

A Social Science Strategy for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta

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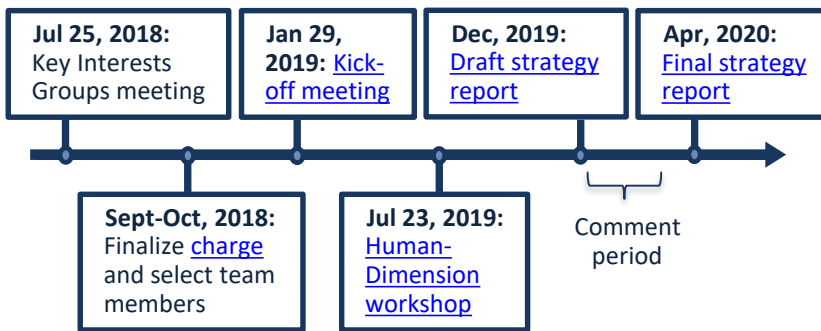
Why do we need social science in the Delta?

The social sciences can help in understanding how people interact with the Delta, how the Delta impacts human well-being, and how human actions impact the Delta environment – all of which contribute insight into protecting and restoring the Delta.



What is the Social Science Task Force (Task Force)?

The independent Task Force of six social scientists was charged by the Delta Science Program to develop a strategy for strengthening and integrating social sciences into the science, management, and policy landscape of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.



What is social science?

As described by the Task Force, “...social science disciplines seek to understand social processes, social phenomena, or individual human attributes that are critical to the effectiveness of management decisions...” (pg. 15).

Example disciplines and research questions:

- **Psychology:** What values, attitudes, and prior experiences influence a farmers’ adoption of a riparian buffer strategy?
- **Economics:** What are the benefits and costs of alternative environmental restoration strategies?
- **Human Geography:** How are people in the Delta affected by and adapting to climate change?

Strategy Findings and Recommendations (R)

Finding 1: There is a lack of social science capacity and investment

- R1. Invest in building an external network of social scientists.
- R2. Invest in internal social science capacity.
- R3. Invest in a broad array of social science studies.

Finding 2: Research activities are ongoing, but there is no long-term vision for social science integration

- R4. Invest in a collaborative process to develop a conceptual framework for the Delta that includes social science.
- R5. Invest in the collaborative development of social and natural indicators for the Delta Ecosystem.
- R6. Develop a plan for integrating social science into the Delta science enterprise.

Finding 3: Social science does not currently inform adaptive management structures or learning processes

- R7. Continuously evaluate institutional and cultural barriers to learning.
- R8. Evaluate and reduce institutional factors that limit adaptation.

What’s next?

The Delta Stewardship Council is implementing the Task Force recommendations through internal efforts and external collaborations. To join us and learn more, please visit

<https://deltacouncil.ca.gov/social-science>

