinth and invasive plants
 - Periodic tidal conditions



South Delta Water Level / Water Quality

- **Temporary Ag Barriers**

- DWR annual installation completed early June
- Old River, Middle River, Grant Line Canal
- Protects levels by retaining water upstream

- **Permanent Operable Gates Project**

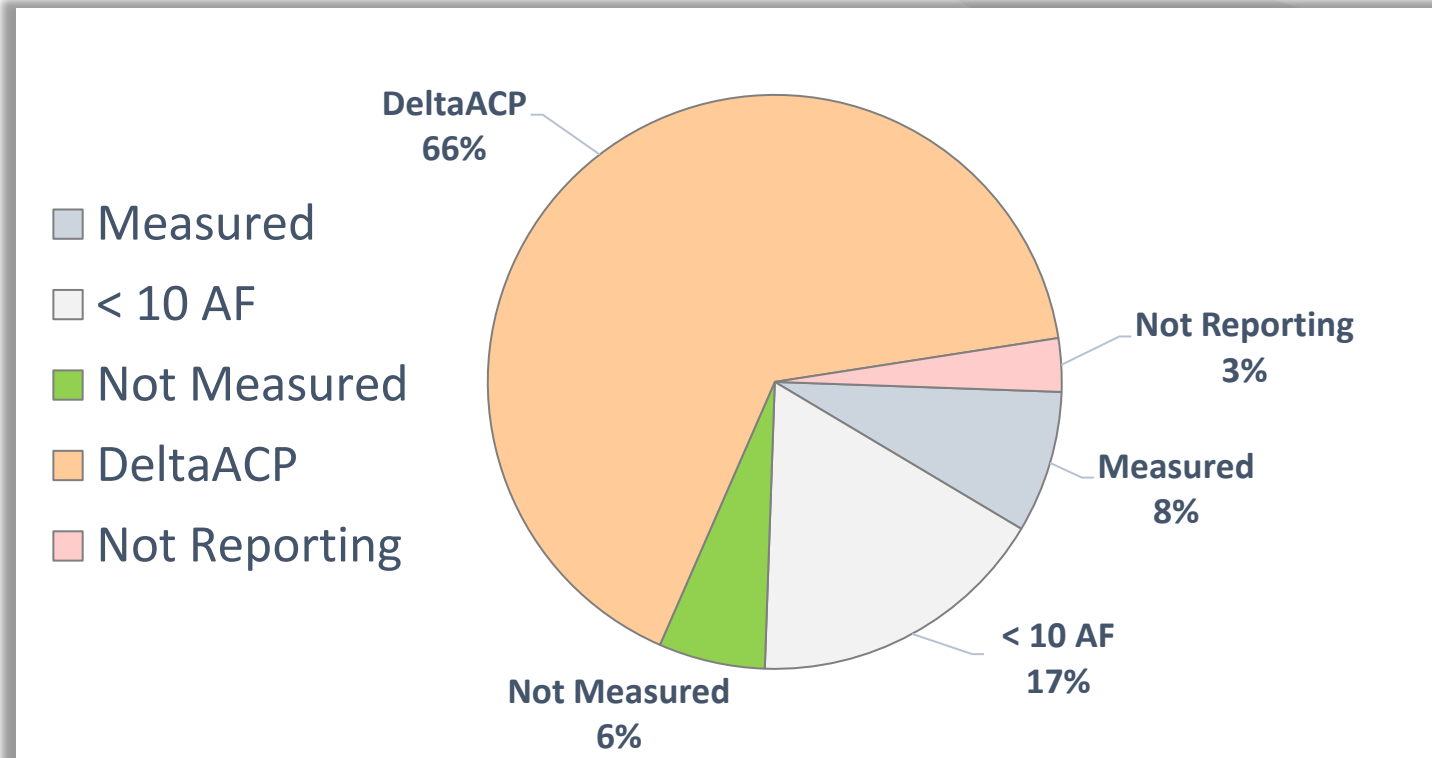
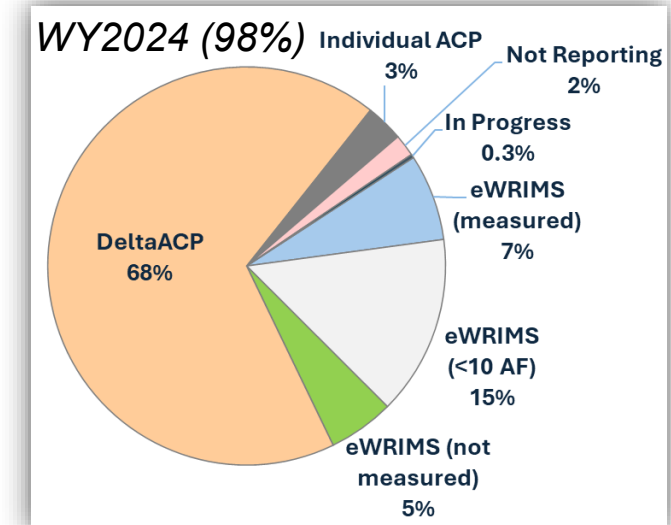
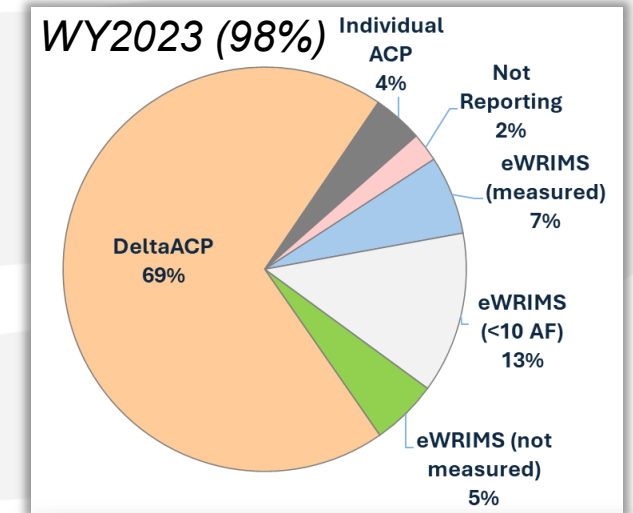
- South Delta Improvement Program (SDIP)
- DWR proceeding with design and analysis
- Potential to improve circulation, water quality



DWR / Sacramento Bee photo

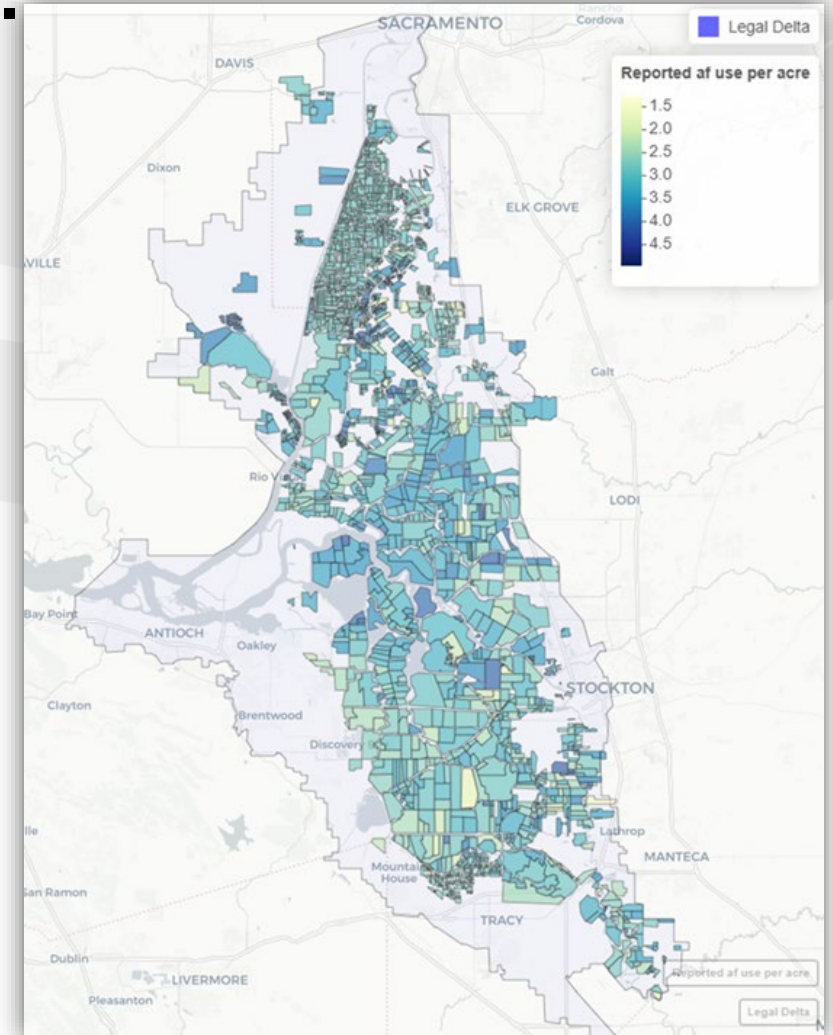
Transition to CalWATRS Annual Reporting

Water Year 2025 – 97% reporting compliance
Delta Alternative Compliance Plan (Delta ACP):
~2/3 of water users participating



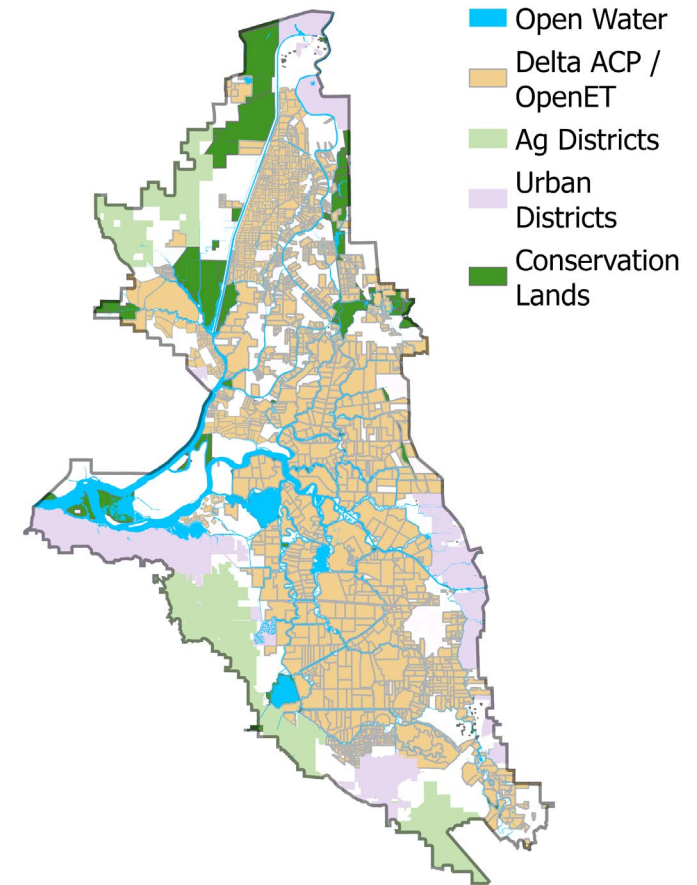
Delta Alternative Compliance Plan (DeltaACP) Has Been a Great Success . . .

- CalWATRS integration of OpenET
 - Remote sensing of field evaporation
 - ~1,700 senior / riparian Statements of Use
- Water users / agents draw place of use (POU) field boundaries
- Consumptive use estimates then calculated by OpenET
- Consistent & accurate quantitative method at low cost



. . . Better Measurement Still Needed

- SWRCB amended SB88 regulations (Dec. 2025)
- Clarification of measurement requirements, particularly for large diverters
- Delta ACP / OpenET technology fulfills part, but not all of data required
- Need to discern magnitude and timing of major diversions & other water balance factors
- Alternative compliance plans (ACPs) must be established or updated by Jan. 2027, if not measuring all diversions



Measurement Implementation – RD 2068 (Dixon)

- Extension of Time requested
- Prop. 218 local issue: rate increase to fund system improvements
- ~200 cfs main diversion canal from Haas Slough
- Installation of Channelmaster™ sonar & three weir flow transducers
- Future connection with Solano County Water Agency website



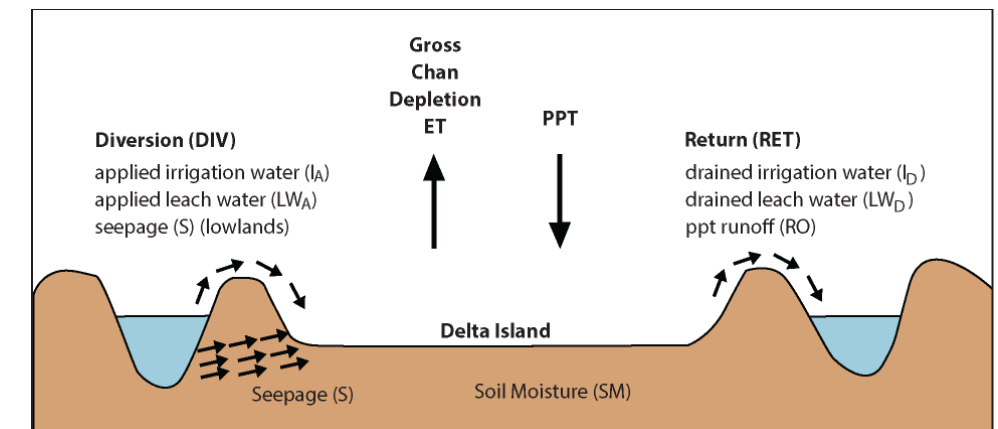
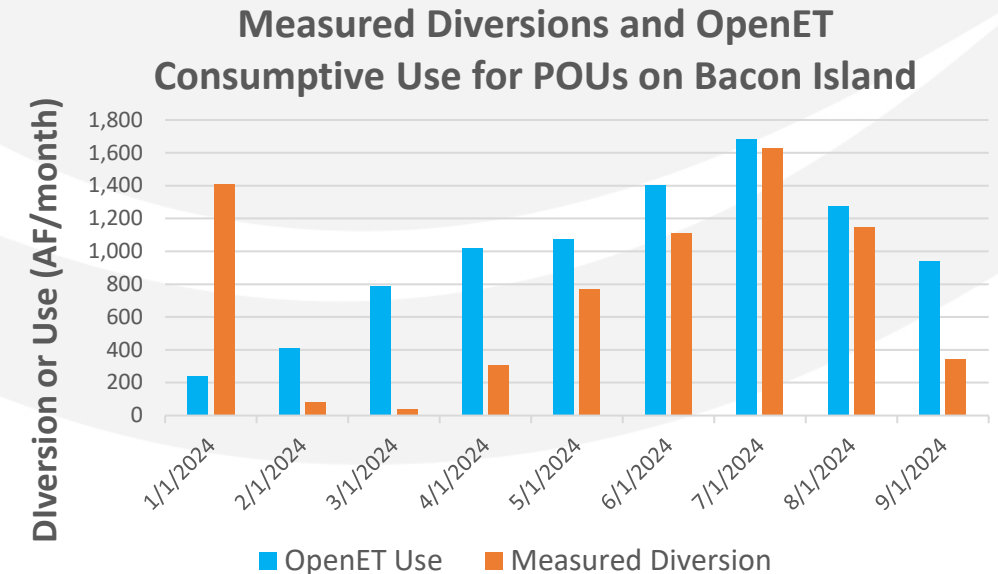
RD 2068 Lateral 4/5 transducer site



RD 2068 Main Canal – Channelmaster site

Measurement Science Proposal

- **Pending contract with UC-ANR (Agriculture and Natural Resources) & USGS**
 - Synthesis report of existing water balance studies & unique Delta island hydrology
 - Relationship of consumptive use / OpenET to diversions and drainage
 - Relationships in existing Delta models
- **Other “critical path” studies**
 - Focused evaluation of OpenET / OTTER
 - Long-term soil moisture measurements



South Delta Channel Maintenance

- South Delta Dredging MOU & related actions
- On-going bathymetry studies (SDWA & DWR)
- DWR Modeling Special Study (MSS Report)
- Division of Boating & Waterways:
 - In-Channel Weed Eradication Program
- Coordination with Regional Water Quality Control Board regarding contaminant screening & permit alignment for priority areas



Tom Paine Slough – 8/6/2025

Golden Mussel Response Actions

Delta Counties Declare Emergency Status to Combat Golden Mussel Presence

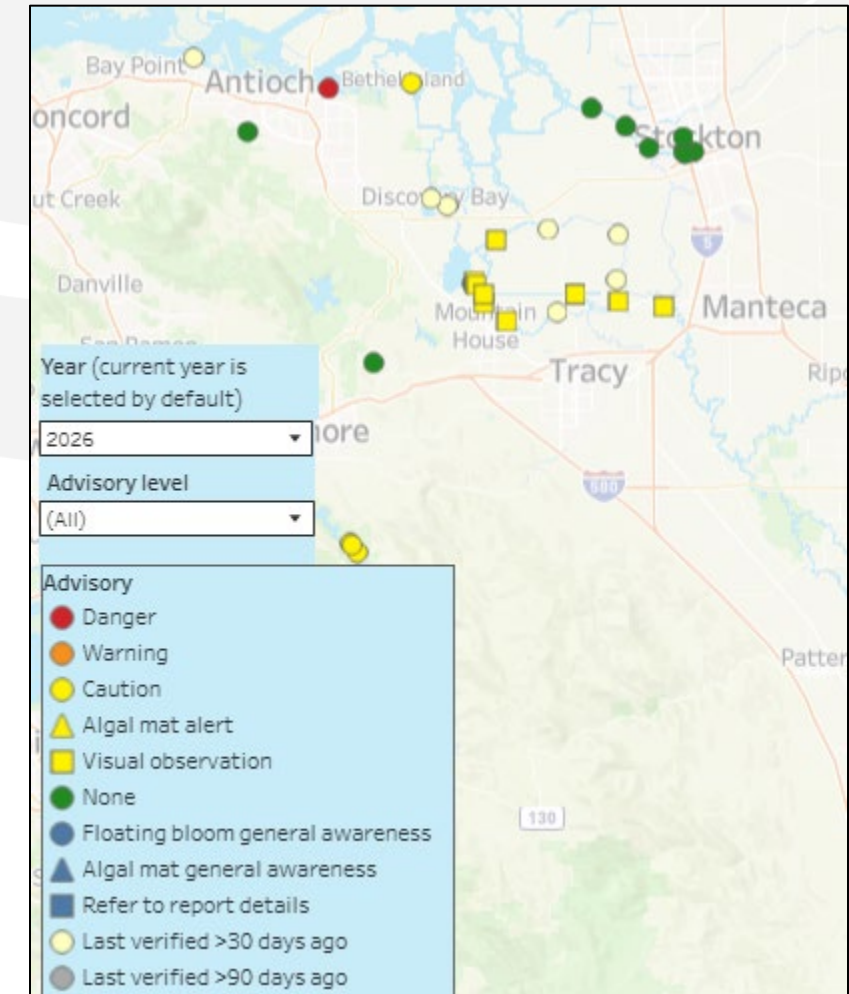
- **Port of Sacramento:** Northernmost detection of the species in California

Field Experiments and Regulatory Actions

- **New Eradication Techniques:** Agencies are experimenting with ultraviolet treatment systems and a bio-pesticide treatment
- **Federal Legislation:** The *Golden Mussel Eradication and Control Act of 2026* (S.4603) was introduced in Congress in May 2026
- **Updated State Regulation:** CA Department of Fish and Wildlife inviting comments on invasive mussel regulations and control actions

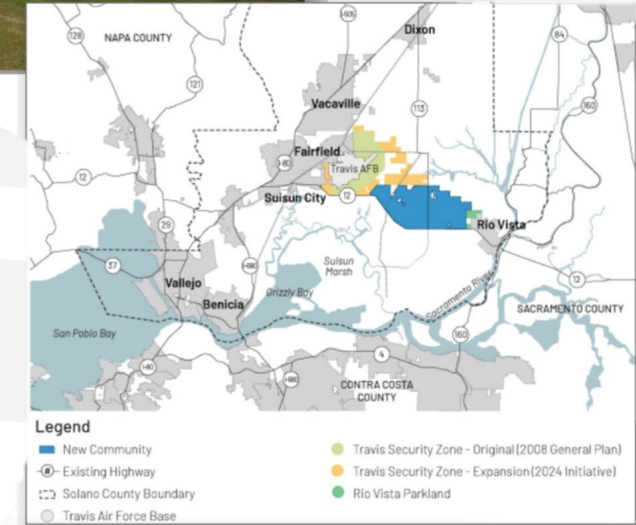
Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) Update

- **Current Conditions:** “Caution” advisories are in place for Regional Shoreline, Delta Coves, and Discovery Bay Marina. “Danger” for Big Break. Visual reports in Middle River.
- **Monitoring Partnerships:** Restore the Delta conducts weekly site visits and field screenings in the Stockton area.
- **Bay-Delta Plan:** Final draft framework incorporates standardized HAB monitoring program.



“California Forever” Suisun City Annexation

- CA Forever Initiates Application to Create “Solano Mutual Water Company”
- Water Supply Questions Remain...
- Legislation Aimed to Expedite Environmental Review of Collinsville Shipyard



- Habitat restoration has accelerated dramatically
- Levee investment strategies & programs outline a path forward

- Delta science would benefit from wider integration & accessibility
- Limited funding for levee maintenance & dredging, key modernization projects, and experimentation require action



Delta Watermaster Engagements in Context of Delta Reform Act

Delta ACP – Provides framework for consistent water reporting

- Basis for analysis and comparison of usage aligned with rights
- Formation of Delta Measurement Experimental Consortium (DMEC) drives continued innovation in measurement approaches

Delta Drought Response Pilot Program (DDRPP)

- 2022-2023 voluntary programs for agricultural water conservation
- Informs future drought response planning based on science

Resolution of Water Rights Disputes

- Woods Irrigation District reporting
- 2015-16 Information Order assesses basis of claims and licenses in Legal Delta

Thank you

Jay Ziegler

Delta Watermaster

Jay.Ziegler@waterboards.ca.gov