DELTA PROTECTION COMMISSION
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August 16, 1993

TO: Commissioners

FROM: Margit Aramburu, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Proposed Planning Procedures and Outline for Preparation of Delta Land Use and Resource Management Plan

Background

Last year, the Legislature passed SB 1866 which created the Delta Protection Commission and charged the Commission with preparation of a land use and resource management plan for the Delta. The Commission must prepare and adopt the plan which will then be forwarded to the five counties for review and adoption. The five counties are: Solano, Yolo, Sacramento, San Joaquin, and Contra Costa.

The preparation of the plan is necessary to: protect the remaining farmland from urban encroachment; to facilitate the maintenance of the existing levee system surrounding the Delta communities and islands; promote protection of the remaining wildlife habitats in the Delta and, where possible, promote restoration of those habitats; enhance opportunities for Californians to recreate in the Delta on land and on water; to allowed continued use of the Delta for navigation to the Ports of Sacramento and Stockton; and to protect and maintain the unique qualities of the Delta.

Local Government Action

All five affected Counties are represented on the Commission. Upon Commission adoption of the Plan, the Plan will be forwarded to the five Counties for preparation of General Plan amendments to carry out the Plan. The Counties must submit the proposed General Plan amendments to the Commission for review and approval.

Planning Procedure

The legislation requires creation of three advisory committees: agriculture, recreation and environment. The advisory committees will assist the Commission staff and consultants in preparing planning background reports which will be the basis for preparation of the plan. The Citizen

Advisory Committees will meet to discuss the general topic of each background report and to generate areas of concern, opportunities and constraints. The Advisory Committees will review the draft plans before the plans area released to the general public and the Commission for review and a public hearing.

In preparing each background report, maximum use will be made of all previous local, state, regional and federal planning and research efforts concerning the Delta to minimize costs and to save time. Close coordination with local, regional, state and federal agencies, property owners, and interested groups and individuals will be maintained throughout the planning process.

Each draft background report and the draft plan will be submitted to the Advisory Committees and the five County planning departments for early review and comments. Staff will revise the reports based on these comments. Next the background reports and draft plan will be presented to the Commission for consideration and action. Staff will identify comments and concerns which have not been included in the report in a separate staff report.

A public hearing will be scheduled for each background report. The legislation requires three public hearing on the draft plan prior to Commission vote. The public hearings must be held in the north, south and west areas of the Delta. After adoption, the final plan will be forwarded to the five Counties for review and adoption. A schedule is contained in a following section.

Plan Format

The Delta Land Use and Resource Management Plan will be a specific comprehensive plan to guide the Commission, local government, and possibly State and Federal agencies in planning for the Delta. The Plan may contain recommendations for legislation and institutional changes, as well as policies, guidelines, and maps. Staff will work with the County planning departments to ensure that the Plan will be in a form that can be easily incorporated into the Counties' plans and regulations.

Budget

The Commission received a $250,000 loan from the environmental license plate fund for set up of the Commission and preparation of the Plan; approximately $240,000 remains of that loan. In addition, the Commission will receive materials and loan of equipment a settlement litigated by San Joaquin County District Attorney's office.

As currently recommended by the Subcommittee on Budget and Long-term Finance, most of the remaining loan will be spent in the current fiscal year in preparation and review of the plan.

Schedule

The schedule for the planning process would be as follows, assuming consultants are retained in a timely fashion and can complete their work as indicated:

		To Advisory	To Comm
1.	Establish Advisory Committees		7/93
2.	Environment Background Report	10/93	11/93
3.	Development In and Around the Delta	11/93	12/93
4.	Utilities and Facilities	12/93	1/94
5.	Water Resources Mgmt	1/94	2/94
6.	Recreation Land Mgmt (Consultant)	2/94	3/94
7.	Agricultural Land Mgmt	3/94	4/94
8.	Levees (Consultant)	4/94	5/94
9.	Implementation (Consultant)	4/94	5/94
10.	Draft Plan (Three public hearings are required)	5/94	6/94

The Commission should reserve the option to combine or delete issue areas, or to request a short extension of the deadline for adoption (July 1, 1994), if needed to ensure adequate public review and participation.

Background Report Contents

The planning backgrounds reports would be the basis for the overall plan. The reports would address several issue areas as described below and each would include tentative findings and conclusions to be adopted based on the information included in the report. The reports would primarily address the land use issues regulated by local government and would point out areas where state and or federal programs impact land uses.

Delta Environment: A description of the habitat types in the Delta, the aquatic resources, the wildlife resources, and the physical features in the Delta.

Development In and Around the Delta: A description of the existing land uses, existing water projects, summary of plans policies and regulations over land and water areas, proposed development and changes in land uses, and ownership of land and underwater areas.

Utilities, Facilities and Transportation In and Around the Delta: Describe existing and proposed utilities and public facilities, existing and proposed transportation facilities in the Delta, and existing and proposed flood control infrastructure.

Water Resources Management: Describe goals for water management in the Delta as they relate to various land uses, sources of fresh water, present water quality, future water quality issues, standards for water quality in the Delta, current waters uses, and water management goals for the Delta.

Land Management for Recreation and Access: Describe goals for recreation and access in the Delta, existing public and private recreation and access facilities, describe day use and multi-day visitors, currently proposed recreation and access facilities, limitations on recreation and access, a management plan for recreation and access, and a plan for a coordinated marine patrol in the Delta.

Land Management for Agriculture: Describe goals for Delta agriculture, describe history of agriculture in the Delta, value of agriculture, existing extent and type of agriculture, existing farming techniques, non-traditional farming techniques, and programs available to assist with non-traditional techniques and to promote long-term agricultural land use.

Levees: Describe the history of construction of levees, history of maintenance of levees, current programs for levee improvement and maintenance, current regulatory scheme, and recommend levee standards.

Implementation: Describe implementation techniques available to local government, describe regulatory programs used in other state/local government regulatory programs, and develop recommendations for carrying out the Land Use and Resource Management Plan for the Delta.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Commission: (1) approve the proposed planning procedures and work outline for preparing the Delta Land Use and Resource Management Plan and (2) instruct staff attempt to retain the consultants and other assistants required to prepare the Plan and to report to the Commission monthly on the status of the planning program.