



CALFED BAY-DELTA PROGRAM

Facts About... Delta Levee System Integrity

The CALFED Bay-Delta Program is a cooperative effort among state and federal agencies and the public to ensure a healthy ecosystem, reliable water supplies, good quality water, and a reliable levee system in California's Bay-Delta system and its tributaries. These four priorities represent the CALFED Bay-Delta Common Programs.

The Problem

There is growing concern that California's Bay-Delta system levees are vulnerable to failure, especially during earthquakes or periods of high runoff. A significant levee failure in the Delta could not only flood farmland and wildlife habitat, but also interrupt water supply deliveries to urban and agricultural users and disrupt highway and rail use. Most Delta islands have land surface elevations below sea level. Natural settling of the levees and shallow subsidence of Delta island soils (oxidation which lowers the level of the land over time) resulted in a need to increase levee heights to maintain protection.

The Goal

To reduce risks associated with the sudden and catastrophic failure of Delta levees by implementing an integrated and comprehensive program for maintenance and rehabilitation of Delta levees and channels.

Ways This Can Be Accomplished

The Delta Levee System Integrity Common Program addresses levee maintenance, stabilization, improvements, subsidence reduction and emergency management in the event of flooding.

The CALFED Bay-Delta Program identified several objectives to restore levee system integrity. Examples include:

- Implementing uniform requirements/guidelines for levee maintenance. In conjunction with maintenance work, channels could be dredged to help move water more efficiently and to reduce flooding impacts.
- Enhance flood protection - Improve stability of levees to a uniform levee design to meet federal flood control project criteria.

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- Creating high priority buffer zones to protect islands with deep peat soils. Modify agricultural practices and/or implement demonstration projects on islands with peat soils.
- Developing an emergency levee management plan to improve coordination among agencies in the event of a Delta flood. Plans could be developed to ensure that adequate materials and equipment will be immediately available to make repairs should disaster strike.

Things To Consider

The Delta levee system provides protection to:

Delta Communities
Existing land use

Ecosystem
Water Quality

Water supply operations
Economic activities

Agriculture
Infrastructure

What You've Told Us

Through public meetings and comment, Californians have told the CALFED Bay-Delta Program several important things about the Delta Levee System Integrity Program, including:

- Levees should be improved to provide a high standard of stability.
- Reliable, long-term funding is needed for regular levee maintenance.
- A single regional authority should coordinate stabilization and maintenance of Delta levees and emergency management.

Want To Know More?

For further information on how you can participate in the effort to restore the environment and water management of the California Bay-Delta system, contact: CALFED, 1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155, Sacramento, CA 95814 ph: (916) 657-2666 Fax: (916) 654-9780 Public Information Line 1-800-700-5752, Website: <http://calfed.ca.gov>

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