

## **California Sportfishing Protection Alliance Advisory 1.6.08**

### **Special Report on the Final Delta Vision Document and the Water For Fish Efforts**

I've reported previously that in conjunction with his signing of SB 1574, authored by State Senator Sheila Kuehl, Governor Schwarzenegger issued an Executive Order in September of 2006 to develop a Delta Strategic Vision process to create a sustainable management program for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta while ensuring sustainable water supplies.

The bill required the Secretary of the Resources Agency to convene a committee to develop and submit to the Governor and the Legislature, on or before December 31, 2008, a Strategic Vision for a Sustainable Sacramento - San Joaquin Delta that is to include sustainable ecosystem functions for aquatic and terrestrial life, sustainable recreation uses, and a sustainable water supply.

The first phase of that process was completed in November when the Blue Ribbon Task Force released its final report "Our Vision for the California Delta" and announced they would begin the Strategic Planning process to ensure that vision could be implemented given the constraints of governmental, fiscal and natural resources. You can find the full text of their report at [www.deltavision.ca.gov/](http://www.deltavision.ca.gov/)

The Governor appointed several groups to pull the vision together including a Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF) to advise the Governor's agency oversight committee. The Resources Secretary appointed a Stakeholder Coordination Group (SCG) to advise the BRTF. I was appointed to the SCG as the representative for CSPA and sportfishing interests.

In a previous report I chronicled the development of the SCG Visions for a Sustainable Delta they provided to the BRTF in September. CSPA & the Allied Fishing Groups also provided a Delta Fishery Recovery and Restoration Vision to the SCG and to the BRTF and supported the vision offered by the environmental community.

While a number of our recommendations were included in the final vision, at this point we have absolutely no assurance that the vision proposed by the BRTF will be what is submitted to the Legislature or if it will include realistic measures to recover and restore the aquatic ecosystem of the Delta and its fisheries. The BRTF vision document was intentionally short on how the goals of the vision would be realized. This has generated significant uncertainty that is compounded by other elements of the vision including the proposed re-plumbing of the State Water Project's Delta export facilities.

The alternatives will have huge impacts on the Delta. The "Peripheral Canal" and a "Dual Facility" (a Peripheral Canal connected to Delta water export system modified to keep

fish out of it) are to be analyzed (as are reductions in Delta exports). Once new infrastructure of this magnitude is built, the associated costs will preclude significant changes down the road to help the fish and the ecology of the Bay-Delta. While implementation of any alternative is supposed to be based on scientific adaptive management, to date what we've seen in the estuary is mostly adaptive miss-management guided by political objectives.

The future of the Delta and its fisheries depending on how well the strategic planning analysis is accomplished. Will the conservation measures we and the environmental groups requested be provided the political support, financial resources and governmental implementation necessary to save and restore the Delta ecosystem? After nearly twenty years of broken promises that our fisheries would be restored, we need to muster our political strength and insist that our government fulfill its legal and moral obligations.

### **Water For Fish Petition**

Due to this, CSPA, in concert with the Allied Fishing Groups, believes it is now absolutely essential to support the Water For Fish petition as this is the only organizing tool we have with which to make our nonpartisan political stand. Should we fail to effectively make such a stand, then we firmly believe it will mark the beginning of the end of fishing for the salmon, striped bass, steelhead, American shad, sturgeon and largemouth bass that depend upon the Delta and its Central Valley tributaries.

The effort is now underway to generate significant statewide support for the Water For Fish campaign. This effort will include generating support from anglers & angling organizations, commercial and sportfishing industries, and the public for restoring the estuary's fishery resources. This is where we need you to step up and help us out!

**Our outreach effort needs your support. This is not a task you can leave up to the "other guy or gal"! If you do, it simply won't get done.**

**Task 1:** Sign the petition. You can sign the petition online at <http://www.water4fish.org/> Or, you sign up at the ISE shows in San Mateo or Sacramento. Ask your family members, anglers and fishing club members, friends and acquaintances to sign up too! We started last year with no signatures and ran that up to 21,000! We want to increase it this year to 50,000! Everyone who signs the petition will have a letter sent in their name to the Governor, their state and federal legislators requesting water our fish!

**Task 2:** We will be participating in the International Sportsmen's Exposition shows in San Mateo (Jan.10-13) and Sacramento (Jan. 17-20). **We need volunteers to help staff the Water 4 Fish Booth and get petition signatures!** To help, please email Mike McKenzie at [Stripermike@earthlink.net](mailto:Stripermike@earthlink.net), or give him a call at 209-772-9398.

**Task 3:** We will be participating on a Sportfishing Panel - the "**Plight of Our Fisheries**" on Jan 12th and on Jan 19<sup>th</sup>, 1 PM at the ISE shows that will focus on the Delta and Klamath fishery problems and what anglers can do fight back for their fishery resources. Please attend and if you can and lend a hand signing up the folks who attend!

Lois Wolk chair of the State Assembly's Water Parks and Wildlife Committee with also be on the panel at the Sacramento ISE show.

**THE PETITION IS AN EXTREMELY VALUABLE WAY TO MOTIVATE THE POLITICIANS WHO WILL MAKE THE FINAL DECISIONS ON THE GOVERNOR'S PROPOSED DELTA VISION AND NEW DAMS. THE EXTENT TO WHICH WE HAVE A SUSTAINABLE DELTA AND FISHERIES WILL DEPEND ON DEVELOPING OUR POLITICAL CLOUT!**

Don't forget that we appreciate all your support for bring back our fisheries!

John

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**CSPA is a nonprofit fishery conservation organization. You can support our efforts by becoming a member. Donations are tax-deductible, greatly needed and most appreciated. Send checks to CSPA at 1360 Neilson Street, Berkeley, CA 94702-1116. Membership starts a \$30. Questions? 510-526-4049.**