

# Working Meetings on Draft Sacramento/Delta Updates to Bay-Delta Plan

Working Meeting #4: Inflow-Based Delta Outflow  
Objective and Program of Implementation



January 30, 2025

## Attendees

# Welcome to Today's Meeting

- Facilitator
  - Meagan Wylie, Zephyr Collaboration
- Presenter
  - Dr. Matt Holland, Division of Water Rights
- Additional Board staff from the Division of Water Rights and Office of Chief Counsel providing support
- One or two Board members may attend this and other meetings to observe but are not otherwise planning to participate or provide input

# Reminders

## Format

- 2-hour staff-led virtual meeting
- Staff will present key questions (provided in advance) and slides relevant to today's topic to guide discussion
- Focus only on the major provisions relevant to today's topic
- Participants must raise hand by using hand icon in Zoom or dialing \*6 on phone if calling in and wait to speak until you are called upon

## Participation Guidelines

- Use appropriate and respectful dialogue
- Stay on topic
- Share speaking time considerately
- Be as concise and specific as possible
- Be open to listening to and understanding different perspectives
- Review relevant sections of draft plan in advance
- Designate point person to speak on group's behalf, if possible
- Provide constructive input
- Avoid general comments

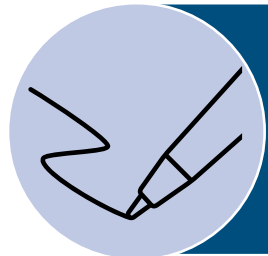
# Purpose of Today's Meeting



Discuss the inflow-based Delta outflow objective and program of implementation provisions in the October 2024 draft Bay-Delta Plan\* updates



Hear constructive input on whether and what changes should be made to specific provisions and concepts, if any



Share input with Board to inform development of revised draft Bay-Delta Plan for additional public review and comment

*\*Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Watershed*

# Provisions to be Discussed Today

- Inflow-based Delta outflow objective
- Implementation of inflow-based Delta outflow objective
- Possible exception to inflow-based Delta outflow objective for Delta lowlands
- Timeline and provisions for implementation



# Guiding Questions

- 1) What, if any, modifications should the Board consider to the inflow-based Delta outflow objective (p. 62)?
- 2) Should the Board consider methods other than water right curtailments to implement the inflow-based Delta outflow objective consistent with the water right priority system (p. 62)?
- 3) Should the Board consider an exemption to the inflow-based Delta outflow objective for water rights in which the diversion and use of water is limited to irrigation of lands below sea level in the Legal Delta, or any modification to the terms of this exemption (pp. 62-63)?
- 4) Should the Board consider modifications to the required timeline and provisions for implementation of the inflow-based Delta outflow objective (p. 62)?

# Narrative Delta Outflow Objective

COMPLIANCE LOCATIONS	PARAMETER	DESCRIPTION (UNIT)	WATER YEAR TYPE	TIME PERIOD	VALUE
<b>DELTA OUTFLOW</b>					
Delta Outflow	Flow rate	Narrative	All	Year round	Maintain Delta outflows sufficient to support and maintain the natural production of viable native anadromous fish, estuarine fish, and aquatic species populations spawning, rearing in, or migrating through the Bay-Delta estuary. Delta outflows that reasonably contribute toward maintaining viable native fish and aquatic species populations include, but may not be limited to, flows that connect low salinity pelagic waters to productive tidal wetlands and flows that produce salinity distributions that more closely mimic the natural hydrographic conditions to which these species are adapted, including the relative magnitude, duration, timing, quality and spatial extent of flows as they would naturally occur. Indicators of viability include population abundance, spatial extent, distribution, productivity, and genetic and life history diversity. Viability is dependent on maintaining migratory pathways, sufficient quantities of high quality spawning and rearing habitat, and a productive food web.

Reference: Table 3. Water Quality Objectives for Fish and Wildlife Beneficial Uses (p. 18)

# Inflow-Based Delta Outflow Objective

COMPLIANCE LOCATIONS	PARAMETER	DESCRIPTION (UNIT)	WATER YEAR TYPE	TIME PERIOD	VALUE
<b>DELTA OUTFLOW</b>					
Inflow-Based Delta Outflow	Flow rate	cfs	All	Year round	The inflows required above, including for the Sacramento/Delta tributaries and San Joaquin River, are required as outflows with adjustments for downstream natural depletions and accretions.

Reference: Table 3. Water Quality Objectives for Fish and Wildlife Beneficial Uses (pp.18)



# Implementation of Inflow-Based Delta Outflow Objective

- Required inflows from the Sacramento/Delta tributaries including equivalent accretions from the Sacramento Valley Floor and Delta, and required inflows from the Lower San Joaquin River, are provided as Delta outflows with adjustments for downstream natural depletions.
- Implementation of the inflow-based Delta outflow objective is required to be met in order of water right priority, unless exceptions apply, using the implementation methodology.
- The required Delta outflow is to be calculated by adding up the applicable required inflows from the Sacramento/Delta tributaries, including an equivalent amount of Sacramento Valley Floor and Delta accretions, and required lower San Joaquin River flows making appropriate adjustments for natural losses.

# Timeline for Implementation of Inflow-Based Delta Outflow Objective

- Implementation to begin within two years of adoption of the Bay-Delta Plan amendments and proceed in coordination with implementation of the Sacramento/Delta tributary numeric inflow objective.
- An extension of up to one year to this time may be granted by the Executive Director for good cause, including where significant efforts are underway to develop local cooperative solutions. The Executive Director may also approve incremental implementation of the inflow-based Delta outflow objective for good cause, such that the objective is fully implemented within five years of initial implementation.

# Possible Exception for Delta Lowlands

- Based on recent information indicating that the net consumptive use of irrigated agriculture on subsided islands below sea level in the Delta may be equivalent to the amount of water that would be used by the vegetation that would grow absent irrigation and land management, the Board is considering possible exemptions to the inflow-based Delta outflow for water rights in which diversion and use of water is limited to irrigation of lands below sea level in the Legal Delta.
- All water rights and claims associated with irrigated lands below sea level in the Delta would be considered initially exempted.
- The State Water Board, in coordination with others, would conduct additional analyses regarding water use on irrigated lands below sea level in the Delta and undertake a public process to further evaluate the effectiveness of curtailments of agricultural diversions on lands below sea level. Based on that process, the Board could make refinements to this exemption, including requiring additional water right holders in the legal Delta to contribute to the inflow-based Delta outflow objective.

# Guiding Questions

- 1) What, if any, modifications should the Board consider to the inflow-based Delta outflow objective (p. 62)?
- 2) Should the Board consider methods other than water right curtailments to implement the inflow-based Delta outflow objective consistent with the water right priority system (p. 62)?
- 3) Should the Board consider an exemption to the inflow-based Delta outflow objective for water rights in which the diversion and use of water is limited to irrigation of lands below sea level in the Legal Delta, or any modification to the terms of this exemption (pp. 62-63)?
- 4) Should the Board consider modifications to the required timeline and provisions for implementation of the inflow-based Delta outflow objective (p. 62)?

# Next Meeting

<b>Jan. 28</b>	<i>Inflow Objective and Program of Implementation</i>	<b>Feb. 13</b>	<i>Provisions for Continuation, Modification, or Termination of VAs*</i>
<b>Jan. 29</b>	<i>Cold Water Habitat Objective and Program of Implementation</i>	<b>Feb. 19</b>	<i>VA* Habitat Commitments and Accounting Provisions</i>
<b>Jan. 30</b>	<i>Inflow-Based Delta Outflow Objective and Program of Implementation</i>	<b>Feb. 20</b>	<i>Monitoring and Evaluation for VA* Provisions</i>
<b>Feb. 4</b>	<b>Methodology to Determine Water Unavailability and Implement Bay-Delta Plan</b>	<b>Feb. 27</b>	<i>VA* Flow Commitments and Accounting</i>
<b>Feb. 5</b>	<i>Monitoring and Evaluation for Regulatory Provisions</i>	<b>Mar. 4</b>	<i>Tribal Provisions</i>




Register via links provided in January 3 letter:

[www.waterboards.ca.gov/bay\\_delta/docs/2025/ltr-baydeltaplan-workmtgs.pdf](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/bay_delta/docs/2025/ltr-baydeltaplan-workmtgs.pdf)

*\*Voluntary Agreements, also referred to as the Healthy Rivers and Landscapes Proposal*

# Resources and Contact Information

- Sacramento/Delta Update to Bay-Delta Plan: [waterboards.ca.gov/bay\\_delta/comp\\_review.html](http://waterboards.ca.gov/bay_delta/comp_review.html)
- Proposed VAs: [waterboards.ca.gov/bay\\_delta/proposed\\_voluntary\\_agreements.html](http://waterboards.ca.gov/bay_delta/proposed_voluntary_agreements.html)
- Bay-Delta Watershed: [waterboards.ca.gov/bay\\_delta/](http://waterboards.ca.gov/bay_delta/)
- Email: [SacDeltaComments@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:SacDeltaComments@waterboards.ca.gov)

 Visit the Bay-Delta webpage and subscribe to receive future email notifications:

## Email Subscription List

Subscribe to the Bay Delta Notices email topic to receive notifications and the latest updates.

\*Email Address

Submit