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California Water Leaders Convene on Delta Vision Strategic Plan

State water experts discuss next steps to monitor and evaluate implementation of historic plan

Sacramento - The Delta Vision Foundation (formerly the Governor's Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force) held a public meeting in downtown Sacramento on Wednesday, to gather input from state water experts on the most useful and effective framework for monitoring and evaluating implementation of the Delta Vision Strategic Plan, released in 2008. Timed to preview the September meeting of the Delta Stewardship Council, the roundtable discussion featured Chair Phil Isenberg and other members of the Council, members of the State Water Resources Control Board, Association of California Water Agencies, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, Natural Resources Defense Council, Water Education Foundation, The Bay Institute, Westlands Water District, Southern California Water Committee, Planning and Conservation League, and other diverse stakeholders engaged on Delta issues.

"We are grateful that so many stakeholders across the spectrum of interested organizations participated in the Delta Vision Foundation Water Leaders Roundtable to provide input on how best to track the progress of the state in restoring the Delta and ensuring water supply reliability for all Californians," said Sunne Wright McPeak, Chair of the Foundation. "The turnout today is a sign of the sense of shared urgency we all have, and that must not lose momentum as in past efforts to address California's water challenges."

Actions discussed by the panel hinged on the seven goals established in the Strategic Plan:

Goal 1: Legally acknowledge the co-equal goals of restoring the Delta ecosystem and creating a more reliable water supply for California.

Goal 2: Recognize and enhance the unique cultural, recreational, and agricultural values of the California Delta as an evolving place, an action critical to achieving the co-equal goals.

Goal 3: Restore the Delta ecosystem as the heart of a health estuary.

Goal 4: Promote statewide water conservation, efficiency, and sustainable use.

Goal 5: Build facilities to improve the existing water conveyance system and expand statewide storage, and operate both to achieve the co-equal goals.

Goal 6: Reduce risks to people, property, and state interests in the Delta by effective emergency preparedness, appropriate land uses, and strategic levee investments.

Goal 7: Establish a new governance structure with the authority, responsibility, accountability, science support, and secure funding to achieve these goals.

"We've had decades of stalemate over the Delta," said Dr. Raymond Seed, professor of civil and environmental engineering at the University of California, Berkeley, and a Foundation director. "The biggest challenge is getting people to the table to have a rational discussion about solutions. Today's roundtable is a step in the right direction."

The Delta Vision Foundation will publish annually an assessment of progress in implementing the integrated and linked actions set forth in the Delta Vision Strategic Plan to restore the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and ensure a reliable water supply for California. Wednesday's discussion will inform the process and format to be used in the annual evaluation.

For more information, go to: <http://deltavisionfoundation.org/>

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