

# **Draft Prospectus: Review of the Interagency Ecological Program (IEP)**

## **Delta Independent Science Board**

**30 November 2017**

The legislative mandate of the Delta Independent Science Board (Delta ISB) includes periodic reviews of scientific activities related to adaptive management in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (the Delta). Many such activities take place under the umbrella of the Interagency Ecological Program (IEP), which originated with interagency agreements nearly 50 years ago and now brings together nine state and federal agencies (<http://www.water.ca.gov/iep/>) with linkages to non-governmental organizations and university scientists. The Delta ISB will review the research, data archives, and synthesis efforts of the IEP as part of this review, along with its administrative structure and procedures.

The IEP's mission is "to provide and integrate relevant and timely ecological information for management of the Bay-Delta ecosystem and the water that flows through it. This is accomplished through collaborative and scientifically sound monitoring, research, modeling, and synthesis efforts for various aspects of the aquatic ecosystem." Challenges in meeting these important and ambitious goals range from practical chores such as scheduling the use of a multi-agency boat fleet to complex undertakings such as working with agencies and water contractors with different goals and agendas.

The Delta ISB review will identify "lessons learned" from this extensive history that could lead to improvements in IEP and perhaps to the activities of other interagency efforts in the Delta. Concurrently, the Delta ISB is conducting a review of the monitoring enterprise in the Delta (MER), for which the IEP plays a major role. Therefore, to avoid duplication and to maximize input to the MER, our IEP review will focus on how the science-governance structure of the IEP leads to the success of the program with respect to the coordination and organization of research, modeling, and synthesis efforts. Our IEP review will include (but not be limited to):

### *Review of the use of science now and in the future*

- The potential role of IEP as a synthesizer of information about the Delta and its environment and as the nexus for creation of "science narratives" about the needs of the Delta that go beyond what is presented in narrower technical reports; and

-The ability of the IEP to use ecosystem-forecasting mechanisms to anticipate environmental changes to communicate this information to other agencies.

### *Agency structure and the production and use of science*

-The effectiveness of the IEP Science Governance structure in providing credible and relevant scientific information that supports management of water-export facilities in a way that minimizes harm to key ecosystem components, while also providing a reliable water supply;

-Coordination among IEP agencies and between IEP and other agencies/programs;

-The level to which the various components of IEP are working and organizational suggestions that could improve IEP efficiencies; and

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39 -The effectiveness of current institutional arrangements that support the interagency investment  
40 in IEP and future applicability.

41 Members of the Delta ISB will interview Delta scientists and managers working both within and  
42 outside the IEP. We will examine past reports and reviews of the IEP. These include: the IEP  
43 Annual Plan [http://www.water.ca.gov/iep/docs/2017\\_IEP\\_Work\\_Plan\\_02-21-2017.pdf](http://www.water.ca.gov/iep/docs/2017_IEP_Work_Plan_02-21-2017.pdf), the  
44 Science Strategy [http://www.water.ca.gov/iep/docs/2016\\_IEP\\_Science\\_Strategy\\_FINAL\\_02-21-  
45 2017.pdf](http://www.water.ca.gov/iep/docs/2016_IEP_Science_Strategy_FINAL_02-21-2017.pdf), and the Strategic Plan  
46 [http://www.water.ca.gov/iep/docs/IEP\\_Strategic\\_Plan102214.pdf](http://www.water.ca.gov/iep/docs/IEP_Strategic_Plan102214.pdf)

47 The expected outcome includes recommendations on how IEP could function more effectively in  
48 terms of science collaboration, integration, and use, to better inform decision making and  
49 adaptive management in the Delta. We are planning to release a preliminary draft report for  
50 public comment in mid-2018.

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