

DELTA VISION TASK FORCE
Examples of Draft Principles or Working Premises
(“Top Ten” List)

- The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary is a major natural asset that must be valued and preserved. The policy of the State of California must recognize and respect the value of the Estuary and seek to protect it.
- Protection of the Delta Estuary cannot be ensured unless the water needs of the rest of California also are assured. Thus, the solutions to “fix” the Delta must be comprehensive and address the water needs of all of California.
- The comprehensive solution must include both optimizing all water-use efficiencies and new facilities—conservation and construction.
- There must be an institution and process of adaptive management established for the Estuary that works to simultaneously improve fisheries, export reliability, and water quality.
- New facilities must include storage (both surface and groundwater) and conveyance. Improved conveyance through and/or around the Delta must be coupled with increased storage in order to be able to capture water that is truly surplus to the environment at times of excess rainfall and runoff. Conveyance alone seriously compromises the ability of the state to protect the Estuary in the future.
- The existing network of Delta levees are vulnerable to catastrophic disaster from flooding and earthquakes, which would threaten the health of the Estuary and the quality of water for exports. However, levees in the Delta serve an important function to “conserve” water for both the Estuary and exports by defining areas that “take up space” and thus require less fresh water to maintain both the estuarine environment and sufficient water quality for exports. Thus, there must be immediate rebuilding of strategically-located levees in the Delta to protect the Estuary and exports from catastrophic failure from flooding and earthquakes.
- There must be immediate preparation for emergencies in the Delta due to potential levee failure by both (a) stockpiling rock and other supplies for flood fight and (b) allocating sufficient Proposition 1E funds for strategic levee reconstruction.
- Critical infrastructure that currently runs through the Delta can be relocated to a path of reconstructed levees.
- There should be no further residential development approved in the Delta.
- A new governance structure is needed for adaptive management of the Estuary which involves:
(a) top-level leadership from both the state and federal governments and all agencies/departments that have statutory responsibility; (b) state and federal elected officials; and (c) stakeholders.