



Delta Science Program
Delta Stewardship Council

A California State Agency

2017 California Sea Grant State Fellowship Water Supply and Science Communications

1. Host Location and Contact Information

Delta Science Program, Delta Stewardship Council
980 Ninth Street, Suite 1500
Sacramento, CA

2. Fellowship Supervisor, Point of contact for California Sea Grant, prospective fellows, and finalists

Nir Oksenberg, Science Communications
980 Ninth Street, Suite 1500
Sacramento, CA
(916) 445-0715
Nir.oksenberg@deltacouncil.ca.gov

3. Introduction

California's Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta is the largest estuary on the West Coast and is the hub of the state's major water supply systems. It is inextricably linked to statewide issues that affect its ability to function in a healthy, sustainable way. In November 2009, the California Legislature enacted the Delta Reform Act, one of several bills related to water supply reliability, ecosystem health, and the Delta, and created the [Delta Stewardship Council](#). The mission of the Delta Stewardship Council is to achieve the coequal goals of providing a more reliable water supply for California and protecting, restoring and enhancing the Delta ecosystem (including Suisun Marsh).

The Act also established the Delta Science Program (DSP), Lead Scientist, and Delta Independent Science Board (Delta ISB). Under the guidance of the Delta Lead Scientist, a Delta Science Plan (Plan) was completed in December 2013 (<http://deltacouncil.ca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/files/Delta-Science-Plan-12-30-2013.pdf>). The Plan proposed 31 actions intended to strengthen, organize, and communicate science to provide relevant, credible, and legitimate decision-support for policy and management actions. Chapter 3 of the Plan describes the use of adaptive management as a tool to manage complex natural resources programs and projects and Chapter 4 discusses the necessity of building a science infrastructure. Also see Appendix C of the Delta Plan (http://deltacouncil.ca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/files/AppC_Adaptive%20Management_2013.pdf) for further discussions on adaptive management and best available science.

"Coequal goals" means the two goals of providing a more reliable water supply for California and protecting, restoring, and enhancing the Delta ecosystem. The coequal goals shall be achieved in a manner that protects and enhances the unique cultural, recreational, natural resource, and agricultural values of the Delta as an evolving place."

– CA Water Code §85054

Position Description

The Fellow will work under the direction of the program manager for the Delta Science Program's Water Supply Adaptive Management and Communications Unit and initially, will meet with the program manager, Lead Scientist, and other Science Program staff as appropriate to develop a mentoring plan for the year. This plan will be based on the interests and specialties of the Sea Grant Fellow and is intended to maximize the Sea Grant Fellow's experience.

The Water Supply Adaptive Management and Communications Unit has two primary tasks: 1) develop a Water Supply Adaptive Management Framework to address water management actions, and 2) improve science communications to more effectively inform policy and management decisions, build the Delta science community, and inform the public about the Bay-Delta system. Based on the Fellow's interests, the Fellow will have the option of working only on the Water Supply Adaptive Management Framework, only on Communication tasks, or a blend of tasks related to the primary tasks.

Water Supply Adaptive Management Framework

Currently, two staff scientists in the unit are working on developing a framework that will address how adaptive management can be integrated into water management in California. This adaptive water management framework will complement the ecosystem restoration framework that is being developed concurrently in another unit. Development of the framework requires research as well as outreach to other federal and State agencies and affected stakeholders.

Potential Assignments

The Fellow will collaborate with the staff to develop the water supply adaptive management framework and will help to propagate the knowledge and information gained through the process to policy and decision makers, managers, and the public. The fellow would contribute to the development of the framework reflecting his/her work. Specific topics would include but are not limited to:

- Water supply challenges facing California, and specifically the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta
- Research on the relationships between water management and ecosystem impacts
- Case studies on water supply adaptive management and how they can be applied (adopted) to California and the Delta
- Studies on social, political and economic challenges and opportunities in applying the adaptive management to water supply issues

Communications

Currently, one staff scientist is working in the Science Communications Unit who would collaborate with the fellow on communication related project. One of the goals of the Communications Unit is to translate complex scientific information into a form readily understood by the non-scientist. This is done through monthly Brown Bag seminars, quarterly science synthesis symposia in conjunction with UC Davis, and the Bi-annual Bay Delta Science Conference, to mention a few.

Potential Assignments

- Develop 3-5 Brown Bag seminars centered on a specific theme of importance to management of the Bay-Delta system; synthesize the information and present at a Delta Stewardship Council meeting.
- Synthesize research results from the 2013 Delta Science Fellows solicitation in a format accessible to the non-scientist and present at a Delta Stewardship Council meeting
- Contribute short essays and/or videos to the Council's online blog.
- Assist in dissemination of Science Program efforts through social media
- Assist in dissemination of Science Program efforts through creating "fact-sheet" type products to be shared at Delta Science Conferences, our website, and other mechanisms.
- Research and synthesize all of the Bay-Delta-related science communication efforts. Write a report on the "state of Bay-Delta science communication"
- Research and synthesize all of the Bay-Delta-related social science efforts. Write a report synthesizing and communicating the importance of social sciences within the Bay-Delta.