

DELTA CONSERVATION FRAMEWORK

November 30, 2016 Workshop Summary

The following provides a summary of the fourth Delta Conservation Framework (DCF) workshop held on November 30, 2016. The workshop focused on regional conservation regions and included overview presentations on conservation planning efforts in the South Delta, Cache Slough/Yolo Bypass, and Suisun Marsh. Comments and input received on each of the regional conservation regions discussed are summarized below.

West/Central Delta

Challenges

- Microcystis/blue-green algae and invasive aquatic weeds impact recreation and represent both an environmental and economic concern. Efforts to address invasive aquatic weeds could provide multiple benefits.
- Salinity intrusion/water quality is a common community concern in the western and central Delta. This should be discussed and evaluated when doing any conservation planning in the region.
- High value agricultural lands (prime 1 soils) throughout East Contra Costa County should be protected. Conservation efforts on these lands should focus on wildlife friendly agriculture.
- Need to consider sea level rise and climate change impacts in the West Delta, including impacts on salinity and hydrology.

Opportunities

- There is an existing inventory of current land uses that could be used.
- There are existing State owned lands, an HCP and ongoing projects such as the Knightsen biofilter project that could be leveraged.
- Existing agricultural lands present opportunities for wildlife habitat.
- Land IQ dataset could be helpful in developing regional conservation strategies.
- ECATs offer existing, multi-agency groups that have been used as a centralized forum for permitting discussions.
- Incorporate annual presentations to key forums (MOUs, TACs, Delta Protection Commission) including updates on the previous year and discussions on the upcoming

year providing an opportunity for stakeholders to comment on projects, processes and ideas before they move farther along.

- Consider separating the West and Central Delta into two planning regions.
- Look at ongoing DPIIC (Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee) discussions regarding permitting, including suggestions for a coordinated, consolidated process with common application forms, grant funding process and programmatic EIR/EIS's. The Delta Long Term Management Strategy for the ship channel is a good example. Also see Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan for the Bay.

Stakeholders/Partners

- Contra Costa County General Plan update. County supervisors and advisory councils provide points of contact for communication and coordination with locals and counties going forward.
- Ironhouse Sanitary District – important stakeholder
- East Contra Costa County HCP. Also see county regional plan
- Local Reclamation Districts (hold monthly citizen meetings in Isleton)
- Local Marinas – provide informal presentations at existing scheduled meetings.
- Sacramento Area Council of Governments
- Farm Bureaus
- Windsurfing community – recreation

South Delta

Challenges

- Accomplishing flood control + restoration + agriculture
- Restoration in entrainment zone. Need to find ways to move forward with restoration that does not increase entrainment
- Encroachment of vines/trees @ Stanislaus/San Joaquin River confluence
- Urban pressures in secondary Delta
- Foreclosures around Tracy – frozen urbanization
- Manteca/Lodi/Stockton have disadvantaged community status
- Very little public land, land managed for conservation/parks
- SJR Steelhead => ensuring survival of juveniles
- Need to develop local capacity.
- Need a permitting liaison to navigate through process and “open doors” to resolve issues.
- Regional permitting is a good idea, but still requires a lot of work
 - Consider Yolo-like MOU to streamline permitting, bring people together

- Need someone to propose that the 2016 Flood Protection Conservation Strategy IS the Regional Conservation Investment Strategy under AB 2087

Opportunities

- Vernalis to Hwy 5 = riverine
- Floodplain/Channel Margin Habitat in legal Delta
 - Link with Water Board flows process
 - Link to National Wildlife Refuge to south
- See CVFP efforts to consider conservation opportunities in South Delta
- \$295 million in Proposition 1 available to DWR for multi-benefit levees => Can this be used here?

Stakeholders/Partners

- South Delta Water Agency => engaging landowners
- SJAFCA - San Joaquin Area Flood Control Agency
- San Joaquin County
- RD 17
- San Joaquin Farm Bureau
- SJC RCD

North Delta

Challenges/Comments

- Recognize/acknowledge that private lands are being converted to public lands in the in the name of conservation, which is adversely affecting landowners and local communities.
- Public agencies/ land managers must be responsible for outcomes, including potential adverse impacts on local landowners and communities.
- Government is a bad neighbor - managing lands poorly. Increased public lands also leads to loss of tax revenue and impacts on adjacent landowners.
- Avoid driving private landowners out.
- Don't use Adaptive Management– can't constantly change rules. Don't "kick can down the road".
- Goals should include:
 - No net loss of private property
 - Improved flood protection, Including along Sac River
 - No loss of water quality or quantity
 - No inundation that affects adjacent wells

- Show Sacramento River – fix the map (Courtland – Freeport).
- Flood Control policy needs to be more than just State interest – It should also benefit local landowners. Concern is that flood control investments are just to protect State interests/resources.
- Be specific – don't be “fuzzy”
- Specify what we are trying to protect/conserves?
- Lack of \$ for land management.

Opportunities

- Elk Slough is an example of an area that might benefit from conservation actions that could also be good for the community. The question is who will take responsibility for doing this?
- Levee improvements combined with habitat?
- Qualify measurable outcomes (i.e. quantitative conservation), including clear triggers for change).
- Incentivize land owners to participate in new conservation projects.
- Provide examples of where public lands are being managed well.

Stakeholders/Partners

- Commit to scheduling regional community meetings as part of the Framework.
- Include large landowners such as Metropolitan Water District (MWD) in future meetings and planning.
- Hold additional workshops with proper notice to each community.
- Do more community outreach up front - take more time.
- Build in implementation of outreach with specific accountability, including specifying who will do it, how it will be done and how will it be measured. Consider a checklist.
- Ask the communities what they want.
- Identify existing projects and discuss with community.

Northeast Delta

Challenges

- Outside of Delta influences – big ag/business coming in and buying large acreage.
- Conversion of crops from annual to permanent.
- Production facilities.
- Increasing land values and crop profits.
- Growers don't want to be told what to do or be liable for someone else's decision.
- Agriculture wants to stay agriculture.

Opportunities

- Wildlife friendly farming.
- Integration.
- Landscape-level mosaic.
- Greater rural/urban connection - consider “food desert” analysis for rural/urban connection.
- Reconciliation – functioning ecosystem that allows human uses.
- Voluntary easements.
- Consider specific land uses for specific parcels. For example, if a parcel that’s part of a larger property is at an intersection, consider different land uses for that particular parcel.

Stakeholders/Partners

- Provide better signage at postings stating this is a public meeting
- Provide posters at libraries and post offices
- Host night meetings.
- Farm bureau and key opinion leaders.
- Consider a community liaison to help with outreach.
- Don’t ask for acceptance of the plan, but how planning can help you. How can this benefit farmers?

Yolo Bypass/Cache Slough

Challenges

- Wide range of land uses and impacts (e.g. Infrastructure, agriculture, flood protection, wildlife habitat, duck clubs and managed wetlands).
- Regional – urban water supply (Napa/Solano County -> NBA).
- Concern regarding lifestyle change - socio-cultural/way of life.
- Change from terrestrial/agriculture to water.
- North-South, land (size, use etc.) differences.
- North: Heavy focus on fisheries, all land already spoken for (Tule Ranch North).
- One region, but recognize sub-regional differences.
- Need for maintenance/monitoring.
- Public access, recreation, education opportunities & funding.
- Public access areas conflicts with private/restoration, local authority/patrols (nuisance).
- Upper bypass versus lower bypass – connections and impacts.
- Agriculture, flooded agriculture, value as waterfowl/other habitat.

- Transition zones (e.g. levees - how to address regulatory challenges).

Opportunities

- Adult fish passage in Yolo Bypass.
- Increased effectiveness of floodplain rearing (17,000+ acres).
- 8,000+ acres of tidal restoration.
- Financing from State/federal water contractors.
- Prioritize projects, e.g. Lower Elkhorn, Putah.
- Opportunities on agricultural lands, operations/management.
- Connect slivers, existing areas/opportunities.
- Fish Restoration Program.
- TMDL/mercury concerns; mosquito control. Refer to BMPs
- Additional incentives for winter flooding => address mercury.
- Monitor and inventory water quality impacts, impacts to fisheries
- Collective solutions, funding for urban and fisheries.
- Multi-Benefits solution - planning to resolve water supply vs fish (co-equal).
- Corridor Management Framework: www.yolowra.org/board_agendas/2015/CMF-LS-ND.pdf

Stakeholders/Partners

- Institutionalize through governance (project based).
- Use Yolo Bypass/Cache Slough partnership as model.
- Local decision-maker involvement to happen at outset.
- Creative stakeholder engagement; get involvement early.
- Need for constant education, address multiple interests.
- Adequate notice of meetings.
- Provide follow up summary notes.
- Integrate and clearly address agricultural sustainability into DCF document.
- Bypasses as “best hope” for certain crops/habitat (will not be developed).
- Outreach to farmers, communication of activities, potential benefits (Newsletter?), Board of Supervisors.

Workshop Participants

First	Last	Affiliation
Chris	Alford	Yolo Habitat Conservancy
Bob	Amrine	Bethel Island Municipal Improvement District
Kate	Anderson	Delta Stewardship Council
Charlotte	Biggs	DWR
Amanda	Bohl	Delta Stewardship Council
Chris	Brieno	Assemblyman Jim Frazier
Doug	Brown	Douglas Environmental
John	Cain	American Rivers
Mike	Campbell	Clarksburg volunteer
YouChen	Chow	DWR
Daniel	Constable	Delta Stewardship Council
Barbara	Daly	DPC AC
Bruce	DiGennaro	The Essex Partnership
Linda	Dorn	Regional San
Sakura	Evans	CFDW-IEP
Agnes	Farres	Water Board
Rebecca	Fris	CDFW-WRGB
Terri	Gaines	DSC
Roberta	Goulart	Solano County
Aaron	Haiman	Delta Conservancy
Stephan	Heringer	RD 999
Ryan	Hernandez	Contra Costa County
Jennifer	Hobbs	USFWS
Brooke	Jacobs	CDFW
Laura	Jensen	Delta Conservancy
Megan	Keever	Stillwater Sciences
Alejo	Kraus Polk	UC Davis
Robin	Kulakow	Yolo Basin Foundation
Galea	Kusic	
Debra	Kustic	Delta Conservancy
Desiree	Loggins	Audubon California
Jim	Long	DWR (Delta Levees Enhancement)
Amber	Manfree	UC Davis - CWS
Brett	Milligan	UC Davis
Rhianna	Mulligan	DWR
Martha	Ozanoff	Yolo Basin Foundation

First	Last	Affiliation
Thomas	Pate	Solano Co. Water Agency
Shelley	Phillips	DWR
Eugene	Phillips	W. G. property Owner
Mark	Pruner	Clarksburg Fire
Amelia	Raquel	TNC-CFR
Richard	Reed	Yolo County BOS
Blake	Roberts	Delta Protection Commission
Sam	Safi	Sacramento County Regional Sanitation District
Bjarni	Serup	CDFW
Christina	Sloop	CDFW
Dave	Stirling	Personal
George	Strnad	AECOM
Ramona	Swenson	ESA
Anna	Swenson	The Freshwater Trust
Heather	Swinney	USFWS
Kris	Tjernell	Natural Resources Agency
Doug	Weinrich	USFWS
Carl	Wilcox	CDFW
Mark	Wilson	Wilson Vineyards, Clarksburg
Greg	Yarris	USFWS - Central Valley Joint Venture