



The Delta Conservancy

Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy

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"A partner for balanced ecosystem restoration and economic development in the Delta."

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Strategic Plan Meetings Scheduled

Your input is needed as the Delta Conservancy completes its first Strategic Plan by summer 2012.

"It is critically important to us that Delta residents let us know what they want and need as the Conservancy forms how it will pursue its mandates over the next five to ten years," said Campbell Ingram, executive officer of the Conservancy.

People can provide their ideas and input over the next few months through strategic plan public meetings and strategic plan subcommittee meetings. For people unable to participate in meetings, a comment period on a public draft document is scheduled for spring 2012. The final strategic plan will be completed by June 30, 2012.

Strategic Plan Public Meetings

Solano County: Suisun City
January 25, 2012 (*Wednesday*)
3:30 pm-5:30 pm
Rush Ranch, Solano Land Trust
3521 Grizzly Island Road, Suisun City, CA

Sacramento County: Isleton
January 26, 2012 (*Thursday*)
3:30 pm-5:30 pm
Peter's Steakhouse
203 2nd Street, Isleton, CA

Yolo County: Clarksburg
January 28, 2012 (*Saturday*)
1:00 pm-3:00 pm
Clarksburg Community Church
52910 Netherlands Road, Clarksburg, CA

Contra Costa County: Antioch
February 7, 2012 (*Tuesday*)
3:30 pm-5:30 pm

Antioch Community Center
4703 Lone Tree Way, Antioch, CA

San Joaquin County: Stockton
February 9, 2012 (*Thursday*)
3:30 pm-5:30 pm
San Joaquin WorkNet Building
56 S. Lincoln Street, Stockton, CA

Strategic Plan Subcommittee Meeting
February 13, 2012 (*Monday*), 3-5 pm
3500 Industrial Blvd, West Sacramento, CA

Collaboration in the Delta

Delta Counties Coalition Working Together

In the current financial and political climate, it is more important than ever to collaborate and cooperate with like-minded organizations and individuals. Speaking with a unified voice and pooling resources are valuable tools to effect change. The **Delta Counties Coalition** (DCC) is one Delta group that made a commitment to work together to reach agreement on tough, controversial issues and is pushing forward to success.

The DCC is a five-county coalition led by the supervisors from the Delta counties of Contra Costa, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Solano, and Yolo, and supported by the chief executives and staff from each county. In spring 2008, the Coalition began to create a unified voice for the protection and preservation of the Delta and its communities. Persevering through initial growing pains called for a

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Sacramento-
San Joaquin

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Campbell's Corner



Your Input Is Needed in Our Strategic Planning Process

It's hard to believe
my first year is

drawing to a close. I have gotten acquainted with the organization, its Board members and its staff, and together we have implemented efforts to move the Conservancy forward. Currently we are embarked on developing our strategic plan which will guide our decisions and programs for the next five to ten years.

What makes this so exciting for me and the Conservancy staff is getting out and meeting as many Delta residents as possible. Getting local input—that is, *your* input—is a critical component to the success of this project. We've had several meetings with county supervisors, county agriculture

commissioners, and residents, and we are impressed by the passion people have for the Delta. We are excited about creating partnerships to bring needed improvements and enhancements to the region.

Your thoughts about what the Delta region needs—or does not need—and what role you think the Conservancy can play in helping bring resources to manage high priority issues in the Delta are important to us. Please attend the strategic plan public meetings featured in this newsletter.

We look forward to hearing from you and can always be reached at 916-375-2084.

Campbell Ingram
Executive Officer

Delta Counties Coalition: "Working Together on Water and Delta Issues"

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strong commitment, hard work and mutual respect to stay focused and reach agreement on targeted points. In summer 2008, each of the DCC counties adopted the Multi-County Resolution which resolved that:

"The COUNTIES adopt this Resolution for the purpose of articulating mutual interests on Delta Issues. The COUNTIES resolve to work together to better understand Delta related issues from a regional perspective and to use their unified voice to advocate on behalf of local governments in available forums at the federal and state levels."

At the same time, the DCC adopted a common set of twelve principles that include: protecting water quality and quantity and existing water rights; improving existing infrastructure; protecting Delta agriculture, recreation and the Delta as a place; and fighting for local representation in state and federal planning and governance processes.

Committed to providing local representation, the DCC consistently proposes collaboratively-developed solutions intended to protect and enhance the many socio-economic and environmental resources unique to the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta. Its goal is to protect and preserve the individual interests of each of the five Delta counties, as well as the entire Delta (e.g., agricultural industry, fishing and recreational groups, flood control, water supply, Delta ecosystem health, and protection and enhancement of the eleven legacy communities).

Current DCC efforts include:

1. Implementation impacts of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Reform Act of 2009, including activities, plans and actions of the Delta Stewardship Council, the Delta Protection Commission and the Delta Conservancy.

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Delta Conservancy Brings New Perspectives to the Delta's "Wicked" Problems

More than 160 people were asked to think differently about Delta issues at the October 2011 inaugural Delta Roundtable co-sponsored by the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy (Conservancy) and the Water Education Foundation (WEF). (Video of each roundtable panel is available on the Conservancy's website.)

The Delta's "Wicked" Problems

Featured panelists Dr. Ian Mitroff, of Mitroff Crisis Management, and Dr. Jeff Conklin, of CogNexus Institute, both experts in crisis management and critical thinking, provided new insights in how stakeholders could come together to overcome the gridlock facing the Delta and work together to manage its "wicked problems."

Conklin described wicked problems as situations that are so complex at a technical, conceptual, and social level that they create gridlock, usually caused by the conflict between scarce resources and solutions. The best process for addressing wicked problems is learning-based (non-linear) planning that allows for trial and error, but most planning processes are linear.

Mitroff said that to address wicked problems we need to kick our "certainty addiction." Traditional problem solving methods have turned us into "certainty junkies," he said, but because wicked problems are so interconnected, we cannot guarantee any outcome with a high level of certainty. Both Conklin and Mitroff said that by stepping back from the need for certainty, managers will be more likely to see something critical they had overlooked.

"Negotiating is the definition that the problem is the problem," Mitroff said. In discussing the Delta, Mitroff said that a system is not the sum of its parts; rather, it is the sum of its interactions. Water managers and Delta residents need to look at the critical interactions that they haven't looked at before and move beyond their denial of the Delta's wicked problems.

One critical step is to develop a shared understanding of the issues and problems facing the Delta today. To do this, Delta water managers and residents may need to bring in people who will look at the problems differently such as artists, psychologists, or social scientists.

"Managers don't solve problems," Mitroff said. "They cope with messes. And if you can't manage messes, they will manage you."

"The worst thing you can do is solve the wrong problem precisely," Mitroff said.

Innovation Happens at the Local Level

What's wrong, why and how we can think differently in terms of strategy, culture and organization, were the questions Jim Mayer, executive officer of California Forward, focused on in the keynote address. Mayer said part of what's wrong is that when confronted with big problems, we try to solve small problems, losing sight of the bigger picture and frequently not using our time or resources strategically. Culturally, he said, we tend to focus on what's wrong and who is to blame rather than looking at solutions and outcomes. Finally, he said, the size and scale of government entities are out of sync with our problems. "Most problems are at the community, regional, and international level," Mayer said, "but our political structures are county, state, and national."

Mayer said innovation happens at the local level, especially when people rally around identified outcomes.

People must invest in the outcome and not have a plan B they hope to use sooner rather than later. Once the outcomes are agreed to, everyone must be disciplined enough to focus on critical path actions to achieve the outcomes. What this means for Delta water issues is to shift from "doing what everyone wants to do, to doing what is critical and needs to be done to achieve the agreed upon

"A system is not the sum of its parts; rather, it is the sum of its interactions."

"The best process for wicked problems is planning that allows for trial and error."

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“Wicked” Problems

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outcome.” Mayer said such a shift will be difficult to make.

As attitudes shift to be more outcome focused, a culture is formed that is outcome and performance based. This frees people to try and fail and learn from their failures. “Until the Delta is truly on a trajectory of healing, sustainability, and can be managed, everybody has a stake in the Delta and everyone is at risk,” Mayer said.

“When Californians learn to manage water—for fish, for farmers, for families, for the future—we will be able to manage everything; and until we do, we won’t be able to manage anything,” concluded Mayer.

Moving Beyond Delta Planning

Executive officers of four agencies responsible for carrying out Delta initiatives spoke for more than an hour about the challenges and tensions in carrying out Delta initiatives. All agreed that the differing values represented by Delta stakeholders made it difficult to have a shared understanding of the problems and issues confronting them today.

The panel explored the connections between expectations for a “perfect” solution with the realities of conflicting legal requirements and goals; panelist Campbell Ingram referred to the earlier panel saying that it is critical that any effort moving forward establish a shared understanding and bring in stakeholders who have not traditionally been part of the conversation.

This panel consisted of Campbell Ingram (Delta Conservancy); Mike Machado (Delta Protection Commission); Joe Grindstaff, (Delta Stewardship Council); and Byron Buck (State and Federal Contractors Water Agency).

Reality Check: Status of Public Financing for Large-Scale Programs

The final panel featured Senator Lois Wolk, Senator Jean Fuller, and Assemblyman Bill

Berryhill talking about the political realities of funding the implementation of the various Delta plans.

Asked if the water bond would be on the November 2012 ballot, none of the legislators could say definitely yes or no. Wolk said the bond is a bad idea and should not be on the ballot; Fuller said the bond was the best compromise possible, but who knew what the voters would want to do, especially in this economy.

The panelists discussed alternatives for funding the Delta plans as well as for environmental mitigation before opening the discussion to questions from the audience.

Sponsors

The event was underwritten by the Resources Legacy Foundation and State and Federal Contractors Water Agency; four Delta wineries—Viano Vineyards, Ehrhardt Estates, Wilson Wines, and Heringer Estates—provided a “Taste of the Delta” to participants.

Delta Counties Coalition

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2. The Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCCP) activities, plans and actions.
3. Alliances with organizations with common interests or goals for the Delta.
4. Legislative, administrative, regulatory, and policy advocacy regarding state and federal proposals that impact the Delta.

DCC leadership, with great care, has developed working relationships with residents of the Delta; state, federal, and local government representatives; and public/private businesses. For additional information please contact the Delta Counties Coordinator, Doug Brown, via email at browndoug@att.net, or any of the Delta Counties.

Written by Pete Kutras, Principal Consultant, Delta Counties Coalition

“It is critical that any effort moving forward, establish a shared understanding and bring in stakeholders who have not traditionally been part of the conversation.”

Delta Conservancy Is a Partner in the Delta

A partner for balanced ecosystem restoration and economic development in the Delta, the Conservancy aims to advance economic, environmental, and social interests, seeking creative solutions to complex challenges by working cooperatively with local communities, interested groups, and other government agencies. Conservancy programs and projects are prioritized and funded in a balanced manner, according to geography and its legislative responsibilities.

Founded in 2010, the Conservancy is governed by an 11-member Board, with assistance from 2 non-voting members from the legislature, and 10 liaison advisors. Collectively, they represent the five Delta counties, local nonprofits, special districts and



Photo by Robin Fadtkke

Susan Roberts, Elisa Sabatini, Nancy Ullrey, Campbell Ingram, Betsy Taloff, Kristal Davis Fadtkke, Rhonda Hoover-Flores, Cindy Messer

state and federal agencies. The Conservancy's service area is the statutory Delta and Suisun Marsh. Currently seven people, and several volunteers, staff the Conservancy.

Delta Conservancy Mission

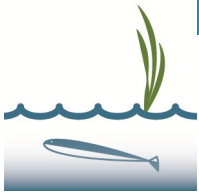
Working in collaboration and cooperation with local communities, the Conservancy will **lead efforts and establish partnerships to protect, preserve, enhance and restore the Delta's environment, agriculture and working landscapes, heritage, property, regional economy and increase opportunities for tourism and environmental education** for the benefit of the Delta region, its communities and the citizens of California.

"A partner for balanced ecosystem restoration and economic development in the Delta"

Conservancy's Legislative Responsibilities

The Conservancy is responsible for supporting efforts that advance environmental protection and the economic well-being of Delta residents in a complementary manner. In addition to these two "co-equal responsibilities," the Conservancy has twelve legislative responsibilities to consider:

- Protect and enhance habitat and habitat restoration
- Protect and preserve Delta agriculture and working landscapes
- Provide increased opportunities for tourism and recreation
- Promote Delta legacy communities and economic vitality in the Delta in coordination with the Delta Protection Commission
- Increase the resilience of the Delta to the effects of natural disasters such as floods and earthquakes, in coordination with the Delta Protection Commission
- Protect and improve water quality
- Assist the Delta regional economy through the operation of the Conservancy's program
- Identify priority projects and initiatives for which funding is needed
- Protect, conserve, and restore the region's physical, agricultural, cultural, historical, and living resources
- Assist local entities in implementing their habitat conservation plans (HCPs) and natural community conservation plans (NCCPs)
- Facilitate "take protection" and "safe harbor" agreements under both the federal and state endangered species acts for adjacent landowners and local public agencies



Plant Hoppers May Control Water Hyacinth in Five Years

The water hyacinth is an invasive aquatic plant that has negative impacts in the Delta. These plants can form dense mats that completely cover a waterway's surface, creating safety hazards for boaters, blocking navigation channels and marinas, and clogging irrigation systems. Water hyacinth can also be troublesome to the ecosystem by displacing native plants, blocking light needed for photosynthesis, and reducing the amount of dissolved oxygen in the water.

Introduced into the Delta from South America over a hundred years ago, water hyacinth has no natural predator here. In hot weather, these plants can double in size every ten days and rapidly form a dense, floating mat of vegetation up to 6 feet thick. The current methods to control this invasive plant have focused on the use of herbicides through a program run by the California Department of Boating and Waterways (CDBW).

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) has recently joined CDBW's effort to control water hyacinth with the release of a small insect, also native to South America, that is known to feed exclusively on the invasive aquatic plant. The water hyacinth plant hopper, known to scientists as *Megamelus scutellaris*, feeds on water hyacinth leaves by siphoning out the plant juices, which kills the small area of the

plant they feed upon. A whole leaf can wilt and die if enough plant hoppers are feeding on it.

This summer, water hyacinth plant hoppers were released in the Delta at Whiskey Slough and Seven Mile Slough; their populations are being monitored by the CDFA. The question is whether they will survive the hot summers and cold winters. If so, the plant hopper population must build up to a high enough level to make a significant dent in the water hyacinth population. If the plant hopper survives the climate here, CDFA scientists estimate it will take about five years for the population to increase to a level to be effective against the water hyacinth.



Photo by D.F. Spencer

"Is the Delta missing an agricultural opportunity?"

Can the Water Hyacinth Create Jobs?

Melinda Bonayos harvests the water hyacinth growing in the Philippines and produces colorful bags, sandals, slippers mats and twines. About 50 stalks make 25 meters of twine, enough to fashion a purse. Is the Delta missing an agricultural opportunity?

Ref: <http://business.inquirer.net/9727>



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