

# Interagency Ecological Program Guiding Principles

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The Interagency Ecological Program (IEP) collaboratively monitors, researches, models, and synthesizes critical information for adaptive management, water project operations, planning and regulatory purposes relative to endangered fish and the aquatic ecosystem in the San Francisco estuary (Bay-Delta). This addresses high priority management and policy needs to meet the purpose and fulfill responsibilities under water right decisions, the State/Federal Endangered Species and Clean Water Acts and is carried out by multidisciplinary teams of agency, academic, NGO, and private scientists.

The IEP is committed to adapting emerging science to management needs using these guiding principles to design for the future. Together, this collaborative will:

## 1. **Collaborative Science Leadership for the Bay-Delta** (*Why and Where*)

- Serve as the interagency core of a collaborative Bay-Delta aquatic science network with a focus on Bay-Delta aquatic ecology but coordinated within the full watershed;
- Provide a scientific foundation for planning and management decisions through best available science and strong partnerships with other agency, university, and stakeholder science programs;
- Work with the Delta Science Program (DSP) to identify, track, and explain Bay-Delta science status and needs simply and cogently; and
- Inspire, engage and foster objective leadership and sponsor independent peer review of key management issues including identification and strategies to address scientific uncertainty.

## 2. **Science Collaboration, Coordination, and Integration** (*What*)

- Integrate IEP's roles and responsibilities with other programs and plans including the Bay Delta Habitat Conservation Plan (BDHP) and Delta Plan as appropriate;
- Collaborate with other agencies and programs to maximize the effective and efficient application of funds, equipment, personnel and expertise to meet scientific information needs for regulatory compliance, and management and planning; and
- Help sponsoring agencies to adaptively manage and integrate monitoring and studies to meet compliance, planning, and management needs, and to reduce uncertainties.

## 3. **Relevant, Responsive, and Adaptive Science** (*When*)

- Engage decision makers to help them identify high priority science needs and collaborate on science initiatives responding to high priority management needs;

- Respond to urgent needs with staged responses (time vs. quality) to maximize benefits;
- Periodically review the IEP program and program elements to ensure focus and direction remain relevant;
- Adaptively manage long-term programs and be alert to new events and trends;
- Consider decisions in context of current, transitional and the future paradigms;
- Build on what's "good" and keep it relevant into the future; and
- Ensure processes and business practice cycles are timely, documented and regularly reviewed.

#### 4. **Objectivity, Inclusiveness, Consistency, Continuity and Transparency** (How)

- Involve stakeholders and seek robust, constructive engagement and collaboration;
- Seek balanced and inclusive funding partnerships, including with private entities;
- Document and manage by agreed upon priorities;
- Follow described governance, work planning and decision making processes;
- Share and learn from peer and independent scientific review of IEP projects; and products; and
- Communicate clearly, timely, and relevantly.