

Report from the
Delta Vision Stakeholder Coordination Group

to the

Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force

**Addendum to the Stakeholder Coordination Group
Recommendations Report**

September 11, 2007



I. INTRODUCTION

On August 21, 2007 the Delta Vision Stakeholder Coordination Group submitted its Draft Recommendations Report to the Blue Ribbon Task Force. It contains a series of Guiding Principles, a framework for Action-Based Decision Making (especially for conveyance), principles for addressing environmental justice issues, a set of potential “Out-of-Delta” Actions, a summary of potential draft “Near-Term, Low-Regrets Actions” and a description of two potential visions for the future of the Delta following the guidance provided by the Governor’s Executive Order.

The report also contains a summary of the similarities and differences between the two visions. The similarities between the two visions are many. They contain similar views on land use, infrastructure and approaches to improve the ecological health of the Delta. The primary difference is that one vision builds around a water conveyance system that continues the current practice of water flowing through the Delta, whereas the second vision considers the potential long-term need for an isolated or peripheral conveyance system. They also differ around the potential for using Delta islands for in-Delta water storage and the extent to which some levees need to be strengthened.

This addendum builds on these initial visions, providing clarification on some elements of the visions as well as offering recommendations on additional issues related to these “visions.” This includes:

- A side-by-side comparison of similarities and differences between the two visions
- A list of 30-90 day actions that could serve as a transition between the visioning and strategic planning phases of Delta Vision
- A summary of initial SCG ideas about assurances, strategic planning and the concept of regional self-sufficiency (as directed by the Task Force)
- A summary of the Near-Term, Low-Regrets Actions considered by the SCG.

Many SCG members continue to express their desire to ensure that the “visions” emerging from their conversations are accurately portrayed. SCG members gravitated around two primary visions for the Delta as described above. They have articulated similarities and differences at a conceptual level. But some SCG members believe it is important to note that without the full blown analyses needed to assess these visions, and to explore possible alterations and revisions based on those analyses, the visions remain conceptual and an example of what should be considered in developing a vision for the future of the Delta.

II. SUMMARY OF SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN VISIONS

The following chart reflects the work of the Stakeholder Coordination Group (SCG) at their September 4-5, 2007 meeting. The two emerging vision groups reviewed each of the elements of the other vision and suggested language that might allow for consensus. Where broad agreement between both groups exists, checkmarks appear in each column. Where there were differences an "X" is placed in the appropriate column for that group. Some of the continued differences were due to minor wordsmithing changes that were not acceptable to the other group for various reasons. Where the differences were more significant in nature, the elements have been explained below. It is certainly possible that with additional time and effort the areas of disagreement can be reduced further.

Despite the important difference of opinion between the two emerging visions with respect to the potential use of an isolated facility to accompany the Middle River Conveyance, the two emerging visions are primarily characterized by broad areas of similarity. Most fundamentally, both emerging visions represent a response to the uncertainty that pervades decision-making about the Delta. As already noted, SCG members collectively feel that critical information is currently lacking on numerous pivotal subjects, including the impact of particular conveyance strategies on the ecosystem and water quality for various parties, the ecosystem conditions necessary to recover threatened native species and many others.

There are some differences in the specifics of water export regimes between the two visions in addition to the potential isolated facility. Flexible Delta calls for the use of water storage islands to allow greater flexibility in the management of freshwater flows in the Delta for various purposes, such as local water supply, export water supply, ecosystem management, or salinity repulsion. Flexible Delta also calls for a return aqueduct from the California Aqueduct to the San Joaquin River to introduce higher quality export water into the San Joaquin slightly upstream of the Delta. This would improve environmental conditions in the river and enhance water quality for south Delta and central Delta irrigators. The Flexible Delta also calls for tying export levels to in-Delta hydrologic and water quality conditions. The Resilient Adaptive Delta vision makes no predetermination and leaves those specifics to the operational and regulatory requirements in place at any given time.

The SCG is nearly unanimous in its belief that there should not be substantial new urbanization in the primary zone, except perhaps in the Sacramento River legacy towns. These towns may be permitted to grow in ways consistent with their historic internal needs and with their economic and social sustainability. The Resilient Adaptive Delta vision also calls for prohibiting residential subdivisions in deep floodplains and potential floodways in the secondary zone. The groups differ in their willingness to approach re-designating the primary and secondary zones as a way to address land use issues in the strategic planning phase.

Additionally, the group approached protecting the Western Delta islands differently. Flexible Delta chose to be specific in its reference to the islands protected and feel that seismically stable and/or ring levees are appropriate. The Resilient Adaptive Delta group does not identify specific islands and would protect all of them with cross-levees if found to be most effective.

NOTE: A ✓ indicates that team has approved language for entire item as written. An X indicates team does not approve *italicized* language in that item.

A. Environment	Flex Delta	RAD
1. Restore floodplain along the main stem of the Sacramento River (upstream of the city of Sacramento) for the benefit of splittail and migrating salmonids, and to increase nutrient and organic carbon flows to Delta. Improve salmon spawning gravels in upstream reaches and tributaries of the rivers flowing into the Delta.	√	√
2. Enhance habitat along Old River and in west Delta with setback and vegetated levees. Explore appropriateness of setback levees on Sutter and Steamboat Sloughs.	√	√
3. Manage Yolo Bypass: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for the benefit of splittail and salmonids and other species, • to increase nutrient and organic carbon flows to Delta and • so flood conveyance capacity of the Yolo Bypass is maintained, • in a manner that does not negatively impact the water quality needs of the North Bay aqueduct. 	√	√
4. Enhance channel configuration and hydraulics of Elk Slough, Sutter Slough, and Steamboat Slough to provide alternative route for migratory fish that avoids Georgiana Slough and the Delta cross-channel.	√	√
5. Improve hydraulic residence time and tidal exchange between Cache Slough and the Delta to contribute organic carbon, nutrients, phytoplankton and zooplankton to the Delta, for the benefit of Delta smelt among others. Create a hydrologic and terrestrial connection between Cache Slough and Suisun Marsh.	√	√
6. Restore Mokelumne and Cosumnes River corridors. Enter into formal flood flow agreements with private landowners in the Stone Lakes area and other potential flood bypass areas. Explore opportunities to increase flood flow areas.	√	√
7. Implement the Suisun Marsh PEIR/EIS, which will call for some conversion of managed wetlands into tidal wetlands as habitat restoration in Suisun Marsh (currently a brackish water habitat). Restore tidal action in a portion of each region of the Marsh as follows, based upon Preferred Alternative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 500 to 2,250 acres in Region 1 • 460 to 2,070 acres in Region 2 • 860 to 3,870 acres in Region 3 • 180 to 810 acres in Region 4 The plan will also call for managed wetland enhancement (46,000 acres to 39,000 acres) including the development of a funded exterior levee maintenance program.	√	√
8. Restore tidal marsh on Decker Island and Dutch Slough.	√	√
9. Maintain existing managed wetlands and create new tidal wetland habitats.	√	√
10. Manage Bouldin Island and Holland Tract for habitat.	√	√
11. Create setback levees at opportune sites in west Delta and the lower Sacramento River to allow tidal marsh restoration.	√	√
12. Consider the feasibility of converting the west end of Sherman Island to managed marsh.	√	√
13. Purchase terrestrial habitat and wetlands easements from willing landowners.	√	√
14. Assist in the achievement of habitat acquisition, creation, and enhancement goals of Central Valley Joint Venture for seasonal wetlands, semi-permanent wetlands, riparian forests, and waterfowl-friendly agriculture.	√	√

15. Assist in the acquisition of water needed for seasonal and semi-permanent wetland habitat acquisition, creation, and enhancement under the Central Valley Joint Venture plan.	√	√
16. Develop a sequenced plan to prevent, control and eradicate undesirable non-native species.	√	√
17. Establish and track performance standards for all ecosystem programs and investments.	√	√
18. Enhance river channel habitat along the length of Old River.	√	√
19. <i>Explore habitat enhancement in numerous other channels, including Georgiana Slough and east side tributaries if dual conveyance strategy is built [the disagreement is about dual conveyance]</i>	X	√
20. <i>Manage flood bypasses for fish migration and rearing in low flows, and for flood attenuation in high flows. Maintain hydrologic connection between bypasses / floodplains and rivers during spring flows.</i>	√	√
21. <i>Explore creation of tidally influenced habitats on selected portions of Fabian Tract and Netherlands Tract. [the disagreement is that these Tracts represent prime agricultural land]</i>	X	√
22. Conduct flexible experimentation and adaptive management of Delta ecosystem, especially with respect to in-channel flow and salinity, with operable, channel gates	√	√
23. <i>Experiment with depths and forms of river channels to simulate natural conditions of aquatic habitat. [the disagreement is concern about the impacts on recreations]</i>	X	√
24. <i>Develop a sequenced plan for dealing with invasive species and fish problems without creating undue harm to other parts of the ecosystem.. [the difference is lack of clarity about what is meant by “ fish problems”]</i>	√	X
25. Create floodplain habitat on McCormack Williamson Tract, with proper mitigation for downstream impacts.	√	√
B. Land Use		
1. Concentrate tourism and recreation investments along Highways 160 and 12, in north Delta waterways, and in legacy towns. Permit legacy towns to grow at historic growth rates driven by internal, locally-driven needs to expand local economies.	√	√
2. In the westernmost islands, an assisted transition may be needed from irrigated agriculture to recreation, wildlife habitat, unirrigated agriculture or other land uses if salinity fluctuation impacts irrigated agriculture.	√	√
3. <i>Add buffers to protect activities in the primary zone wherever negative impacts are occurring. [the disagreement is about the utilization of buffers rather than other means for achieving similar outcomes.]</i>	√	X
3b. <i>Re-evaluate primary and secondary zone designations to permit growth in primary zone consistent with internally-defined historic needs of legacy towns, and to restrict urbanization in deep floodplains. [the disagreement centers around perceptions of the effectiveness of existing policies and practices and whether to open the door to changing these,]</i>	X	√
4. Provide incentives to landowners to willingly integrate agriculture, wildlife-related recreation and ecological enhancement on land throughout the Delta. Ensure this does not impact the reclamation district from assessing property.	√	√

5. Provide incentives to landowners to willingly manage land for multiple public benefits, including ecological enhancement. Ensure this does not impact the reclamation district from assessing property.	√	√
6. Create programs and research to provide incentives for farming that deals proactively with climate change and subsidence (e.g. carbon sequestration crops, rice, etc.).	√	√
7. Develop conservancy and/or use a land trust or easement approach to buy or protect agricultural and open space lands that are at risk of urban development in and around the periphery of the Delta, based on a willing buyer – willing seller concept which protects revenues.	√	√
C. Transportation, Utilities, and Infrastructure		
1. Rebuild Highways 12, 160 and 220 on top of levees designed to adequately protect targeted resources.	√	√
2. Protect critical infrastructure, including the water conveyance channel, and a South Delta infrastructure corridor (including Highway 4, the Mokelumne Aqueduct, and the BNSF Railroad) with levees designed to adequately protect targeted resources.	√	√
3. Protect Stockton and Sacramento ship channels and water conveyance channel with levees designed to adequately protect targeted resources. Promote the maximum use of beneficial dredge material.	√	√
4. Key electricity transmission lines and natural gas fields must be protected on Sherman and Brannan-Andrus Islands; repair other reaches on an as-needed basis.	√	√
5. <i>Improve and maintain Suisun levees to protect significant infrastructure in Suisun Marsh such as natural gas production, Southern Pacific Railroad tracks, petroleum pipelines, built structures and wildlife habitat. [the disagreement is primarily around language used to represent the concept.]</i>	√	X
6. Leverage investments in new highway construction (on levees designed to adequately protect targeted resources) with habitat and recreation benefits associated with setback levees. Road relocations should consider criteria for restoration and recreational opportunities.	√	√
7. Include a description for what constitutes an “adequately designed” levee, for example should the levee be: seismically stable, strong enough to protect life and property, a 100-200 year, an urban levee, etc., incorporating the concept that it does not always need to be the most protective.	√	√
D. Water Supply and Quality		
1. Ten-step plan for action-oriented decision making (see attached). <i>[the disagreement is about the content and timing of proceeding with this analysis]</i>	X	√
2. <i>Protect the existing island configuration but confine water conveyance to an armored channel along South Fork of Mokelumne and Middle River. [the disagreement is about the potential need for dual conveyance.]</i>	√	X

3. Partially segregate the water conveyance system and aquatic habitat with operable gates connecting Old and Middle Rivers, and siphon the Victoria Canal under Old River to deliver water to the Clifton Court Forebay.	√	√
4. Re-circulate some export water from California Aqueduct to San Joaquin River. <i>[disagreement exists about whether to do this or consider doing this.]</i>	√	X
4b. Consider re-circulating some export water from California Aqueduct to San Joaquin River. <i>[see comment on 4.]</i>	X	√
5. Link Delta export rates to hydrologic and water quality conditions. <i>[the difference is whether the vision focuses on this explicitly.]</i>	√	X
6. Assess whether water could be stored for release to the Middle River for in-Delta use and export, or to the Old River to augment flow and manage salinity and carbon levels. <i>[the difference is between whether and how.]</i>	X	√
6b. Assess how water could be stored for release to the Middle River for in-Delta use and export, or to the Old River to augment flow and manage salinity and carbon levels. <i>[see comment on 6.]</i>	√	X
7. Ensure that water delivered through Middle River conveyance channel to the pumps is of higher quality than today. <i>[the difference is whether to ensure or seek to ensure.]</i>	√	X
7b. Seek to ensure that water delivered through Middle River conveyance channel to the pumps is of higher quality than today. <i>[see comment on 7.]</i>	X	√
8. Explore water demand reductions that could reduce impact on Delta stressors.	√	√
9. Extend Contra Costa intakes to Middle River to avoid Old River.	√	√
E. Recreation, Tourism & Economic Dependence		
1. Enhance fishing, hunting and birdwatching by ecosystem changes described above.	√	√
2. Enhance opportunities for boating and other water sports.	√	√
3. Explore recreational trail development in eastern Delta transition zone between Delta and uplands	√	√
F. Flood Risk Management		
1. Protect Sherman, Twitchell, Brannan, Bradford, Webb, Jersey, and Bethel Islands with seismically stable levees. Explore whether they are best protected by a continuous ring levee or individual levees by conducting cost analysis and reviewing other considerations, such as boat access. <i>[disagreement stems from the need to focus on the islands named.]</i>	√	X
2. Reduce risk of failure of all critical islands to a reasonable level subject to DRMS further DRMS analysis and likelihood of seismic failure. Explore use of cross-levees to achieve this risk reduction by confining inundation in the event of exterior levee failure (with caution not to endanger existing residents), and to provide flexible management opportunities in different sub-sections of islands. <i>[disagreement stems from identification of islands and type of protection noted.]</i>	X	√

3. Explore dredging of Yolo Bypass and quarrying of Montezuma Hills as sources of fill material (delivered by slurry line) to rebuild key western Delta islands, particularly Sherman Island, to sea level over time.	√	√
4. Reuse all other dredged materials beneficially (e.g. for levee construction, island fill) whenever possible.	√	√
5. Explore the potential for floodways and additional groundwater and surface water storage to mitigate effects of global warming, including reduced snowpack.	√	√
6. Protect legacy towns with levees designed to adequately protect targeted resources.	√	√
7. Provide flood protection for Sacramento and West Sacramento with levees designed to adequately protect targeted resources.	√	√
8. Provide flood protection for Stockton/Lathrop area. with levees designed to adequately protect targeted resources.	√	√
9. Improve other levees to future 100-year flood protection as scientific knowledge of future hydrology emerges.	√	√
10. Protect Highway 84 Corridor with levees designed to adequately protect targeted resources.	√	√
11. Create seasonal floodplain on the lower San Joaquin River, including a flood bypass on Paradise Cut.	√	√
12. <i>Link south Delta flood bypass to tidally influenced habitat areas on Fabian Tract. Explore potential for additional flood bypass parallel to Sacramento ship channel. [disagreement exists based on the agricultural value of Fabian Tract.]</i>	X	√
13. Consider the feasibility of creating new flood bypasses south of Vernalis for San Joaquin River and in Stone Lakes region. Study water system and ecosystem management implications.	√	√
14. Continually maintain and improve agricultural levees to meet the drivers of change other than seismic.	√	√
15. Develop and implement a levee maintenance program for Suisun Marsh to support water quality, existing wetland values and functions and ecosystem restoration activities.	√	√
16. Maintain Sacramento and Stockton ship channel levees to protect channel use.	√	√
17. Explore infiltration of floodwaters upstream to reduce Delta flood risk and replenish C.V. groundwater aquifers.	√	√
G. Emergency Management		
1. Identify areas to store materials for emergency response (including temporary channel barriers) as soon as possible.	√	√
H. State and Local Economics (All are cross-listed from other sections)		

III. PROPOSED 30-90 DAY ACTIONS

As noted in the Introduction, the SCG believes several steps could be taken during the next 30-90 days to move the visions forward. In essence, they suggest a series of actions that could serve as a transition between the vision and strategic planning phases of Delta Vision. These recommended 30-90 day activities include:

1. Out-of-Delta Strategies: Floodplain Management. The following three activities should be initiated to continue progress on investigations of the value of improved floodplain management and strategies upstream of the Delta:

- Meet with Resources Agency Project Leaders of three key programs – Integrated Regional Water Management Planning, FloodSafe and the State Water Plan – to determine what knowledge and resources exist to help determine the potential for improved upstream flood management to benefit Delta flood issues, ecosystem health, water supply and water quality.
- Work with the Natural Heritage Institute and interested academic institutions to develop a work plan to evaluate the potential benefits from and issues associated with improved upstream floodplain management.
- Create an Advisory Group from among SCG members to help move these activities forward.

2. Ecosystem Health: Definition of a Sustainable Ecosystem. Most SCG members believe that until definitive targets are established for Delta ecosystem health little can be done to develop strategies to improve the Delta ecosystem. At least three questions need to be answered based on the best information available today: What does ecosystem sustainability mean today? What values are considered essential to health? What functions need to be restored?

SCG members are looking for the best answer available today to serve as the basis for further discussions and analysis which will be critical during the Strategic Planning phase of Delta Vision. The following immediate steps are recommended:

- Work with the Eco-Design team, representatives of the ERP and DRERIP, and any other experts considered necessary to provide an answer to the questions posed.
- Based on their response, develop a plan of action to evaluate the various operational considerations associated with conveyance through the Delta (as contained in the SCG Recommendations Report).
- Create an Advisory Group from among SCG members to help move this activity forward.

3. Integration of Environmental Justice Principles. The SCG believes that the Environmental Justice principles contained in its recommendations should serve as template to be applied to any vision that emerges from the Delta Vision process. This includes any near-term or low-regrets actions as well. The following steps are recommended:

- Identify a team of “experts” who can apply the template once a vision and/or near-term measures are agreed upon. This team should include individuals with expertise in planning, economics and public health at a minimum.
- Potentially use the existing emerging visions to test the environmental justice template.
- Create an Advisory Group from among SCG members to help move this initiative forward.

4. Reduce Constraints to Action. The SCG believes that many potential hurdles exist to making necessary short-term progress on activities germinating from the Delta Vision process. This includes implementation of potential near-term actions, implementation of the Action Based Decision-Making approach and testing of pilot projects, among others. SCG members acknowledge that many of these “hurdles” are intended to serve as an important component of the “checks and balances” necessary for good government. Under appropriate, transparent circumstances, however, it may be possible to improve communications and cooperation necessary to move projects forward more rapidly. To that end, the following should be considered to help reduce the constraints to action:

- Establish an “Executive Steering Committee” of top-level leadership from state and federal agencies responsible for permitting and oversight of activities in the Delta
- Executive or Legislative actions to reduce time constraints on permitting and contracting
- Given the dire state of fisheries in the Delta, employ emergency provisions that can help accelerate activities focused on improving the Delta ecosystem and fisheries
- Other?

5. Seek Opportunistic Ways to Leverage Existing Programs. The SCG believes that efforts to link with existing Delta programs may assist in achieving some of the immediate actions envisioned in its recommendations. For example, through the Delta Levees Program, there may be opportunities to achieve habitat restoration while at the same time meeting the goals of levee maintenance and improvement. These opportunities require further exploration. As such it is recommended an Advisory Group from SCG members, and other knowledgeable professionals and agency staff, be formed to develop a list of possible opportunities and a plan of action.

6. Evaluate Potential Use of Existing Bond Funds. The SCG recommends that appropriate State agency leadership consider immediately how existing bond funds from Prop 84, 1E and 1C could be earmarked for projects and goals associated with Delta Vision. This is highly time sensitive, but potentially provides an opportunity for an immediate infusion of funds needed to support Delta Vision investigations and outcomes.

7. Begin Focused Discussions on Outstanding Land Use Issues. Many SCG members believe a more detailed discussion of land use issues needs to be initiated, with particular emphasis on the effectiveness of current Delta policies concerning primary and secondary lands. Consensus does not exist on the focus of these discussions but the SCG did concur with the step of initiating discussions among those willing to do so. The recommendation is to identify those interested in focusing on the key land use issues and to provide the forum for initiating these discussions.

IV. SUMMARY OF ASSURANCES, STRATEGIC PLANNING AND REGIONAL SELF-SUFFICIENCY DISCUSSIONS

The Task Force asked the Stakeholder Coordination Group to begin a conversation on potential assurances, issues related to the strategic planning phase and regional self-sufficiency at its September 4-5, 2007 meeting. Although there are a number of issues envisioned for strategic planning phase that will need more detailed analysis, this section describes some initial thoughts on these topics. These are conceptual and initial and the SCG understands there will be more focus on this during the strategic planning phase.

A. Assurances Discussion

The SCG groups conducted an initial brainstorm of ideas that each group would want considered if either one or the other emerging vision elements were implemented. Both groups understand that a discussion regarding prioritization will need to occur.

Resilient Adaptive Delta Group

- If Flexible Delta is built, still convey water from Oroville and Shasta to San Joaquin Valley and Southern California
- There should be a commensurate level of analysis for all options.
- Water users don't pay for things that don't benefit water and ecosystem.
- Want commitment for the decision to be real. The group doesn't want to arrive at the decision moment and be told that status quo will continue. They also want the decision to be binding.
- Need pre-Judge Wanger decision on water supply to continue to reach all end users – source doesn't matter if quantity and quality the same.
- In-Delta farmers want assurance that the Delta will still be economically viable.
- All species important to the Delta ecosystem are considered, including migratory wildlife.
- Water operations aren't held responsible for species problems caused by factors other than water operations.
- Flexible Delta cannot give enough assurance.

Flexible Delta Group

- Improve survivability of out-migrating San Joaquin salmon and others such as steelhead trout/generally support California and Federal endangered species act.
- Safe yield export to support agriculture, recreation, ecosystem, wildlife, fish, etc.
- Respect and meet historical water rights, contracts, and water quality standards.
- Export pumping to be tied to hydrologic conditions with Delta ecosystem health the priority.
- Maintain water levels to federally authorized navigation depths.
- Increase storage capacity upstream for flood control and salinity management.
- All proposed channel barriers be operable/navigable.
- Protect and enhance recreation opportunities.

- Maintain and continue to fund levee and channel maintenance (especially if peripheral canal built).
- If peripheral canal built, maintain net tidal flow of water in the pool.
- If peripheral canal built, protect Delta water quality.

B. Identification of Key Strategic Planning Issues

In the September SCG meeting, some members engaged in a preliminary discussion of the key issues that should be addressed in the strategic planning phase of Delta Vision. Though there will be much more time to discuss these issues more thoroughly in 2008, what follows is some initial thinking on issues of importance for that phase of the process.

1. Develop performance measures for all key Delta functions and services, especially the environment. Objective assessments of progress on key management objectives like water quality improvements and species recoveries require agreement on relevant performance measures before program activities begin.
2. Ensure that conveyance options have a fair chance to prove their benefits before final evaluation occurs. The Action-Based Decision Making approach relies on fair evaluation of different conveyance options. As Middle River conveyance is implemented in stages, it is essential that its full potential costs and benefits not be dismissed before all parts of it have been constructed.
3. A “beneficiary pays” principle is generally desirable, but different finance mechanisms will likely be appropriate for different types of investments. For example, bonds may be more suitable for projects that provide broad public benefits (like habitat restorations), whereas water conveyance facilities may best be financed directly by their users, either pre- or post-construction. Some SCG members believe that if beneficiaries pay, they should also have some measure of control over construction and operation of any new projects.
4. Coordination with the federal government is essential. Not only does the federal government operate the Central Valley Project, but its regulatory authority affects nearly all essential Delta functions and services. Some SCG members feel that Delta Vision implementation might benefit from being merged with a permit-acquisition process such as the Bay Delta Conservation Plan.
5. Ensure that all easement, flood bypass, and open space acquisitions have good ongoing management and maintenance programs. Experience has shown that open space and easement acquisition programs can fail to achieve intended benefits – and even become liabilities – if attention isn’t paid to proper management of the land.
6. Consider allowing project contractors to create a Joint Powers Authority to construct any new conveyance facility. Also consider allowing non-governmental organizations (such as land trusts) to execute habitat acquisition and restoration projects. In each case, non-state agencies and organizations have considerable expertise and management experience that may be effective in achieving Delta Vision goals.

7. Strengthen oversight of water delivery under contract agreements. Some SCG members feel that, whatever conveyance arrangements are ultimately made, there must still be a greater effort to ensure reliable delivery of water under agreed-upon contract terms.

8. An effective governance structure is essential. In particular, any governance structure or entity must have the authority to implement a vision for the Delta to avoid the fate of CalFed (in which all parties could stop something, but no one party could make anything specific happen). Some preliminary ideas include:

- A Delta “tsar” who oversees and coordinates all state agency activities related to the Delta.
- A small, high-level entity (perhaps a single person), which directly advises the Governor on Delta issues. The Governor then acts as Delta “tsar” and directs existing institutions to carry out needed actions. This structure avoids having the advisory entity constantly embroiled in lawsuits.
- Don’t make a major change in existing structure; just give clear direction and reliable, dedicated funding to agencies to carry out Delta Vision.

As directed by the Blue Ribbon Task Force, discussions within the SCG on strategic planning aspects of Delta Vision will continue throughout 2008.

C. Regional Self-Sufficiency Discussion

The Stakeholder Coordination Group began a discussion about the concept of regional self-sufficiency and what impact it may have in the strategic planning process. Initially the two emerging vision groups, Flexible Delta and Resilient Adaptive Delta met separately to discuss the topic. Then the larger group reviewed some of the initial thoughts and agreed this issue needs further discussion.

Here are some preliminary thoughts on this topic:

Resilient Adaptive Delta group:

- Urban California has been regionally self-sufficient for 25 years in the sense that all new demand has been met without Delta water.
- Agriculture will have a difficult time achieving this goal. Urban customers may be able to afford higher water prices, but many farmers can't.
- In addition, it's about more than just the farmers. In areas that are agriculture-dependent, there could be major secondary economic ripple effects to higher water prices and potential lost productivity, including lost jobs.
- Groundwater recharge may be one way to get more regional self-sufficiency for agriculture, but it is energy-intensive. Also, water quality management is tough since water has to be conveyed to infiltration sites – these are all hard problems to solve.

Flexible Delta group:

- Regional self-sufficiency as a concept is a good one and conservation and incentives should be explored statewide.
- However, for communities that are truly unable to sustain themselves without help, efforts need to be made to support them. Also, plans should be in place to support areas after potential disasters.
- In general, no more water can be taken from the Delta so self-sufficiency needs to be part of any future planning process. The concept of developing water outside the Delta needs to be explored further.

V. NEAR-TERM ACTIONS CHART

The Stakeholder Coordination Group (SCG) considered immediate near term, low regrets actions that could be taken prior to completing a Delta Vision Strategic Plan. A variety of measures were proposed and a survey was conducted to discern initial support and priorities for these measures. Of the thirty-six measures proposed, nineteen measures already appear in the two emerging visions being prepared by the group.

SCG members were invited to participate in an online survey between July 27 and August 7, 2007. Respondents were asked to mark their level support for the 36 proposed potential actions as:

1. Support,
2. Potentially Support, or
3. Do Not Support.

Members were then asked to comment on their reasons of potential support or lack of support for each measure. It should be noted that each measure was at a different level of development when initially presented in the survey and further development is expected.

Table 1 is the results of this survey showing the six actions that had the most support, (in order - actions 14, 13, 8, 32, 3 and 2) as well as the actions that had more than 60% “support” with little opposition. (In order - actions 36, 6, 7, 23, 26, 31, 4, 11, 21.)

There were nine actions that had 5 or more stakeholders responding with “do not support” (Actions 12, 33, 20, 22, 28, 30, 25, 17 and 24) and these were not included in the table below, but are listed in Appendix A containing the full list of actions and comments received for each one.

Although there is wide agreement on many actions, stakeholders suggest more detailed analysis be completed for each action that includes project objectives, project design details and financial analysis, among other things, before any could be implemented.

TABLE 1:

Action #	Description (shortened)	Response					
		Support		Potentially Support		Do Not Support	

Most Supportive Actions:

Action 14	Prepare emergency plans to deal with threats to lives and property in the Delta as well as critical local, regional and statewide infrastructure.	26	93%	2	7%	0	0%
Action 13	Implement a basic emergency response program in the Delta	25	89%	3	11%	0	0%
Action 8	Increase Investment in Exotic Species Control (e.g. egeria densa)	24	86%	4	14%	0	0%
Action 32	Continue to provide regular levels of funding for Delta levee maintenance.	22	81%	5	19%	0	0%
Action 3	Expedite Implementation of the Dutch Slough Tidal Marsh Restoration Project.	21	75%	7	25%	0	0%
Action 2	Restore Tidal Marsh in Suisun Marsh	18	54%	10	36%	0	0%

Potentially Supported Actions:

Action 36	Determine the water needs of the Delta, including what flow regime is needed under different conditions for a healthy Delta.	20	71%	6	21%	2	7%
Action 6	Acquire and Restore Decker Island.	19	70%	6	22%	2	7%
Action 7	Partition Sherman and and Jersey Islands.	18	64%	9	32%	1	4%
Action 23	Run experiments on subsidence reversal, agricultural practices, habitat restoration, carbon sequestration.	18	64%	9	32%	1	4%
Action 26	Aggressively increase water conservation, water recycling and groundwater cleanup/groundwater desalination to increase water supply reliability.	18	64%	7	25%	3	11%
Action 31	Identify and purchase lands needed for flood protection, (e.g. flood corridors, room for levee setbacks, etc.) and environmental restoration (e.g. shallow water tidal habitat).	17	61%	11	39%	0	0%
Action 4	Restore and Enhance the Cache Slough Region	17	61%	9	32%	2	7%
Action 11	Dredged Material Reuse	17	63%	8	30%	2	7%
Action 21	Implement demonstration projects at Franks Tract for salinity and fish protection and demonstration project screens at Clifton Court forebay.	17	63%	7	26%	3	11%

Appendix A. Full Near-Term Measures Chart with Comments

See Excel spreadsheet attached.

