

Prioritizing Funding for At-Risk Delta Levees

How the Delta Levees Investment Strategy
Reduces Flood Risk



**Delta
Stewardship
Council**

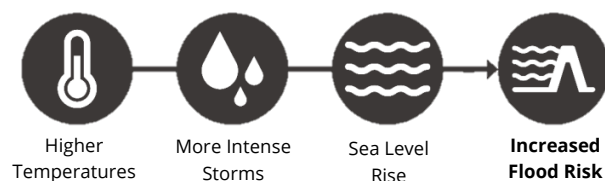
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What you need to know:

- The Legislature charged the Delta Stewardship Council with recommending priorities for state investments in Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta levees, leading to the development of the Delta Levees Investment Strategy (DLIS).
- The DLIS is the first of its kind, risk-based prioritization for Delta levees, targeting limited funding to maximize flood protection for people, property, and state interests, benefiting all Californians.
- Only about 30% of the islands and tracts in the Delta have levees that fully meet state or federal levee design standards.

The Delta is flood prone.

- The Delta region is protected by **1,100 miles of an aging system of earthen levees** designed to operate under historical conditions, not for current and projected climate change threats.
- By mid-century, peak water levels are projected to increasingly overflow levees, endanger communities, and disrupt the infrastructure supplying water to more than **27 million Californians**.



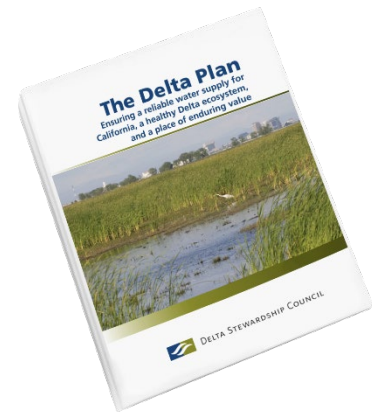
The risks are high.

Findings from the Council's climate adaptation initiative, *Delta Adapts*, show:

- Delta levee improvements to address **future flood risk will require \$3.2 billion** over the next 25 years.
- Increased flooding could put **\$27 billion in assets and economic activity at risk** by 2085.
- More than **65,000 Delta residents** could face flood exposure by 2050, with the greatest impacts on socially vulnerable communities.

There is a new strategy for levee investments.

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Reform Act of 2009 established the Council to create the Delta Plan, a comprehensive, long-term, and legally enforceable vision for water and environmental management in the Delta. **The Legislature recognized escalating flood risk in the Delta, making flood management central to the Act.**



The Delta Plan is required to attempt to reduce risks to people, property, and state interests by promoting emergency preparedness, appropriate land use, and **strategic levee investments.**

But **funding needs outpace available resources** for Delta levee improvement projects. The prioritization of levees helps **target limited funding to where it's most urgently needed.** To meet this need, the Council led a multi-agency effort to recommend priorities that ensure maximum risk reduction and return on investment.



↳ **The creation of DLIS**

This moment was preceded by years of strategic planning.

2009	The Delta Reform Act establishes the Council and its flood risk reduction charge
2013	The Council adopts the Delta Plan
2014 — 2018	The Council, staff, and consultants develop and discuss DLIS at... <i>40 meetings with technical experts 27 Council meetings 4 public workshops</i>
2019	The Council holds a public hearing on the DLIS amendment
2022	The Council begins rulemaking with updated priorities
2023	Final regulatory language approved by the Council Rulemaking completed with approval from Office of Administrative Law
2024	DLIS becomes law as a part of the Council's regulations

Collaboration works.

- The Delta has not had a major levee failure since 2004, further proving that investing in Delta levees pays off for the state.
- **Progress requires collaboration** between many, including the California Department of Water Resources, Central Valley Flood Protection Board, and local levee-maintaining agencies.
- DLIS directs limited funding to the **highest-risk areas first**, and tracks where funding goes and its impact to keep the public informed.
- **DLIS adapts as risks change**, using the best available science and current data to guide decision-making and strengthen Delta flood resilience amid a changing climate. **The Council is uniquely positioned to continue leading Delta flood risk management.**

Good decisions need good data.

- The Council, in partnership with the San Francisco Estuary Institute and California Department of Water Resources, will publish **the first-ever high-quality elevation map of the entire Bay-Delta.**



- This elevation data provides an accurate, point-in-time understanding of levee height that can be used to understand Delta flood risk.
- The Council will use this data to create a **Delta-wide 2D flood model** that any agency can use for planning and emergency response



Visit deltacouncil.ca.gov,
to learn more.

