

10/16/08

**Joint Statement of Sacramento Valley Water Users, San Joaquin Valley Water Users,  
and SWP/CVP Export Water Contractors on The Delta Vision Strategic Plan**

We support the co-equal goals of a sustainable ecosystem and improved water supply and supply reliability, recognizing that California's regions are self-sufficient to variable degrees. California must invest in new Delta conveyance, surface and groundwater storage, conservation, reclamation, habitat expansion, strategic flood management, and actions to address water quality degradation and other stressors.

We also support managing the Delta region as a unique and vibrant part of California's cultural heritage and a recreational destination, while recognizing natural forces changing the Delta. It is essential that in-delta interests be addressed and local officials engaged as plans for conveyance, ecosystem and flood management progress.

Delta Vision has generally done a good job of defining Delta problems and identifying physical changes needed in the system.

***We believe the focus going forward should be on the following:***

**General Implementation Principles**

- Delta solutions, including ecosystem restoration, storage and conveyance must be implemented in compliance with California's water rights system and area of origin statutes without redirecting impacts.
- Water supply and ecosystem changes must be made in the context of the future vision for the Delta which addresses fundamental forces of sea level rise and unstable landforms.
- Water users will pay for supply and reliability improvements, and broad funding should support ecosystem restoration efforts. Diversion fees are not justified.
- With task delegation from the Strategic Plan, targeted increases in staffing and proper resource allocation, current authorities within existing state and federal agencies are sufficient to implement the Strategic Plan and Vision. A new Delta Conservancy could likely add value to the effort. Separation of DWR's State Water Project operations from its planning, local assistance, flood management, dam safety and other such functions is worthy of further investigation.
- Economic Sustainability must be considered.

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### Water Supply Reliability

- A conveyance fix, implemented in accordance with California's water rights system and area of origin statutes, is imperative in order to achieve the objectives of water supply reliability and ecosystem health.
- Water supply impacts of ecosystem flow proposals must be thoroughly evaluated for consistency with the Delta Vision's co-equal goals.

### Ecosystem Health

- Major in-Delta habitat restoration involving interconnected habitats will be necessary for ecosystem restoration. Integrated habitat investments with flood control improvements and strategic levee investment are necessary, desirable and can be cost-effective.
- All Delta ecosystem stressors must be addressed through sound scientific evaluation and objective responses. Continuation of the historic, myopic and singular focus on flow management proscriptions will not achieve Delta Vision's co-equal goals.
- Illegal diversions of water must be eliminated as soon as possible and certainly prior to imposition of new flow regimes developed to support ecosystem health.
- Restoration objectives must recognize the dominance of non-native species in the system (95% of biomass) and that desirable ecosystem outcomes cannot be guaranteed.
- Real-time monitoring of fishery conditions and water operations must be developed to support robust adaptive management in lieu of inflexible, prescriptive obligations that waste water and financial resources.