

The Sacramento / San Joaquin River Delta

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Delta Watermaster

July 13, 2018



North Bay Watershed Association Board



DELTA STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL



Disclaimer



- I am not speaking for the:
 - State Water Resources Control Board or
 - The Delta Stewardship Council
- I am not presenting State policy
- I am expressing personal observations and opinions (*except where specifically referenced to published materials*).

Overview

- Why Should North Bay Water Agencies Care about the Delta?
- Role of the Delta Watermaster
- Water Rights and Water Allocation
- Managing for Drought, Flood and Climate Change
- Planning in the Bureaucratic Labyrinth
- What to Watch For

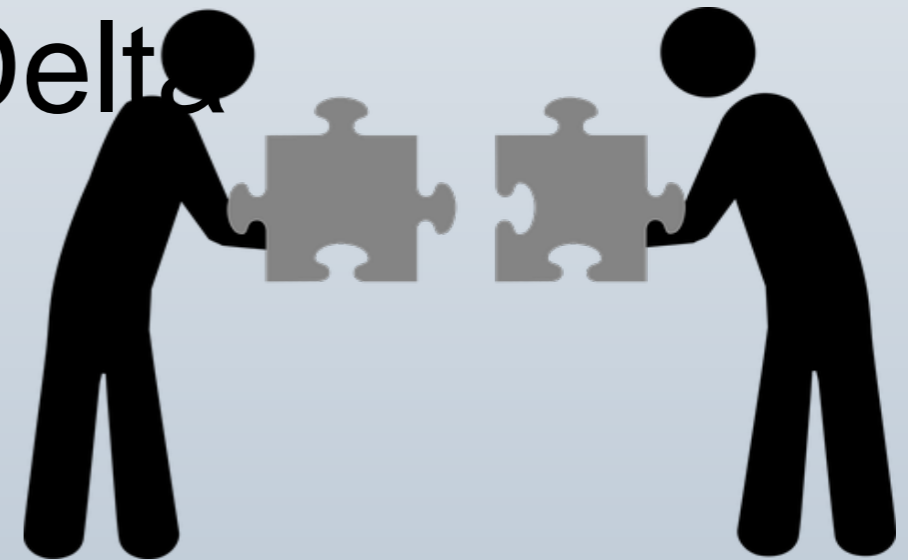
Why Does the Delta Matter to NBWA?

- Except in Extreme Drought (1977), the Delta is Not a Water Supply Source, but:
 - Think of the Delta as “the Upper Estuary”
 - Climate Change will Increase Connectedness
 - ✓ Sea Level Rise
 - ✓ Temperature Rise
 - ✓ Flood/Drought Severity
 - ✓ Impacts on Productivity of Watersheds
 - We’re All in this Together
 - ✓ Constricted Water Resources
 - ✓ Aging Infrastructure
 - ✓ Rising Costs of Diminishing Services



Role of the Delta Watermaster

- Independent Officer of the State
- Created as part of 2009 Delta Reform Act
- Four-year Term
- Reports jointly to Water Board and Delta Stewardship Council



Water Rights and Water Allocation in the Delta

- Appropriation System Overlain on Riparian System
 - Appropriation by Priority: “First in Time, First in Right”
 - Riparian by Correlative Curtailment: “Shared Sacrifice”
- Most Senior Delta Water Rights “Pre-date” Administrative System
- Curtailment: “Whack-a-Mole”



Response: Division of Water Rights Issued Informational Order During 2015 Drought

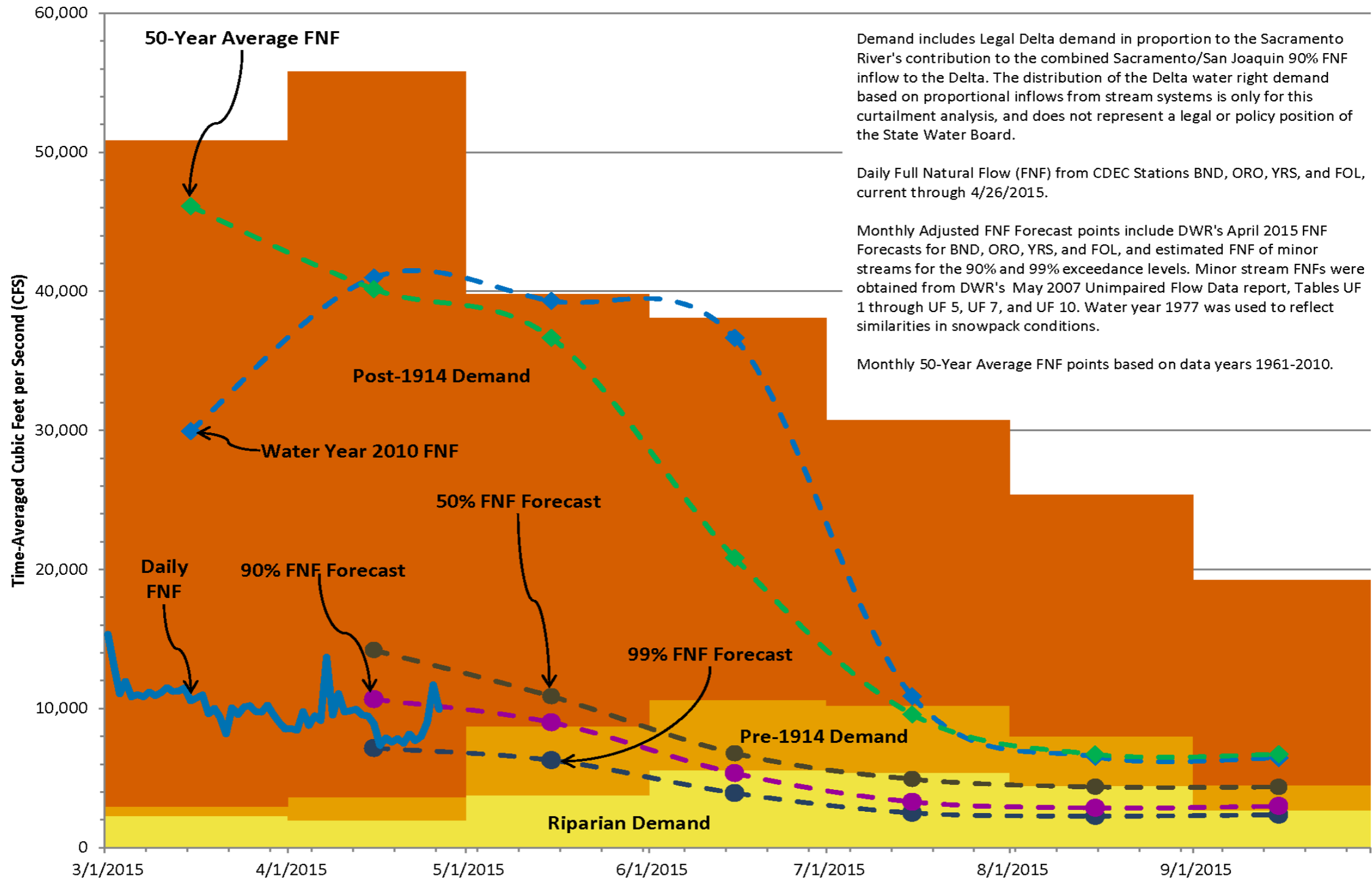
- Short-term:

- Report Recent and Projected Water Use
- Informed Regular Updates to Water Supply Availability Analyses (“Supply/Demand Curves”)

WATER AVAILABILITY

WR-47
Page 1

2015 Sacramento River Basin Supply/Demand



Demand includes Legal Delta demand in proportion to the Sacramento River's contribution to the combined Sacramento/San Joaquin 90% FNF inflow to the Delta. The distribution of the Delta water right demand based on proportional inflows from stream systems is only for this curtailment analysis, and does not represent a legal or policy position of the State Water Board.

Daily Full Natural Flow (FNF) from CDEC Stations BND, ORO, YRS, and FOL, current through 4/26/2015.

Monthly Adjusted FNF Forecast points include DWR's April 2015 FNF Forecasts for BND, ORO, YRS, and FOL, and estimated FNF of minor streams for the 90% and 99% exceedance levels. Minor stream FNFs were obtained from DWR's May 2007 Unimpaired Flow Data report, Tables UF 1 through UF 5, UF 7, and UF 10. Water year 1977 was used to reflect similarities in snowpack conditions.

Monthly 50-Year Average FNF points based on data years 1961-2010.

Response: Division of Water Rights Issued Informational Order During 2015

Drought

- Longer-term:

- Provide Documentation Supporting the Senior Water Right Claim

- ✓ Very High Compliance Rate

- ✓ Avalanche of Material

- ✓ Two-year Process of Organization, Review and Analysis

- ✓ Culminated in First-ever Taxonomy of Delta Senior Water Rights Claims

First Comprehensive Taxonomy of Senior Water Right Use in the Watershed

ALL STATEMENTS											
		Riparian Category					Pre-1914 Category				
Claim	Total Statements	R1	R2	R3	R4	N/A	P1	P2	P3	P4	N/A
Only Riparian	108	9	9	18	72	0	0	0	0	72	36
Only Pre-14	75	0	0	0	6	69	27	11	31	6	0
Both	864	113	142	344	265	0	522	14	73	255	0
Neither	14	1	0	0	12	1	0	0	0	12	2
Total	1061	123	151	362	355	70	549	25	104	345	38

- Undergoing “Crowd Correction”
- Cracks Open “Black Box” of Delta Claims
- Fills Gaps in Understanding Water Diversion and Use

Managing Complexity Under the Delta Reform Act

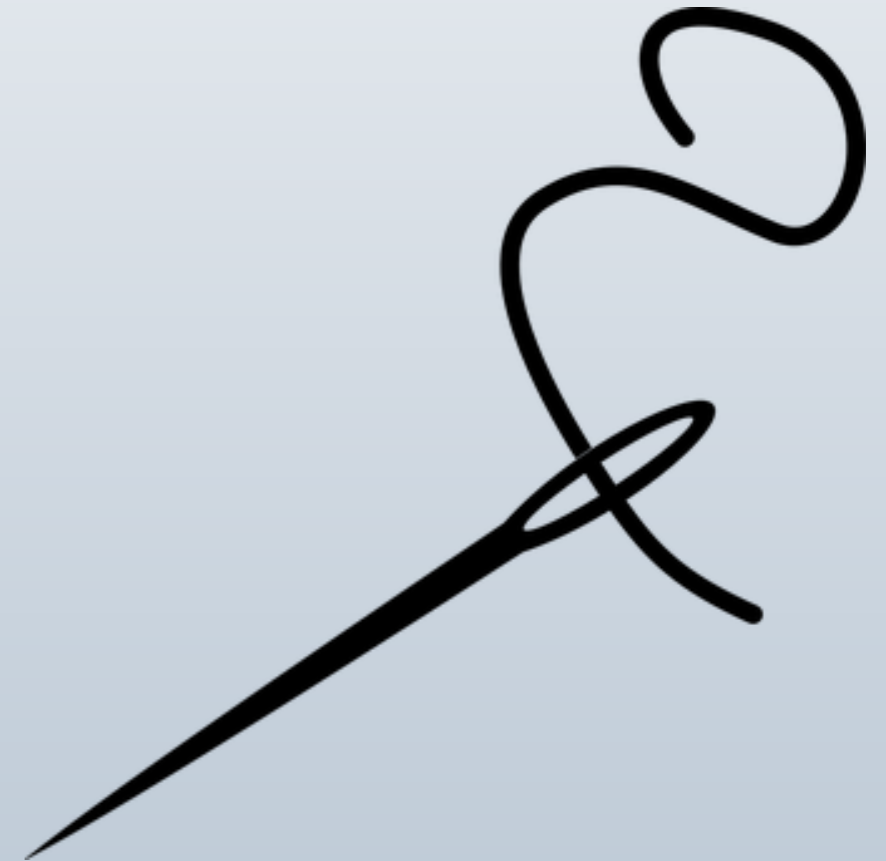
- “Co-equal Goals”
- Three Issues:
 1. Water Supply Reliability
 2. Ecosystem Renewal
 3. Regard for Delta as an Evolving Place
- We Can All Agree on the Appropriate Balance, Right?



Delta Plan – Thread the Needle

Challenges:

- Natural
- Economic
- Infrastructure
- Cultural
- Ecological
- Vision



The Delta Plan

- Currently Suspended –
Procedural Attack (Of course!)
- Undergoing Major Revision:
 - Levee Investment Strategy
 - Storage, Conveyance and Operation of Both
 - Ecosystem Renewal
- Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee

What to Watch For

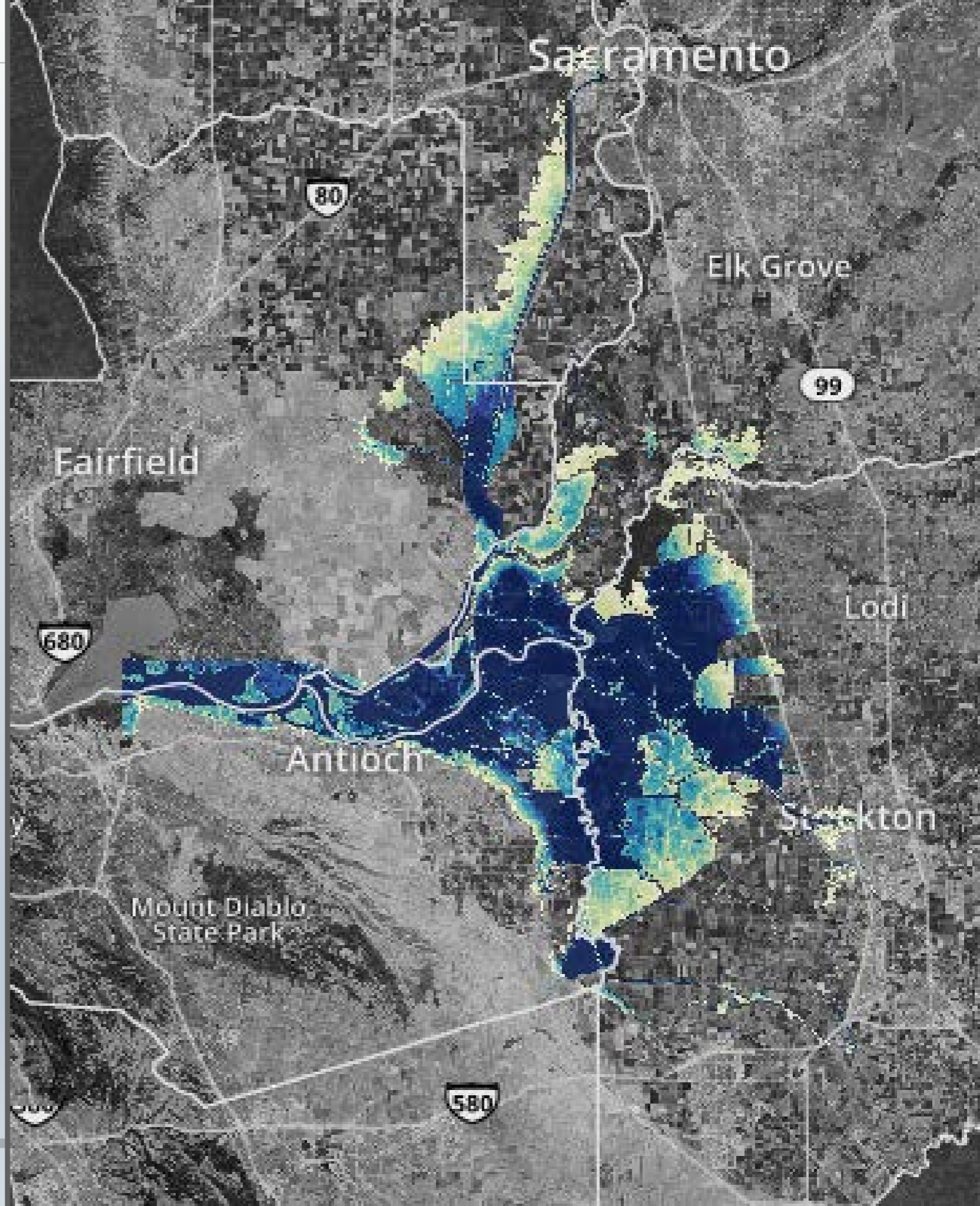


- Water Quality Control Plan Update (Can we set minimum flows?)
- WaterFix (Credible operating conditions?)
- EcoRestore (Practical, actionable, affordable, scalable or utopian?)
- Delta Plan Revisions (Can we escape the ESA single-species straightjacket?)
- Arrival of the Black Swan (Can a mature democracy manage change?)

Sea Level Rise Scenario

- Sacramento San Joaquin Delta
- Inundation of 100-year Flood with 1.4M of Sea Level Rise

(Cal-Adapt.org)



Questions Thank You

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