

Bay-Delta - Informational Proceeding to Develop Flow Criteria for the DeltaEcosystem - Organization of Groups and Panels

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Subject: Informational Proceeding to Develop Flow Criteria for the DeltaEcosystem - Organization of Groups and Panels

Dear Mr. Crader,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the State Board's proceeding to develop Delta Outflow criteria, pursuant to state Senate Bill 1. The legislation requests the participation of the Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) in developing outflow criteria. The Department of the Interior (Interior) believes that staff from its agencies, including the Service and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, have expertise which may be useful to the Board as the Board collects information. Interior intends to make agency staff available to participate in this process. However, Interior believes that requiring participants to testify under oath could impede a free and full scientific discussion on topics where there is a great deal of uncertainty, and may cause governmental agencies and groups to reconsider how, and whether they would participate. Therefore, Interior opposes any requirement for participants to be under oath.

Interior believes that the categories of panels identified by the Board will be useful to identify the flows necessary to protect fisheries which are public trust resources under California law. We recommend the topics identified below be addressed in the panel categories identified in the Board notice.

Fisheries- cover the flow needs of both anadromous and resident species of fish that rely on the Delta. Testimony will focus on flow/habitat relationships that will support healthy fish populations. Topics in this group could include: delta outflow, San Francisco Bay outflow, reverse flow, timing of flows, source water requirements, and floodplain inundation/bypass flows.

Food web- cover the flow needs that will support a healthy ecosystem and food web. Topics in this group could include: Pseudo diaptomus, reverse flows, particle residence time, timing of flow, contaminants, etc.

Water quality- cover the flow that will provide water quality needed for a healthy ecosystem. Topics in this group could include: location of X2, salinity, turbidity, dissolved oxygen, temperature, etc.

Non Native/invasive species- flows needed to reduce/eliminate populations and affects of non native. Topics include: corbula, corbicula, egeria, microcystis, preventative flows (that fluctuate more and reduce risk of invasion/colonization), etc.

If the Board adds panels on additional categories or topics, Interior reserves the opportunity for staff from Interior's agencies to participate in the panels as appropriate.

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