

For Immediate Release:
Friday, September 11, 2009



Contact:
Nicole Lampe, Resource Media / 415-325-5000x302

Delta Legislation Represents Progress - But Financing and Consistency Powers Needed
Delta Vision Foundation Releases Letter to Senate President pro tem Steinberg

Sacramento – Today, the Delta Vision Foundation (formerly the Governor’s Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force) noted the California Legislature is taking action on hotly debated water policy aimed at fixing the myriad problems in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

Unfortunately, changes in bills today failed to address the need for financing of the Delta Council and removed ability of the Council to ensure state and local agencies act consistently with the Delta Plan.

“The bill package provided this morning touched all of the seven goals of the *Delta Vision Strategic Plan*, though it failed to provide secure funding, a critical element of our Goal 7” said Phil Isenberg, chair of the Foundation. “It reflects many recommendations from the Delta Vision Strategic Plan and represents progress after many years of stalemate.” Importantly, the lawmakers acknowledged the co-equal goals of restoring the Delta ecosystem and creating a more reliable water supply for California - the foundation of the *Strategic Plan’s* components.

However, no financing plan has been provided in legislation released this afternoon. Without financing for the Delta Plan and secure funding for the Council, you cannot guarantee achievement of the co-equal goals.

Equally importantly, the ability of the proposed Delta Stewardship Council to ensure that state and local agencies actions are consistent with the Delta Plan was removed from bills this afternoon. The Delta Plan is intended to integrate the actions of the more the 200 state and local agencies with roles in the Delta, and also to provide effective linkages to federal agencies. The dramatic changes in legislative action today mean that agencies can act without consistency with the Delta Plan or even paying effective attention to the coequal goals.

Failure to finance the new governance structure and to provide the Delta Stewardship Council with effective powers guarantees the same old interest group battles shift back to the Legislature and the multiple government agencies currently involved in the water/Delta puzzle --- everyone is involved, but no one is in charge or accountable.

If the failures of the California Bay Delta Authority are to be avoided, more work is needed to solve these problems.

View the full Delta Vision Foundation analysis at <http://www.deltavisionfoundation.org/>