

## **Delta Vision**

### **Blue Ribbon Task Force Panel Discussion**

#### **State/Federal Agency Representatives**

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Sacramento, California**

**The Delta Vision Strategic Plan is an important step in implementing solutions to the various water resources problems both in Delta and regionally across California. This is especially important in light of the various “drivers of change” in this dynamic system, to include: seismicity, sea level rise, regional climate change, subsidence, population growth, and proliferation of invasive species. Many of these drivers were explored in detail by the Department of Water Resources’ Delta Risk Management Strategy.**

**The Corps of Engineers can play a supporting role in each of the four topic areas described in the Strategic Plan:**

#### **(1) Governance and Finance**

**- In a multi-agency collaborative planning effort, the Corps can help bring stakeholders together to identify workable solutions that can be implemented by a variety of local, state, and Federal agencies. The Corps often has the reputation as the “Honest Broker” remaining unbiased by local political pressures or special interest groups; looking for the synergistic, science based solution. For those separable elements that can be implemented by the Corps, Federal appropriations are brought to the table, helping state and local entities extend their funding.**

## **(2) Ecosystem**

- One of the Corps' primary mission areas is ecosystem restoration. With the current state of the Delta's ecosystem, the Corps can provide greatly needed resources to further ongoing restoration initiatives and support the planning effort to identify future restoration goals and objectives. The Corps has many lessons learned from comparable large scale restoration projects such as the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan and Louisiana Coastal Area Ecosystem Restoration; both multi-billion dollar, multi year projects.

## **(3) Water Supply and Reliability**

- Although not a primary mission of the Corps, our study authority for the Delta Islands and Levees Feasibility Study does allow us to look at all water resources problems and opportunities in the Delta, including water quality and water supply. While we may not be the implementing agency for some of the conveyance options, we could provide planning support and engineering and environmental compliance expertise for those efforts that are consistent with the Delta Vision.

## **(4) Delta as Place**

- The Corps can also make a significant contribution in the Delta in the form of levee stability – by improving flood risk management for valuable infrastructure and Legacy Towns and other population centers within the Delta. Much of what exists in the Delta exists only because of the levee system within the Delta. Consistent with the Delta Vision, the Corps stands ready to support local and state agencies with the tremendous task of improving levee stability in key areas of the Delta.

The Corps has already initiated report preparation for smaller Levee Stability Projects Delta-wide, an interim measure to assist Reclamation Districts on their most fragile reaches of levee. We are also part of a multi-agency Delta Emergency Response planning effort. And the Delta Islands and Levees Feasibility Study, currently underway, could be a mechanism to obtain future large scale appropriations in support of this evolving Delta Vision.

**For non-Corps projects, the Sacramento District has a robust Regulatory program available to assist with project permitting. Recognizing the significance of some of the proposed conceptual plans being presented here, it is imperative that Corps regulatory staff be involved with the planning process from the ground up. Through such collaboration, the permitting process could be completed more efficiently (although we still expect it to take several years).**

**For more than 200 years, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has served our Nation in peace and war. As the needs and priorities of the Nation evolved, the Corps has adapted to keep pace. Today, as we continue to transform, we must ensure that those we serve continue to benefit from our ongoing improvements. The Sacramento District strives to better meet the water resources needs of the public through innovative application of existing authorities, and by seeking new authorities as those needs evolve.**

**Realization of a future Delta Vision - where the Delta ecosystem and a reliable water supply for California are the primary and co-equal goals for sustainable management; and where the Delta is recognized as a unique and valued area – you can do it - we can help!**