

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, Governor
MIKE CHRISMAN, Secretary



Charge to the Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force

This document is supplemental to Executive Order S-17-06 establishing the Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force (Task Force).

Background

On September 28, 2006, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed Executive Order S-17-06 setting forth the state and national significance of the Delta and outlining the need for and purpose of the Delta Vision initiative.

Delta Vision follows more than 20 years of state and federal agency collaboration in efforts to manage the Delta and maintain its ability to protect the environment and provide vital economic services. Some successes have been achieved under the CALFED Bay-Delta Program and work continues in developing the Bay Delta Conservation Plan; there has also been a significant body of science and understanding of the Delta accumulated. Despite these achievements, the health of the Delta ecosystem has continued to decline while threat levels in the Delta continue.

In assessing past efforts, experts and scientists agree that: (1) past Delta management efforts designed to address these challenges have been too narrowly focused; and (2) there is no clear, unifying vision of priorities and actions to manage the Delta as a sustainable natural system capable of supporting functions and services critical to the people of California.

Based on this history, the Task Force is appointed by the governor to provide an independent forum to address the environmental, governance, funding and development challenges facing the Delta. The Task Force chair and the appointed members of the Task Force, individually and collectively, bring a unique blend of experience and expertise to bear on considering the future of the Delta.

Task Force Charge

The Task Force shall formulate and submit its analysis and recommendations for a sustainable Delta to the Delta Vision Committee. The Delta Vision Committee consists of the Secretary for Resources, as chair, and the Secretaries of Business, Transportation and Housing; Food and Agriculture; California Environmental Protection Agency; and the President of the California Public Utilities Commission. To accomplish this mission the Task Force will:

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- Formulate its findings and recommendations in an independent manner and not be constrained by past or current public policies and practices.
- Be led by a chair and supported by an executive director of Delta Vision, staff and consultants who will also serve in an independent capacity. The executive director will be selected jointly by the Secretary for Resources and the Task Force chair.
- The executive director shall report to the Task Force chair, and other Task Force staff and consultants shall report to the executive director. In addition, the Task Force and its staff shall have the authority to:
 - ✓ Enter into needed contracts directly, through a fiscal agent of its choosing, consistent with budgets approved by the Task Force.
 - ✓ Authorize its executive director to direct expenditure of funds allocated from public sources or provided through private funding and consistent with Task Force authorizations or budgeted activity.
 - ✓ Ensure broad dissemination of information about its activities and opportunities for public comment on its work. It is recognized that the independent Task Force is not an agency of state government, but an advisory body whose opinions and judgments are sought to assist decision-makers.
- Act when a quorum is present. Although it should be infrequently used, the Task Force may establish a process for electronic voting by its members on issues, and may also establish a system for teleconference attendance and voting by members who are unable to participate in person.
- Conduct public meetings where elected officials, stakeholders, academic and scientific experts, and affected local governments will be invited to share their concerns, goals, priorities and expertise with the Task Force.
- Apply the best readily available scientific and economic information and benefit from access to and advice from science and technical advisors recommended by the Independent Science Board and selected by the Delta Vision Committee.
- Invite local governments, public officials, academic and industry experts and the general public to assist in identifying the issues, challenges and potential solutions that should be considered when planning for a sustainable Delta.
- Make requests for work from a Stakeholder Coordinating Group to be appointed by the Delta Vision Committee and receive the products of that work in whatever form it requires and to use those work products as it chooses. The stakeholder group encourages the participation in public processes by interested stakeholders, and assists in the organization and presentation of diverse points of view by those stakeholders to the Task Force.

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- Make requests for work from state agencies and departments involved in Delta Vision and to receive the results of that work in whatever form it requires and to release those work products or incorporate them into its work as it chooses.
- Submit to the public and Delta Vision Committee a complete set of findings and recommendations as part of a Delta Vision by January 1, 2008. Given the importance of this activity, it is essential that the Task Force meet the deadlines outlined in the Executive Order and this charging document.
- It is recommended that the Task Force organize its initial efforts by examining the major subject areas affecting the Delta:
 - a) the potential impacts of natural disasters, including floods, earthquakes and global warming, on the Delta;
 - b) the current and future impacts of residential, commercial and other development on the Delta;
 - c) the ability of the Delta to continue to exist as a vital environmental resource for California;
 - d) the ability of the Delta to continue to provide a statewide supply of water, of high quality, for residents, businesses and agriculture; and
 - e) such other issues identified in the Governor's Executive Order, or that are considered important by the Task Force.
- It is recommended that the Task Force first make specific findings regarding each subject area. Such findings shall be based upon the best readily available scientific and technical information. The Task Force may decide to adopt such finding subject area by subject area, or for all areas as a unit. After adoption of such findings, the Task Force should proceed to consider and adopt its recommendations.
- It is contemplated that the Task Force will meet regularly (perhaps once a month) for one to two days, at a time and place chosen by the chair. This process shall commence in March 2007 and continue through December 2008, when the final Strategic Plan recommendations are presented to the Delta Vision Committee. Consistent with the Executive Order and this charging document, the details of the meeting schedules, and other processing details, shall be determined by the Task Force chair.
- Hold joint public meetings as needed with the Stakeholder Coordinating Group and the Delta Vision Committee. The timing and content of joint meetings will be determined by the Task Force.
- Make available draft versions of both Delta Vision and Strategic Plan recommendations for review and comment by the public. The Task Force shall receive public testimony on the draft recommendations prior to submittal of its final recommendations to the Delta Vision Committee.

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- Submit the implementation recommendations in the form of a Strategic Plan, which shall be made available to the public and the Delta Vision Committee by October 31, 2008.

Funding for the Task Force

Consistent with the Executive Order indicating that adequate funds for operation of the Task Force shall be provided from governmental and non-governmental sources, the Delta Vision Committee has agreed to seek and make available such funds.

The Task Force members are not compensated for time, but may, upon request, be compensated for travel expenses.



Mike Chrisman
Secretary for Resources
Chair, Delta Vision Committee