



Delta Counties Coalition

Contra Costa County · Sacramento County · San Joaquin County · Solano County · Yolo County
"Working together on water and Delta issues"

July 11, 2023

Honorable Benjamin Allen
State Capitol, Room 6610
Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable Carlos Villapudua
State Capitol, Room 6340
Sacramento, 95814

Honorable Susan Eggman
State Capitol, Room 8530
Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable Eduardo Garcia
State Capitol, Room 8120
Sacramento, 95814

Re: Delta County Coalition – Resource Bond Priorities

Dear Senator Eggman, Senator Allen, Assemblymember Villapudua, and Assemblymember Garcia:

The Delta Counties Coalition (DCC) has long advocated for specific provisions in any proposed legislative bond act that would fund water resources, flood protection and other related projects that may be benefitted by voter approval of new resources. As the Legislature begins earnest discussions regarding a potential 2024 resources bond, the DCC respectfully requests your support to include their priorities as outlined below.

Broadly, the DCC supports a bond that provides significant funding for in-Delta flood management projects and other direct assistance to local Delta communities to address the threats of flood and sea level rise, as well as resources to maintain the existing through-Delta water conveyance system, while protecting the Delta ecosystem. These goals are reflected in the 2009 Delta Reform Act, which established the co-equal goals of water supply reliability and enhancing the Delta ecosystem while protecting the Delta as a place. (Water Code, § 85054.)

Specifically, a final agreement on a resources bond could be supported by the DCC with the following provisions included:

Any Bond Must be Affirmatively Neutral on a Potential Delta Conveyance Project

- This is historical practice on bonds since the Delta Reform Act was passed in 2009. Language has been included in any final bond proposal that affirms that

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no direct or indirect funding for the tunnel or any kind of new isolated Delta conveyance, including permit conditions and other mitigation requirements that could be relied upon by or facilitate the tunnel.

- There should be a prohibition on funding for the purchase of flows needed to operate proposed new north Delta intakes or otherwise meet state and federal water projects' compliance or mitigation requirements.

A Natural Resources Bond Should Include a Specific Set-aside Allocation for Delta Levees and Delta Conservancy Projects

The DCC requests a separate allocation for Delta resiliency with direct allocations for levees and other measures to protect against flooding and sea level rise in the Delta. Delta levees need to continue to be improved to meet an acceptable minimum engineering standard (established in 2005) and the funds allocated should be proportional to the overall size of the bond. In crafting the bond language, it should be recognized that:

- Delta levee improvements provide multiple benefits, including protecting communities, agriculture, through-Delta conveyance corridors, and critical infrastructure of statewide and local importance (roads, railways, transmission lines, waterways);
- Delta levee funding should not include multi-benefit language that requires ecosystem benefits for every levee project. Due to the unique geography and other unique constraints in the Delta, it is often not possible to include ecosystem benefits, and past bonds have failed to fund important levee projects as a result of this requirement. Delta levee projects provide ecosystem benefits on a programmatic level; the Central Valley Flood Control system has been meeting a net enhancement of habitat standard for the system as a whole since 1988; and
- We believe in the strongest possible terms that any bond that is sent to the Governor must ensure that the Delta Conservancy receives adequate funding to carry out its full range of statutory roles and responsibilities, and that funds for projects in the Delta must flow through the Conservancy.

The Delta Counties, which are at the very heart of the State's water distribution system and are also home to four million Californians, appreciate the need for a robust infusion of resources to invest in our State's water system. We offer these priorities to assist you and your colleagues in crafting a final proposal that reflects a comprehensive and supportable bond that we could proudly support when the measure goes before voters for their consideration.

The DCC looks forward to working with your offices to develop a bond focused on water and flood protection for the benefit of our counties, state, and climate. Feel

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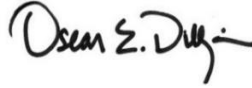
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free to contact us through Elisia De Bord at deborde@saccounty.gov or 916-874-4627.

Sincerely,



Patrick Kennedy, Supervisor
Sacramento County



Oscar Villegas, Supervisor
Yolo County



Ken Carlson, Supervisor
Contra Costa County



Mitch Mashburn, Supervisor
Solano County



Tom Patti, Supervisor
San Joaquin County

cc: Governor Gavin Newsom
Delta Counties' Delegation