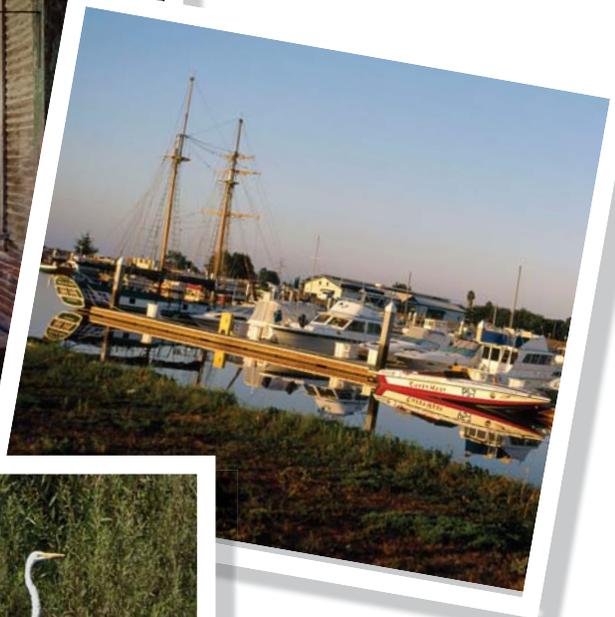
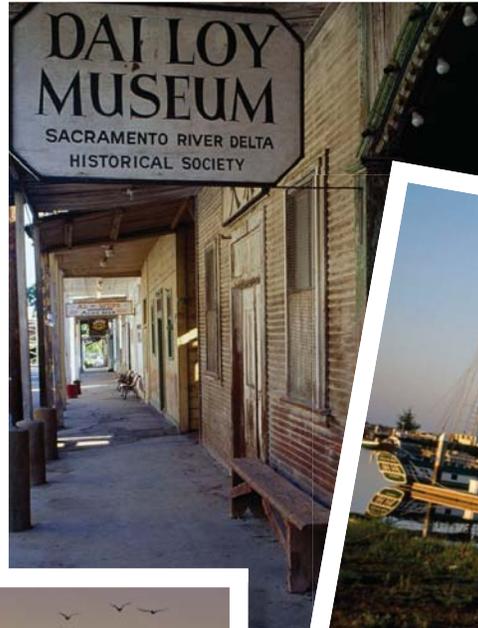
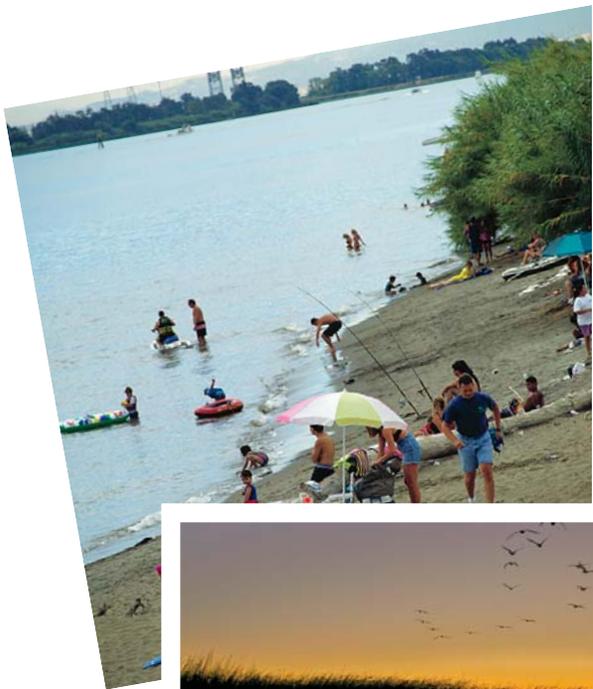

Recreation Proposal

for the
Sacramento-San Joaquin
Delta
and Suisun Marsh

Draft for Public Review, 5/3/11



California State Parks
Planning Division
June 2011

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Delta Protection Commission
Department of Fish and Game
Department of Boating and Waterways
Department of Transportation
Department of Water Resources
Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy
State Coastal Conservancy
State Lands Commission

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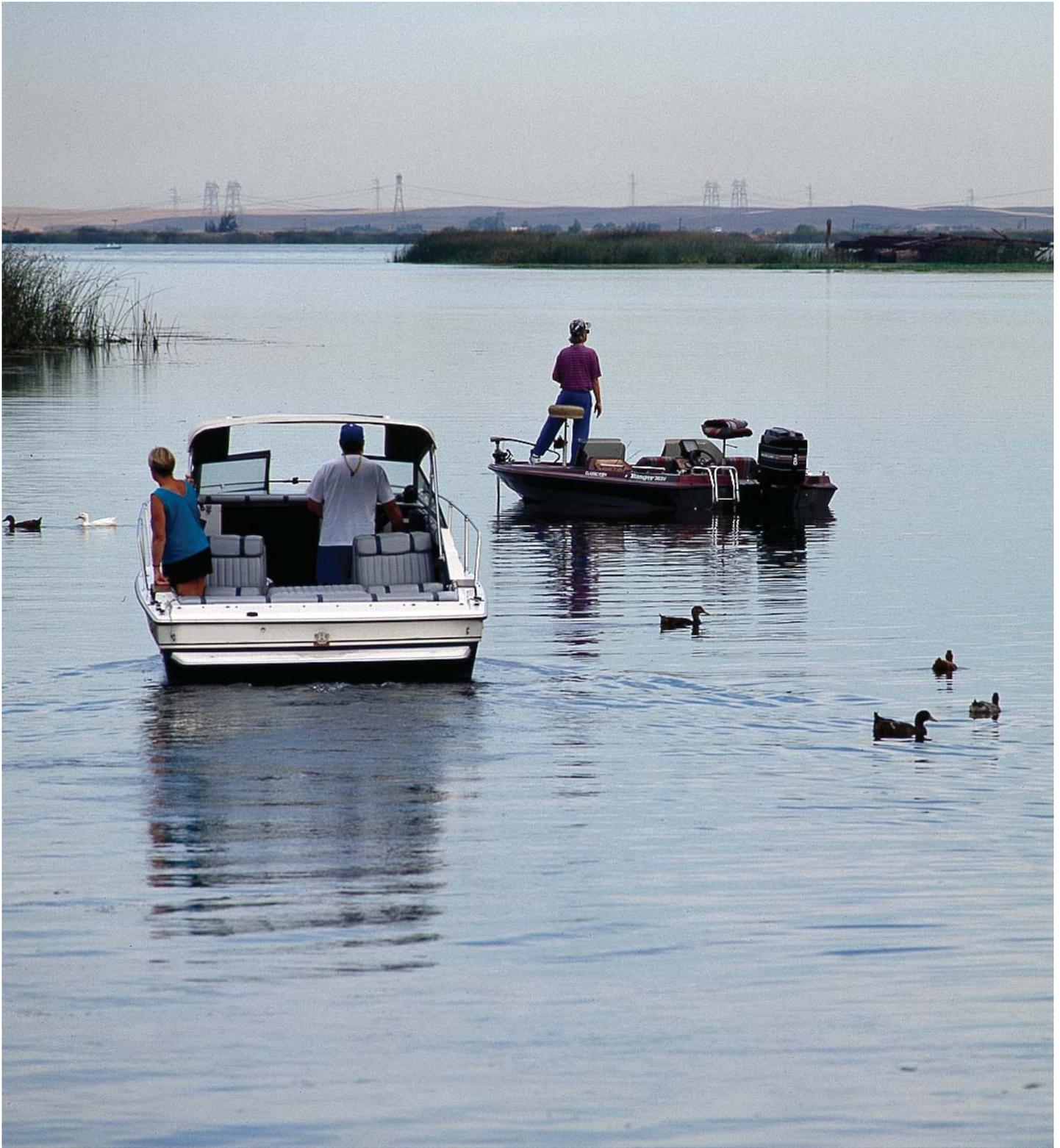
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Fun with Family and Friends. From jet-ski rides to beach lounging, the Delta offers recreation opportunities for all.



Delta Recreation. Boaters enjoy an evening on the Delta.

Director's Message and Executive Summary

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and Suisun Marsh create a meeting place—for the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers, the populations of the Central Valley and Bay Area, and for vacation destinations of San Francisco, the Wine Country and the Sierra Nevada.

The region's waterways, parks, wildlife refuges, marinas, historic communities, and country roads provide recreation for residents and visitors alike. Wonderful places to relax outdoors, enjoy nature, or appreciate the food, culture, and history of the Delta and Suisun Marsh lie within reach of millions of Californians and other visitors.

This proposal recommends improvement and, in some cases, expansion of California State Parks' four Delta recreation areas and six other state parks on the edge of the Delta and Suisun Marsh. It identifies opportunities to create three new state parks to serve the region. The report offers ways to improve recreation at wildlife habitat areas, publicly owned levees, scenic highways, state recreational trails, and other public lands, and to coordinate recreation and tourism efforts. These recommendations constitute California State Parks' proposals to expand state recreation areas in the Delta, as provided in the Delta Reform Act of 2009.

We release these recommendations in an era of change. Budgets are tight, and funds aren't in hand to implement many of the plan's recommendations. But by planning now, we can prepare to use resources that become available and point the way for those who come after us. This plan will require cooperation among State, local and federal agencies, visitor-serving businesses, and non-profit organizations. No one agency can do this job alone.

Although the Delta and Suisun Marsh may change significantly over coming decades, their recreation assets and authentic character can endure and find wider appreciation. As we work together to improve recreation and tourism, we will also contribute to the area's economic vitality, supporting jobs, growing businesses, and improving the quality of life that makes the Delta and Suisun Marsh region an attractive place to live, visit, and do business.

Ruth Coleman
Director, California State Parks



Ruth Coleman, Director of California State Parks. *The Director's first concern in the Delta is providing quality recreation opportunities. (Photo by Jim Block)*

Introduction



Spirit of the Delta. *The sun sets over a Delta landscape that appears just as it might have 150 years ago.*

"About 2 o'clock, P.M., we entered the mouth of the Sacramento. The Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers empty into the Bay of San Francisco at the same point, about sixty miles from the Pacific, and by numerous mouths, or sloughs as they are here called. These sloughs wind through an immense timbered swamp, and constitute a terraqueous labyrinth of such intricacy, that unskillful and inexperienced navigators have been lost for many days in it, and some, I have been told, have perished, never finding their way out."

—Edwin Bryant, October 1846

Although today's Delta differs from what early explorers saw, to many modern visitors, its maze of islands and sloughs remains as much of an enigma as the region was in the past. Maps of today's Delta and Suisun Marsh, which encompass 1,300 square miles, look like a puzzle, with geometric landscape extending inward from levee roads. Railroads, ferries, bridges, and navigation channels traverse the Delta.

Recreation Opportunities. The Delta's predominant land use is agriculture, while the Suisun Marsh is mostly wetland managed for waterfowl hunting. Hidden within the region are recreation opportunities waiting to be discovered. While privately-owned farmland is off-limits to the public, publicly-managed lands and waterways, including parks, some levees, and some road rights-of-way, support diverse recreation activities. These include fishing, boating, along miles of navigable waterways; bird watching, other nature activities, and hunting; enjoying the restaurants, campgrounds, picnic areas, and historic buildings scattered throughout the region, and events that draw visitors to taste local wine and learn about this unique place.

These recreation opportunities may change as projects are undertaken to provide a more reliable water supply and protect and restore the Delta ecosystem. State Water Project improvements projects may include pipelines or canals that carry water around or through the Delta, including intake facilities, fish screens, forebays, or operable barriers in Delta channels. Ecosystem restoration projects may include large restored wildlife habitat areas, including tidal channels, shallow open water, marshes, riverside woodlands, and floodplains, especially at five large potential "restoration opportunity areas" in the south, east, and west Delta, the Cosumnes and Mokelumne Rivers' floodplains, the Yolo Bypass, the Cache Slough complex, and Suisun Marsh. Flood control changes may also alter recreation opportunities.

This proposal recommends a strategy of partnerships and collaboration to expand recreation facilities and infrastructure that reveal the Delta and Suisun Marsh to more visitors. The proposal highlights existing recreation assets as well as new opportunities that are compatible with changes anticipated to improve water supply reliability or restore the ecosystem. These expanded recreation opportunities can provide visitors and residents authentic outdoor experiences rooted in the Delta and Suisun Marsh's unique and enduring character.

Recreation's Contribution to a Sustainable Economy.

Recreation and tourism contribute to the prosperity of the Delta and Suisun Marsh region in many ways. This proposal's recommendations consider these contributions to the region's economy:

- Tourists and residents attracted to the region's parks, waterways, and other recreation areas spend millions of dollars on lodging, food, equipment, and recreation-related services. These expenditures support business and employment.
- For farmers in the Delta and Suisun Marsh region, agricultural tourism creates opportunities to market products directly to consumers, provides alternative uses for lands or facilities not suited to production agriculture, and supplements income.
- Spending by agencies that manage recreation lands and waters also contributes to sales and employment.
- Local and state governments benefit from the sales tax and other revenues this recreation spending and employment generate.
- Communities, particularly those that benefit from recreational activities and tourism, become stronger when their aquatic ecosystems are healthy.
- Outdoor recreation helps support a higher quality of life that makes the Delta-Suisun Marsh region a better place to live, work, and do business. Parks and other open spaces have a positive effect on nearby residential property values, enhancing marketability and leading to proportionately higher property tax revenues for local governments.
- The cost of flood damage is reduced on lands used as parks or open space, rather than for development. These open spaces can also reduce the cost of protecting water quality. Recreation areas also encourage healthy outdoor activity, such as walking or bicycling, promoting human health and reducing residents' medical costs through exercise.
- Outdoor recreation and tourism contribute positively to the reputation of the region, branding it as an area of fun, beauty, and opportunity. Visitors, as well as the marketing and promotional efforts of the area's recreation agencies and tourism businesses, transmit this "brand" far beyond the region, aiding the area's efforts to distinguish itself from competitors for businesses, customers, residents, and jobs.

See more on economic outcomes on pages 32-33.



Local restaurants are among the many types of businesses that get a boost from tourist spending. (Photo by Bill Wells, www.californiadelta.org)



Delta Days are six first-person, fictional stories told in words and photos throughout this document. These stories describe recreation excursions that are *or could be* possible in the region as additional recreation opportunities are developed.

(Grape photo by Dale Goff Photography.)



Public Resources Code. *Specific guidance for this proposal is from these sections of the Public Resources Code (due to passage of SBx7 1 in 2009):*

• *Section 29702: “The Legislature further finds and declares that the basic goals of the state for the Delta are the following: (a) Achieve the two coequal 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. (b) Protect, maintain, and, where possible, enhance and restore the overall quality of the Delta environment, including, but not limited to, agriculture, wildlife habitat, and recreational activities.”*

• *Section 85301(c)(1): “The Department of Parks and Recreation shall prepare a proposal, for submission to the commission, to expand within the Delta the network of state recreation areas, combining existing and newly designated areas. The proposal may incorporate appropriate aspects of any existing plans, including the Central Valley Vision Implementation Plan adopted by the Department of Parks and Recreation.”*

Proposal Purpose. This proposal responds to 2009’s Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Reform Act (“The Act”), which created the Delta Stewardship Council and charged it with developing and overseeing a master plan for the region. This proposal is submitted to the Council, which may consider it as it prepares its plan. The proposal is also submitted to the Delta Protection Commission, which is developing an Economic Sustainability Plan, a part of the overall master plan.

Proposal Goal. This proposal carries out the Act and California State Parks’ mission by:

- assessing recreation demand and opportunities,
- describing issues that may affect recreation, and
- recommending additions and/or improvements to State-managed lands and programs in and around the Delta and Suisun Marsh to increase recreation opportunities.

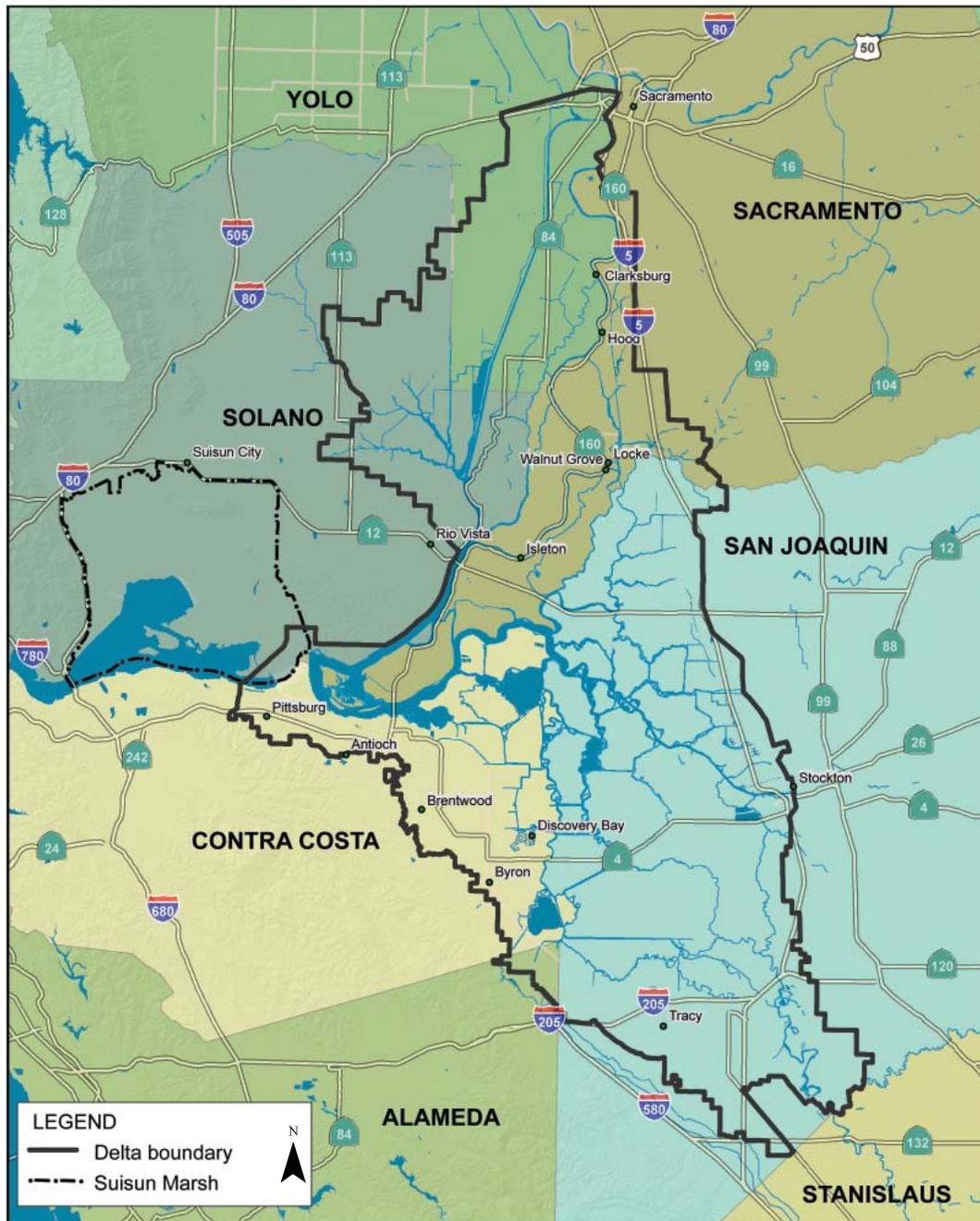
A variety of Information, including government statistics, state parks’ general plans, and input from local agencies and other partners, were analyzed to develop these proposals. Most proposals for state parks are from the *Central Valley Vision*, CSP’s reports about improving the state park system in the Central Valley. Others reflect suggestions of recreation experts, water or fish and wildlife agencies, tourism businesses, and residents.

The State’s Role in Recreation. State, local, and federal agencies share responsibility to provide recreation opportunities. California State Parks’ responsibility to encourage, stimulate, and coordinate recreation is outlined in the California Recreation Policy and embodied in initiatives like this *Recreation Proposal for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and Suisun Marsh*. Under State law, the responsibility for funding for recreation associated with the State Water Project lies with the general fund, rather than the water project’s water and power customers.

This proposal emphasizes State responsibilities; however, many stakeholders have recreation interests in the region, from fishing guides to county governments. East Bay Regional Park District, for example, has several parks and trails on the Delta’s Contra Costa County shoreline. Collaborating with these stakeholders cost-effectively enhances recreation opportunities, strengthens the economy, and allows agencies to adapt to changing programs and budgets.

For more information on the role of the State, see page 12.

The Delta and Suisun Marsh overlaid on California counties.



Three areas are referenced in this document:

1. The Delta, the legislatively-designated or “legal” Delta, indicated by the solid line of the Delta boundary on the map
2. The Suisun Marsh, indicated by the “dotted and dashed” line west of the Delta, and which, like the Delta, is defined by law
3. The Delta and Suisun Marsh, both areas combined (1,300 square miles)

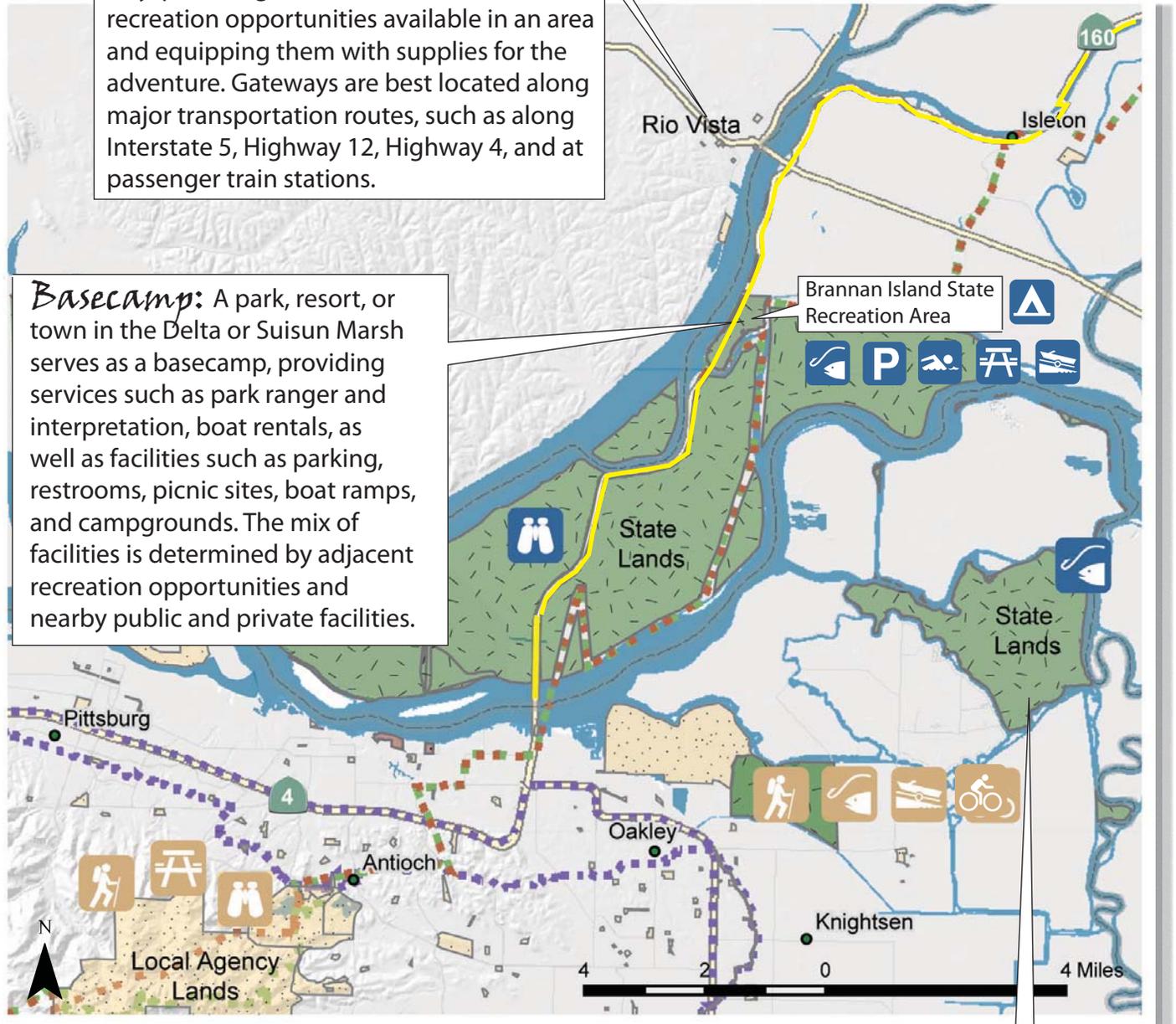
This recreation proposal includes recreation opportunities in the Delta and Suisun Marsh as well as in nearby sites that provide entry points to these areas or link them to other tourism and recreation attractions.

Note: County statistics (for example, population figures) in this proposal are for Sacramento, San Joaquin, Contra Costa, Solano, and Yolo Counties.

Delta Days: Gateways and Basecamps lead to Adventure

Gateway: A community on the edge of the Delta or Suisun Marsh serves as a gateway, providing information to visitors about recreation opportunities available in an area and equipping them with supplies for the adventure. Gateways are best located along major transportation routes, such as along Interstate 5, Highway 12, Highway 4, and at passenger train stations.

Basecamp: A park, resort, or town in the Delta or Suisun Marsh serves as a basecamp, providing services such as park ranger and interpretation, boat rentals, as well as facilities such as parking, restrooms, picnic sites, boat ramps, and campgrounds. The mix of facilities is determined by adjacent recreation opportunities and nearby public and private facilities.



Adventure: Offering diverse recreation activities may entice more visitors to stay longer, visit for the first time, or visit more often. Visitors may take scenic roadways, multi-use trails, water trails, and heritage corridors to nearby hiking, wildlife viewing, angling, hunting, and other activities on public and private land, as well as tour heritage and agri-tourism sites.

Legend

- Scenic Highways
- Public Lands**
- Local Agency
- State
- State Recreational Trails**
- - - Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail (NHT)
- - - Mokelumne Coast-to-Crest Trail
- - - American Discovery Trail

Partnerships. Public lands in the Delta and Suisun Marsh have many owners, including state and federal agencies, several counties, and special districts. Conservation groups and land trusts also own or manage land in the region, as do many private recreation providers.

Using the “Gateway, Basecamp, Adventure” strategy, partnerships between recreation-oriented land owners and recreation providers increase access to public lands while minimizing facilities investment and ongoing costs.

Establishing water trail launching and interpretive facilities in the region, and boating destinations such as boat-in campsites, will allow more visitors to take advantage of the region’s waterways.

Bus or boat tours can provide a package of experiences for visitors.

Benefits. Benefits of this strategy include:

- Increasing recreation on existing public lands, thus reducing the need for land acquisition and development.
- Enhancing recreation opportunities where recreation lands have multiple owners.
- Concentrating intensively developed recreation facilities to minimize impact on resources.
- Collaborating with public, private, and not-for-profit partners to maximize the diversity of recreation opportunities.
- Appealing to visitors who rely on package tours or desire a longer visit.

Strategies for Expanding Recreation. As this report is being drafted the State is facing intense pressure to reduce budgets. Because the recommendations (see pages 22-31) require public investments in recreation facilities, programs, and lands, any substantial expansion of recreational opportunities in the Delta and Suisun Marsh region requires a long-term approach. Collaboration between public agencies, as well as innovative partnerships with not-for-profit organizations and the business community, may facilitate investments that provide multiple benefits without reliance on any single government agency. A strategy of gateways and basecamps, as shown on the map on the opposite page, interweaves many of these suggested strategies:

- **Public lands.** Fully utilize recreational opportunities on existing public lands with targeted investments in public and private recreation facilities. Increase the size and diversity of public lands suitable for recreation as the landscape and economy evolve and opportunities arise.
- **Recreation for all.** Encourage methods to reduce the cost of recreation, for example: renting equipment, low-cost touring and lodging, travel packages combining several sites, seasonal and/or first-time visitor discounts, etc.
- **Natural habitat and water.** Increase opportunities to view wildlife and the natural landscape and rebuild sport fishing and hunting stocks by restoring natural habitat and improving water quality.
- **Interpretation, education, and heritage resources.** Provide interpretation and education on natural resources at recreation facilities to increase recreationists’ respect for private property, other visitors, and the natural environment, and thus reduce operating costs of recreation areas. Protect, restore, and interpret heritage resources.
- **Volunteers and partnerships.** Improve volunteer opportunities and partnerships with not-for-profit organizations for events, facility construction, and management. (One example: Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area’s partnerships.)
- **Agency collaboration.** Improve collaboration among land management agencies and private recreation providers. Cooperatively develop and market a recognizable Delta and Suisun Marsh “brand” for products, events, and tourism facilities.

Existing Recreation Demand



Use of State Parks. 2008 figures show that at Brannan Island SRA, about 36,000 people went camping and about 88,500 used day use facilities. Day-use facilities at Bethany Reservoir SRA were enjoyed by 26,600 people; 24,300 people visited Franks Tract SRA.

California State Parks Abbreviations. Abbreviations for state parks in this document are:

- SHP (State Historic Park)
- SP (State Park)
- SRA (State Recreation Area)

The Delta and Suisun Marsh lie at the heart of communities and farms of the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys, and alongside the residential areas and tourism destinations of the San Francisco Bay Area.

About 4.9 million people live within about a 20-minute drive of the Delta and Suisun Marsh, the typical distance Californians drive to reach a favorite recreation area. Travel spending in Delta counties was \$4.8 billion in 2006.

Recreation in the area includes activities in the three categories outlined here, which suggest a baseline for the region.

Fun with Family and Friends. Many of the most popular forms of outdoor family recreation statewide are available in the Delta and Suisun Marsh, including picnicking and camping in parks, biking its rural roads, and pleasure boating and swimming in waterways.

Participation in these activities is widespread. In a recent survey, more than 90 percent of Central Valley and San Francisco Bay Area residents had visited parks in the last year; about two thirds had done so in the last month. In fact, a typical resident in these regions visited a park about six days each month. Popular, family-oriented activities of these areas' residents include:

- walking and picnicking (over 65 percent of survey respondents),
- camping (about 45 percent),
- wildlife viewing (more than 40 percent),
- bicycling (more than 35 percent), and
- swimming (more than 30 percent).

Demand for these activities is significant. For example, about 17 million Californians (47 percent) day hike on trails, 13 million (36 percent) bike on paved trails, 5.8 million (16 percent) bike on unpaved trails and 4.1 million (11 percent) stay in an RV/trailer camping annually.

The Delta and Suisun Marsh waterways are especially inviting to boaters. An estimated 7.4 million "annual visitor boating days" occurred in the Delta and Suisun Marsh in 2010. About 15 percent of Bay Area and Central Valley residents go power boating annually, 18 percent go paddle boating, and 7.4 percent sail boats. About 810,000 vessels are registered statewide, with 116,000 in the five county area, creating a large pool of potential recreationists.



Delta Days: Fun with Family and Friends

"Our annual Brannan Island vacation is held at shady campsites big enough for our whole family. We bring our boat and tents for the younger adults and kids, but rent an RV for the older folks. Ever since I found that great bait shop in Rio Vista, we catch the biggest stripers and catfish in the Delta. Last year we rented two jet skis—they were already loaded on the trailer at the marina

down the road. This year I want to learn to sailboard! The last night of our vacation, we invite our friends and neighbors in Stockton to a huge barbecue and campfire. We have a volleyball tournament, swim and have kite fights—whatever people want to do. Why vacation far away when you can get away to the Delta and invite your friends, too?"

This story describes an excursion that is possible today or could be possible in the region as additional recreation opportunities are developed.



Interstate and International Tourism Trends. *The San Francisco Bay Area is a national and international draw for leisure and business travelers.*

With 2 million international visitors in 2009, San Francisco is the fifth-most-popular tourist destination among US cities. San Francisco is within a one-hour drive of many Delta attractions.

Long-distance travelers are drawn by a diversity of recreational opportunities, including new sites and events that can bring them back to a region and encourage them to stay longer.

The International Trade Administration projects international travel to increase 6 to 9% annually through 2015.

Nature-Based Recreation. The Delta and Suisun Marsh are renowned for bird watching, angling, and waterfowl hunting. More than 40 percent of Bay Area and Central Valley residents enjoy bird watching and other wildlife viewing. More than 34 percent participate in outdoor photography.

About one out of five San Francisco Bay Area residents go angling, and about one out of three Central Valley residents enjoy the sport. Striped bass have been the main catch in the region, but anglers take many other species, including black bass, catfish, salmon, and sturgeon.

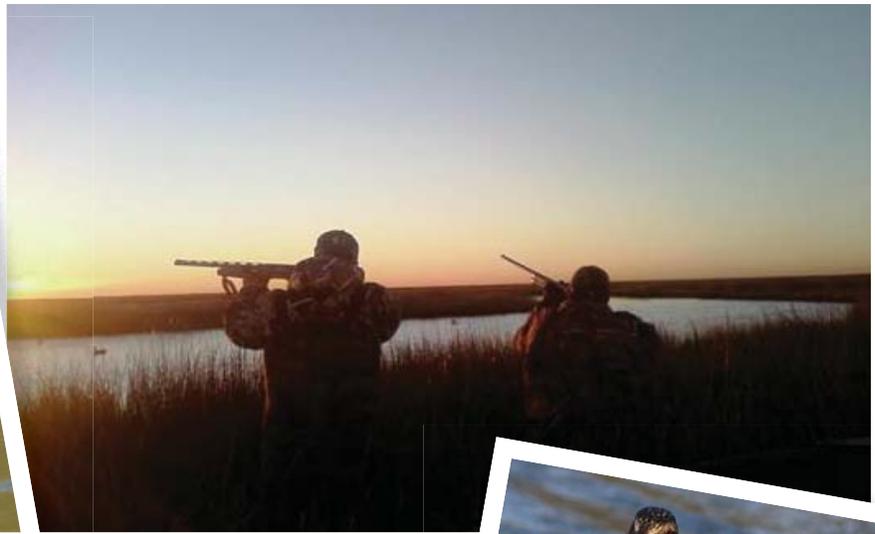
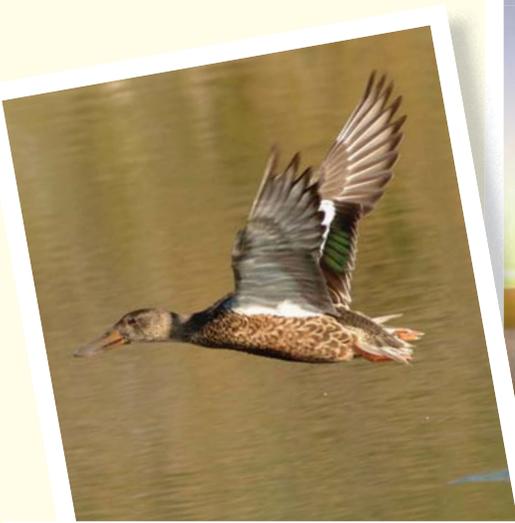
Waterfowl hunting is superb, especially in Suisun Marsh. Hunters also pursue upland game, turkey, deer, and pigs. Although hunting is less popular than many activities (about 3 percent of Central Valley and San Francisco Bay Area residents hunt), its adherents are active and loyal, hunting about 15 days a year, with most participants (77 percent) hunting every year for many years in a row. Hunting is especially popular in the Central Valley (5.6 percent), when compared to its popularity statewide (3.8 percent).

Food-, Wine-, and Heritage-Related Activities. Settlers from many countries created a rich cultural legacy that is evident in the historic communities found along the region's rural roads and waterways.

Area residents continue to celebrate festivals and other cultural traditions. Abundant produce, local wineries, and ethnic cuisines offer the potential for unique dining experiences.

Many residents of surrounding regions enjoy recreation opportunities associated with area culture: more than 60 percent enjoy driving for pleasure, more than 54 percent visit historic or cultural sites, and more than 50 percent attend festivals, historic reenactments, or other outdoor cultural events.

Cultural travel activities, including attending festivals, craft fairs, and art exhibits, visiting historic sites and museums, and attending concerts, plays and dances make up 13 percent of overnight travel statewide.



Delta Days: Hunting Adventure

"Waterfowl of all kinds stream down the Pacific Flyway to spend the winter here, fattening up in the expansive Delta freshwater wetlands, flooded rice fields, and the brackish Suisun Marsh. Renting a duck blind and solar-powered floating campsite for the weekend will get you on the water far away from civilization. With the boat trailered behind

your truck, stop in West Sacramento for groceries, ice, ammo, propane, and a couple of new decoys. A pair of experienced hunters with fearless retrievers can bag the limit of pintails, shovelers, and fat Canada geese. Don't forget to pick up gifts for the kids on the way home."

This story describes an excursion that is possible today or could be possible in the region as additional recreation opportunities are developed.

Summary of Existing Resources

Land Area in the Delta.

This table shows how much of each county is in the Legal Delta.

Contra Costa	22%
Sacramento	19%
Solano	16%
San Joaquin	35%
Yolo	14%

The Role of State Agencies.

This table shows how each agency contributes to recreation.

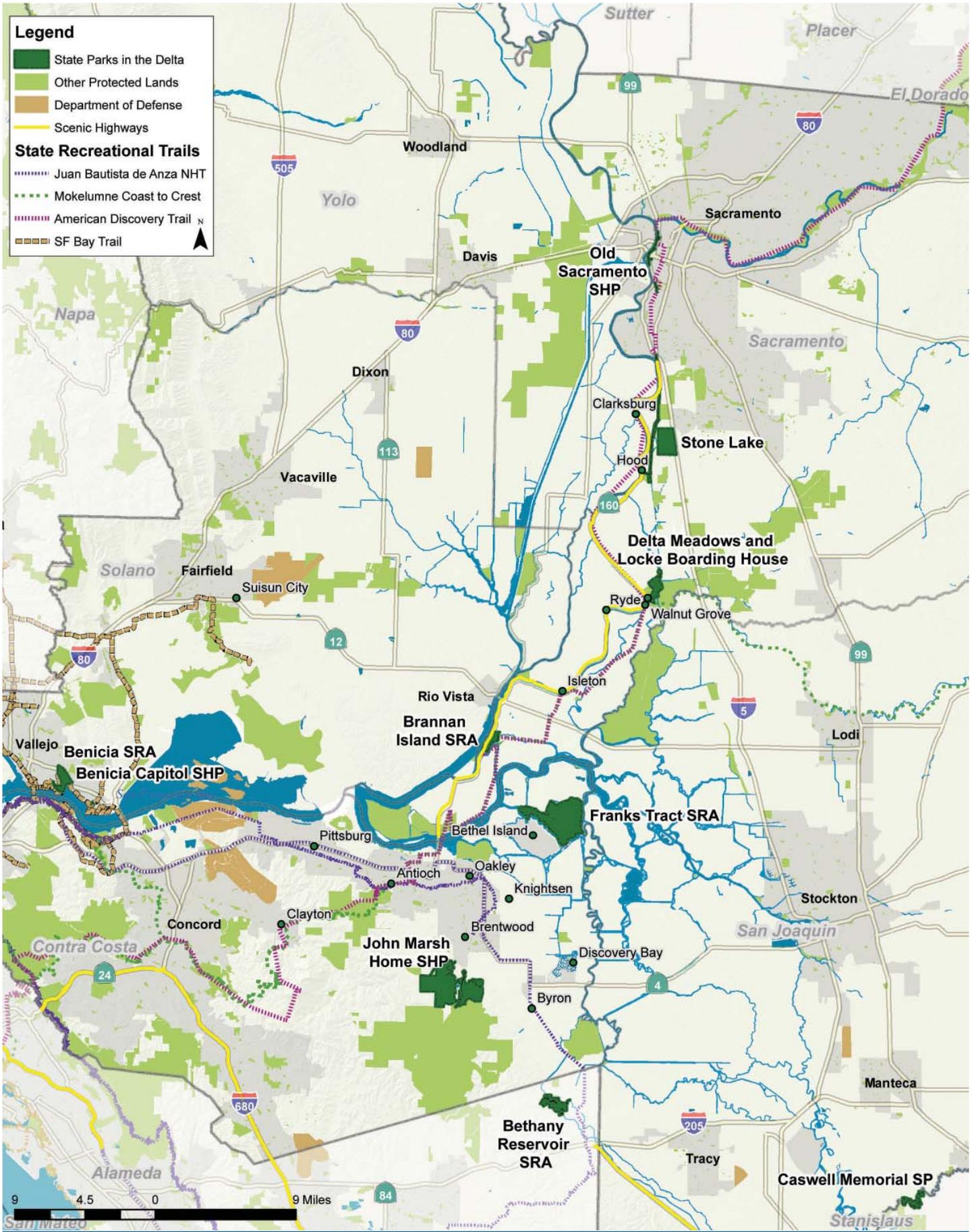
Public Lands and Facilities. Public lands occupy about 74,000 acres, or ten percent, of the legal Delta and Suisun Marsh. Also in the legal Delta are 61,000 acres of open water and 57,000 acres of navigable waterways spread over 700 miles of sloughs and winding channels.

Delta and Suisun Marsh lands and waters include California state parks as well as other protected lands (see map on opposite page): California State Parks system parks, California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) areas, other State lands, federal recreation lands, local parks, and several locations owned by nonprofit conservation organizations.

Recreation opportunities at public lands. Park and wildlife areas support a wide variety of recreation activities, providing opportunities for fishing, hunting, motorized and non-motorized boating, beach play, swimming and windsurfing, wildlife viewing, picnicking, hiking, biking, and tent, RV, and houseboat camping. Some offer trails and options for driving tours, public fishing and hunting access, and visitor/interpretive centers.

State Agency Name and Role	Recreation-related Facilities and Opportunities	Delta and Suisun Marsh Examples
California State Parks (CSP) offers high-quality outdoor recreation and educational opportunities, protects natural and cultural resources, and oversees the California Recreational Trails System.	Day use picnic, campground, marina, trail, excursion railroad, interpretive services, heritage resource protection	Brannan Island SRA, Old Sacramento SHP, American Discovery Trail
Department of Fish and Game (DFG) manages hunting and fishing; operates public lands for wildlife conservation, hunting, fishing, environmental education, and nature study; and encourages private conservation.	Ecological reserve, wildlife area, boat launch, nature-based recreation and events, fish hatchery	Woodbridge Ecological Reserve, Grizzly Island Wildlife Area, Clarksburg boat launch
Department of Boating and Waterways (DBW) provides recreational boater education, public boating facilities, invasive aquatic species control, and grants for water safety.	Boat launch	Antioch Marina Boat Launch Facility
Caltrans operates state highways, historic bridges and ferries, and designates state scenic highways.	Scenic highway, ferry, historic bridge	State Hwy 160, J-Mack Ferry, Steamboat Slough Bridge
Department of Water Resources (DWR) manages California's water resources, including State Water Project reservoirs, dams, land, and waterways available for recreation use.	Reservoir, water conveyance infrastructure (canals, diversion site, waterway flows), flood control projects, and habitat management sites and facilities	Bethany Reservoir, Sacramento River flows, Fremont Weir, Suisun Marsh salinity control structure, Dutch Slough habitat restoration project
State Lands Commission (SLC) manages hundreds of miles of waterways in the Delta, and issues leases for in-stream recreation infrastructure.	Navigable waterways, submerged lands, dock, and pier leases	Three Mile Slough, Walnut Grove Public Dock
Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy will implement ecosystem restoration, advance environmental protection, and support economic sustainability, including tourism and recreation.	Projects that enhance fish and game, tourism, habitat management sites, cultural resources, and environmental education	The Delta Plan, the Bay/Delta Conservation Plan, Economic Sustainability Plan, Delta Conservancy Strategic Plan will guide projects
State Coastal Conservancy (SCC) makes grants to purchase, protect, restore, and enhance coastal resources, including San Francisco Bay and Suisun Marsh, and to provide access to the shore.	Shoreline accessways, trails, habitat protection and restoration areas, farmland and open space protection	Rush Ranch protection, San Francisco Bay area water trail, Marsh Creek stream restoration and trail
Delta Protection Commission (DPC) adaptively manages the Delta's Primary Zone, including, but not limited to, agriculture, wildlife habitat, and recreation activities.	Heritage resource recognition and enhancement, agritourism program, regional trails	National Heritage Area feasibility study, Great California Delta Trail

Public Lands and Trails





Restaurants in Legacy Towns. *Small Delta towns such as Locke and Walnut Grove have places to grab a bite as part of a leisurely day on the Delta.*

Boating and angling. Boating and fishing facilities include a few large public marinas with launch ramps, picnicking areas, and trails. Angling is also available at public fishing piers. Public land can also include access to beach and windsurfing areas.

Highways and routes. Scenic highways, state recreational trail routes, railroads, and other transportation corridors connect recreation areas, offer scenic vistas, and link to destinations in other regions.

Private Facilities. Private recreation facilities and other businesses serving visitors also support recreation in the region.

Marinas. Privately owned marinas and resorts in the five-county Delta area include 41 small marinas (fewer than 50 berths per marina), 39 medium marinas (50-200 berths), and 18 large marinas (200+ berths). Some of these marinas offer camping and picnic facilities and formal fishing access. Many small and medium private marinas and resorts offer cabin rentals; some offer camping, picnicking, boat launches, and houseboat rentals.

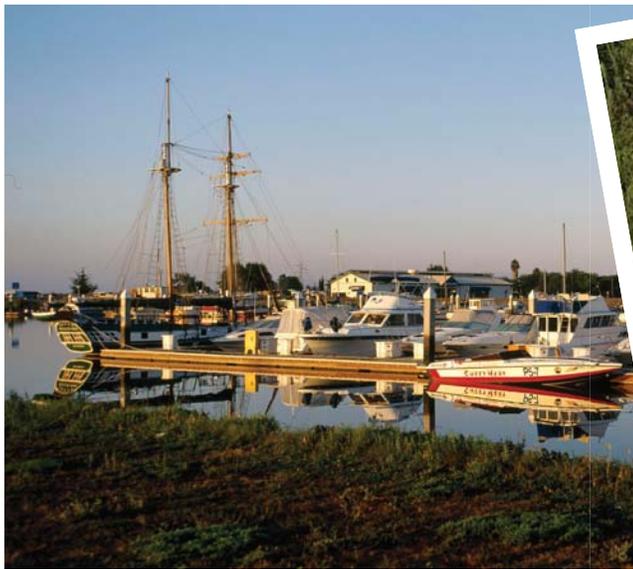
Restaurants, hotels, wineries, and more. Restaurants, hotels, bed and breakfasts, wineries, galleries, gift shops and farm stands in riverside towns and gateway communities serve visitors too.

Excursions by water. Private excursion vessels departing from Antioch, Pittsburg, Stockton, Sacramento, Suisun City, and Walnut Grove offer additional ways for visitors to explore the region.

Yacht clubs. There are 25 private yacht clubs in the Delta: 4 in Sacramento County, 11 in San Joaquin County, 8 in Contra Costa County, and 2 in Solano County. Yolo County has a private sailing club and a private rowing club.

Duck clubs. A total of 158 private duck clubs are located in Suisun Marsh, ranging in size from 30 to 3,200 acres. A majority of the private duck clubs in the Delta are located in Yolo County. Additionally, a 4,700-acre upland game bird hunting club operates in Solano County.

Education and Interpretation Facilities. Many facilities interpret the region and educate visitors, but they focus on only some resources and are unevenly distributed. Nature centers at locations such as the Cosumnes River Preserve, Rush Ranch, and local parks educate students about the region's ecology, including its wildlife and fish, and about native California Indians. Docent-led hikes and boat trips offer guided experiences for visitors.

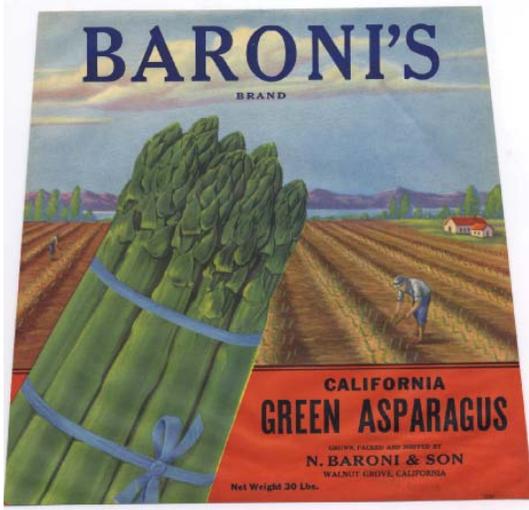


Delta Days: Bird Watching Safari

"We took the concierge's advice and booked a low-carbon safari to Suisun Marsh. We'd toured Napa Valley and Yosemite last year and wanted something different to share with our friends at home in London. The Amtrak train took us to Suisun City where we met our guide, Maria. After a delicious crawfish stew at the marina, she brought our kayaks to the public dock and we headed into the tules. We

spent two relaxing days at the ecolodge surrounded by birds. Maria brought wine, ice, and fresh Delta produce every morning, grilled fish for dinner, and led us through wetlands full of melodious Suisun song sparrows and other rare birds. Maria knew where to find the best birds without disturbing them. We bought two nature paintings from a waterfront gallery before heading back to San Francisco."

This story describes an excursion that is possible today or could be possible in the region as additional recreation opportunities are developed.
(Photo of Sunset Bay kayakers by Del Davidson via City of Suisun City.)



Delta Agricultural Heritage. Farming is an integral part of the Delta's identity.

Education about wildlife also occurs at festivals, such as Galt's Winter Bird Festival. Visitors to historic homes, especially common in Contra Costa County, can learn about early settlers, especially from other areas of the US. Fewer sites interpret the contributions of immigrants from China, Japan, the Philippines, or other nations. Museums in San Joaquin and Sacramento Counties interpret agricultural history. County fairs in Antioch and other communities, winery tasting rooms, and farm trails also educate about agriculture. The California State Railroad Museum presents railroads' role in the region. The region's maritime history, such as steamboats, fishing traditions, and water management efforts (including marsh reclamation and infrastructure), currently gets little attention.

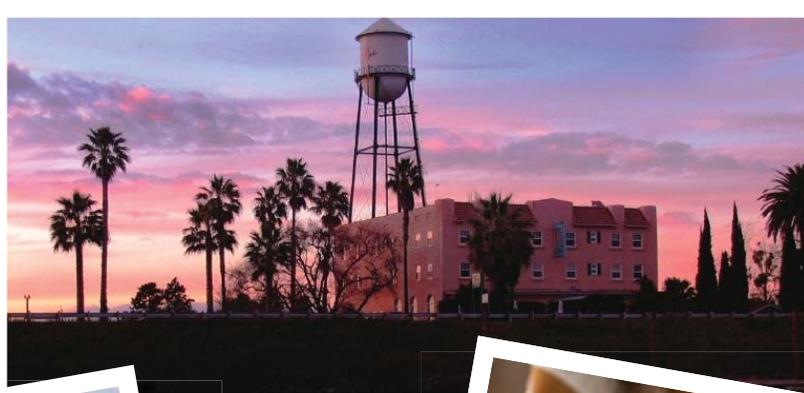
Cultural Events. Festivals honor many ethnic traditions, including Chinese and Cambodian New Years, Portuguese festas, Greek holidays, Indian Diwali celebrations, Filipino fiestas, Cinco de Mayo events, and Juneteenth commemorations.

Cook-offs and other festivities celebrate farming, often featuring trademark crops such as asparagus, dried beans, sweet corn, or pears. Many restaurants highlight fresh local produce or cuisines from many ethnic traditions. Fishing derbies publicize angling.

Annual exhibitions by California landscape painters in Davis, Benicia's fine arts and jazz festival, Sacramento's Jazz Jubilee, art museums in Stockton and Sacramento, galleries, and other venues present the arts.

Heritage Facilities. The communities of Courtland, Clarksburg, Locke, Walnut Grove, and Isleton evoke the heritage of small towns, agriculture, riverboats, and railroads. Too often, however, the deterioration or loss of important buildings impairs these towns' historic fabric and hinders the reuse of important structures. Other landmarks include Old Sacramento, including its state historic park, buildings in Stockton, Benicia's arsenal, and the Benicia Capitol State Historic Park.

Some historic homes are protected as museums in Contra Costa County, including the John Muir National Historic Site in Martinez. Century farms, many with archetypal drainage and irrigation systems and classic farmsteads, are found along many rural roads. Historic drawbridges and ferries still traverse some waterways, while remnants of weather-beaten marine facilities hint at robust infrastructure from a past era.



Delta Days: Heritage Tourism

"I've lived in Silicon Valley for 30 years and never had time to explore the Delta until now. When I heard the Dragon Boat Festival was expanding up the San Joaquin River to Stockton, I booked a room right away. Imagine those boats racing up the river skirting the tule marsh—it reminded me of my childhood! We heard about the cultural tour on

Sunday while enjoying a delicious asparagus curry at the Delta Discovery Center, so we decided to stay a few more days. We explored Locke's historic buildings, Walnut Grove's exhibit on the State Water Project, and Isleton's art galleries. We spent the next day tasting wine, shopping and dining at Clarksburg's Sugar Mill. Next year, we'll bring the grandchildren."

This story describes an excursion that is possible today or could be possible in the region as additional recreation opportunities are developed. (Grape photo by Dale Goff Photography.)

The Changing Delta

The Delta’s Population Today. The five counties with land in the Delta and Suisun Marsh—Contra Costa, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Solano and Yolo—are home to 3.9 million residents. Residents in these counties are the primary beneficiaries of Delta and Suisun Marsh recreation opportunities. Opinion surveys show that California residents typically drive 20 minutes or less to reach favored recreation areas, bringing Delta and Suisun Marsh recreation opportunities within reach of many residents of these counties.

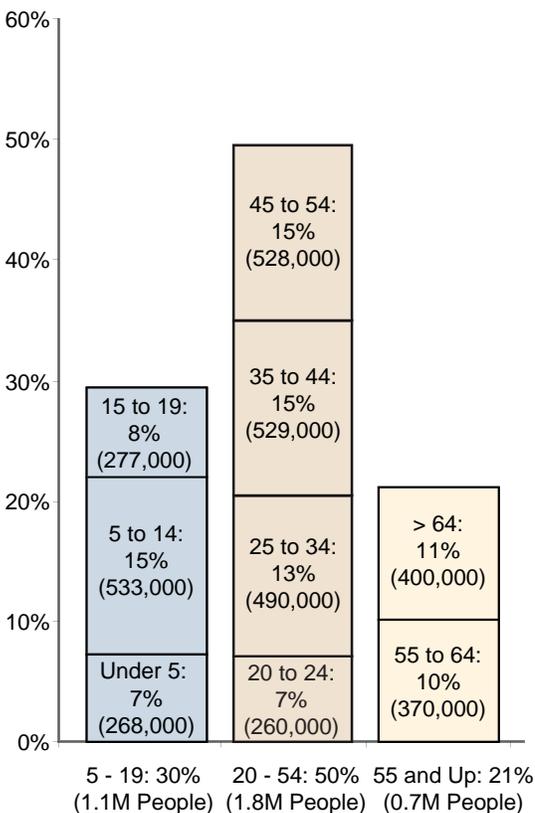
Age Groups. Residents of the Delta’s five counties include a mix of families with children, active adults, and senior citizens, creating demand for a wide variety of recreation activities. For the five counties:

- Thirty percent of households include children between 5 and 19 years of age. The 5-14 age group is among the region’s largest groups, comprising almost 15 percent of its population. Another 8 percent are adolescents between 15 and 19 years of age. These are prime audiences for family-oriented recreation such as picnicking, camping, and boating.
- Adults ages 20-44 comprise about half of the population. These adults are core participants of “fun with family and friends” excursions.
- Adults ages 55 and over make up about 21 percent of the population. People in this age group are likely to enjoy “food and wine” tourism, visiting historic sites, and are likely to prefer hotels, cabins, or other alternatives to camping.

Ethnicities. Ethnically, the five counties are made up mostly of people who describe themselves as white (including Hispanic), with the next largest groups being Asian, some other race, and Black or African American. About a quarter of the region’s population describes itself as Hispanic. Lifestyle differences among these groups influences recreation demand. For example, Hispanics are more likely to recreate in large family groups, while other ethnic groups are as likely to recreate with friends as family. Hispanics and Asians often prefer more developed recreation areas, while other ethnic groups may prefer more natural, less developed recreation settings.

Household Incomes. Median income in the five Delta counties is \$63,550 (compared to \$76,257 in the San Francisco Bay Area). As a result, a mix of recreation opportunities at both moderate and higher prices will serve the region well.

Five-County Population and Percentages by Age Group, 2009*



Age Groups

*Rounding yielded more than 100 percent.

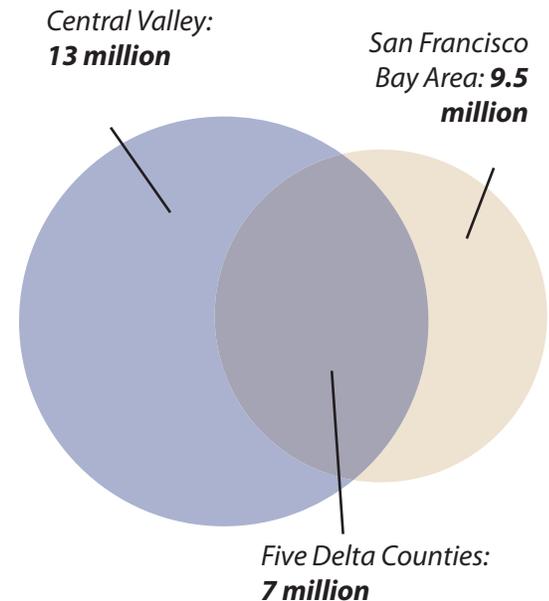
Regional Recreation Preferences. California residents' outdoor recreation preferences vary by region. Residents of the San Francisco Bay Area want to go bicycling more often than do Californians statewide. Central Valley residents prefer more traditional outdoor activities, wanting to go camping, swimming, hunting, and fishing more than do residents of the Bay Area or Californians statewide. Paddle boating and wildlife viewing are other recreation activities that residents of the San Francisco Bay Area and the Central Valley wish they could do more often. During public meetings in 2008 about the California State Parks system held in the Central Valley, Delta participants said they wanted more opportunities for family access, tent camping (including group camping), boating (including boat launch sites and boating trails), wildlife viewing, photography, and fishing facilities.

The Delta's Population Tomorrow. As the Delta and Suisun Marsh region's population increases, recreation demand will grow. The five counties' population is projected to almost double, approaching 7 million by 2050. Almost 10 million people will live in the San Francisco Bay Area, while the Central Valley's population will swell to 13 million, adding to the demand for Delta and Suisun Marsh recreation. The region's changing ethnic composition may also affect recreation preferences, as Hispanics and Asians will comprise a larger percentage of the population, and the percentage of non-Hispanic whites declines.

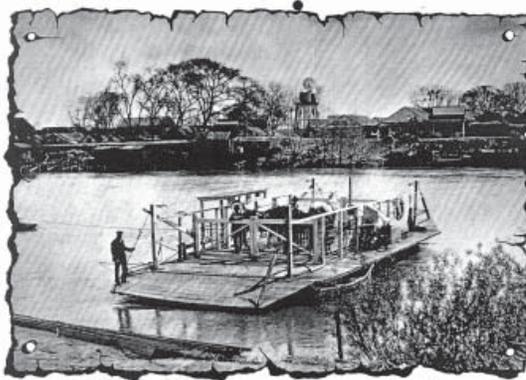
Changing recreation preferences will also affect future demand for outdoor recreation, as the popularity of various recreation activities changes over time. Over the past two decades, for example, data from four studies of Californians' participation in outdoor recreation and projections to 2014 show some types of recreation increasing, while others are in decline.

Attending cultural events, picnicking, bicycling on unpaved surfaces, and non-motorized boating show increases in participation, with hunting, freshwater fishing and swimming in lakes, rivers and the ocean projecting the greatest decreases.

In some cases, declines in recreation participation will be offset by a steady demand from a growing population, while in other cases rising popularity reinforces the increased demand of a growing population.



Projected Populations in Regions and Delta Counties in 2050. Regions are defined in the California State Parks publication, 2008 Survey on Public Opinions and Attitudes on Outdoor Recreation in California. For details, see www.parks.ca.gov/Planning.



Recent Delta History. Starting in the 1850s, farmers began sculpting the landscape to create fields. From fertile soils came asparagus, potatoes, pears, and other crops. Levees, constructed of sediments dredged from sloughs and rivers, protected the islands, tracts, and surrounding lowlands from high water.

Towns as diverse as Clarksburg, Collinsville, Suisun City, Locke, and Rio Vista sprouted on the region's waterways, housing agricultural workers, processing products fresh from the fields and orchards, and becoming transportation hubs for myriad wagons, trucks, trains, and boats hauling goods to market.

Large cities such as Stockton, Tracy, Antioch, Benicia, and Sacramento expanded on the edge of the Delta and Suisun Marsh to take advantage of the abundant water resources and agricultural bounty.

As the expansive tule marsh was dramatically altered to suit human uses, high-quality habitat for native species became rare.

The Changing Delta Landscape. The Delta and Suisun Marsh continue to evolve, as they have for centuries, despite huge investments to stabilize this dynamic environment.

Effect on recreation from current issues affecting the Delta and Suisun Marsh. Issues include:

- Land subsidence, earthquakes and rising seas may contribute to more catastrophic flooding, which could damage statewide and regional infrastructure and local communities, harm recreational and tourism resources, reduce agricultural productivity, and impact the economic health of Delta and Suisun Marsh communities.
- Water quality changes, including increased salinity, may affect the quantity, location, and types of game fish and waterfowl and change riverside vegetation. These changes may also impact agricultural production and the economy of Delta and Suisun Marsh communities.
- Changing rain and snow fall patterns may alter river flows, which may affect water-based recreation patterns.
- Aquatic pests and alien species may continue changing the quantity, quality, location, and types of game fish. This may impact the economic health of the recreation/tourist industry in Delta and Suisun Marsh communities.
- Urbanization may consume open space and limit access to the water. It may also increase the number of local recreationists and support for recreation/tourism infrastructure and programs.

Impacts of Future Delta Management. The state's response to current issues affecting the Delta may impact recreation opportunities in the following ways:

- Reinforced levees with little vegetation and bulkheads can reduce habitat for sport fish and watchable wildlife, the scenic values of waterways and roads, and bank fishing and birding opportunities, and may require expensive changes to recreation facilities such as marinas, beaches, and boat launches.
- State Water Project improvements like salinity control gates, limited access canals and other water infrastructure, and other water supply projects may block access to, or change the character of, existing recreation facilities, beaches and waterways.
- Re-operation of the State Water Project and Central Valley Project

to improve the reliability of water supplies for urban, industrial and agricultural uses may change downstream water flows that alter recreation patterns and limit boating and may affect the availability of reservoir-based recreation.

- Changes in management of existing wetlands may damage facilities and/or change access to existing recreation opportunities.
- Initiatives to recover fish such as salmon and sturgeon may benefit the economic health of the recreation/tourist industry in Delta and Suisun Marsh communities.
- Programs to minimize movement of alien species may increase policing programs and associated costs and limit boat movement.
- Reductions in levee maintenance may endanger historic resources and infrastructure.



Scenic Delta Road. Highway 12 is the main road from Highway 80/ Suisun City, through Rio Vista to Interstate 5.



Delta Waterway. Over time, most Delta waterways have been contained by levees and crossed by bridges.

Recommendations and Outcomes

The following recreation opportunities should be considered as the Delta and Suisun Marsh evolve, and when funding, partnerships, and other resources are available.

Recommendations are organized as follows:

- California State Parks recommendations
- Recommendations for other Delta state and federal lands
- Trails recommendations
- Proposed National Heritage Area

California State Parks Recommendations

Existing California State Parks in the Delta

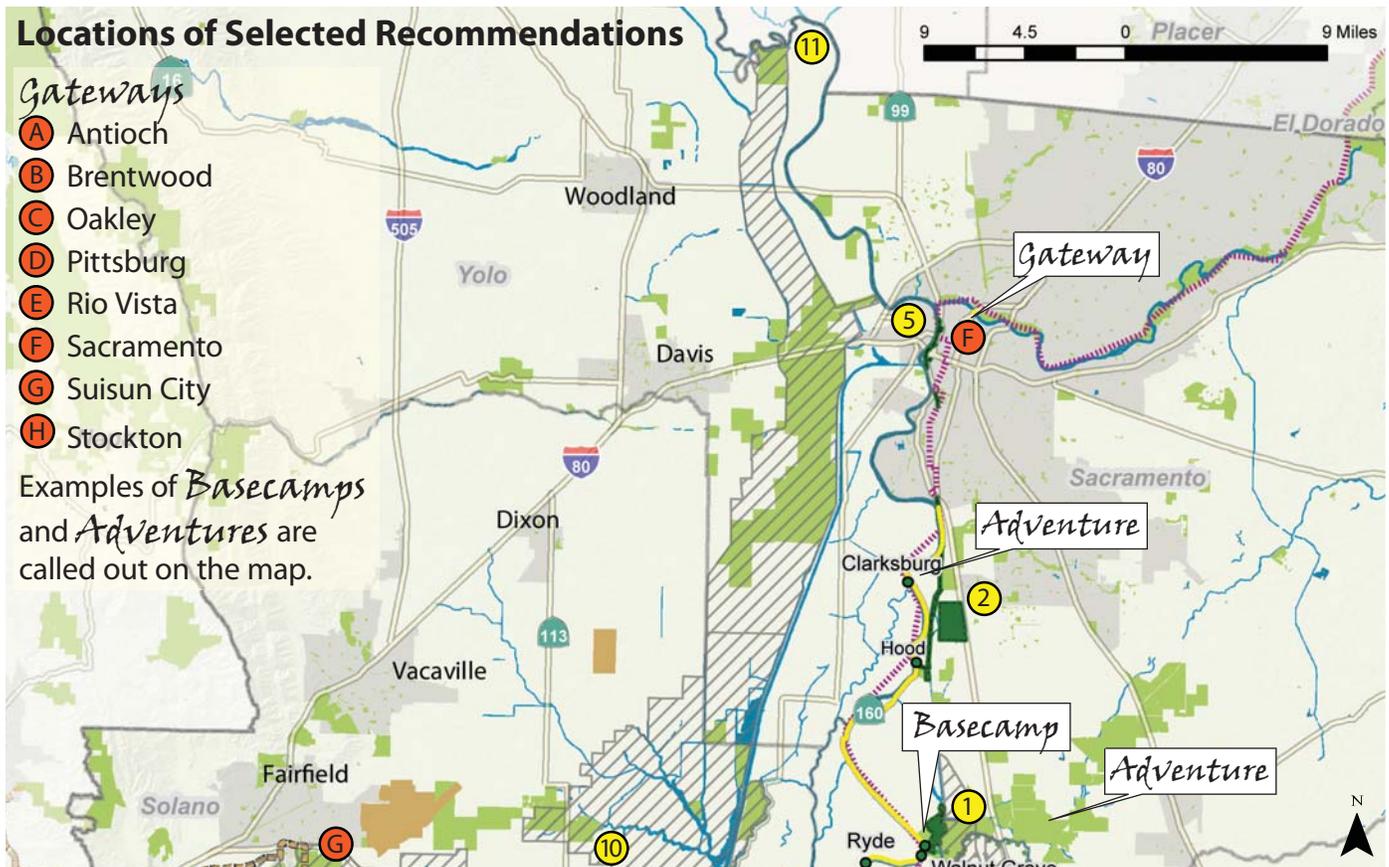
1 *Delta Meadows and Locke Boarding House.*

Complete park planning to preserve and interpret Delta natural and cultural resources and create a basecamp to explore Walnut Grove, Locke, and the Cosumnes River Preserve:

- Secure additional natural and cultural resources in the immediate vicinity.
- Develop picnic sites, trails, fishing and water trail

facilities, and, when needed, campsites.

- Partner with Caltrans, Sacramento County, and other property owners to connect recreation properties to each other, to the American Discovery Trail, and to heritage and natural resources in the area.
 - Partner with the US Bureau of Reclamation and Sacramento County to develop heritage education and interpretation for Locke, the Locke Boarding House and the Delta Cross Channel control gates.
 - Cooperate with Cosumnes River Preserve partners on recreation and environmental interpretation on McCormack-Williamson Tract, Staten Island, and other lands.
 - Partner with Locke and Walnut Grove stakeholders on special events that highlight nearby heritage and recreation resources, such as historic bridges, and buildings.
- 2 *Stone Lake.* On this park property, continue joint management as wildlife habitat:
- Partner with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and environmental organizations on environmental



interpretation programs.

- Consider connecting to the California Recreational Trails System.

③ **Brannan Island SRA.** Maintain as a basecamp to explore the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers, including Franks Tract SRA, and public lands on Twitchell, Sherman, Lower Sherman, and Decker Islands:

- Rehabilitate and expand angling, picnicking, swimming, and camping opportunities.
- Partner with central Delta stakeholders to provide visitor information on surrounding public lands and waters to explore.
- Partner with Sacramento and Solano Counties, DFG, and DBW to rehabilitate and expand boating facilities, provide water trail information, and rehabilitate and restore the windsurfing area, if feasible.
- Collaborate with Caltrans to connect park facilities to the California Recreational Trails System.
- Consider strategic partnerships to increase affordable recreation opportunities for families.
- Partner with DWR and DFG on programming and facilities to connect visitors to recreation opportunities at Decker, Twitchell, Sherman, and Lower Sherman

islands such as bank fishing, birding, hiking or bicycling on publicly-owned levees.

- ④ Explore partnerships at **Franks Tract State SRA** to increase boating, fishing, and hunting opportunities and enhance boating safety.

Existing California State Parks outside the Delta

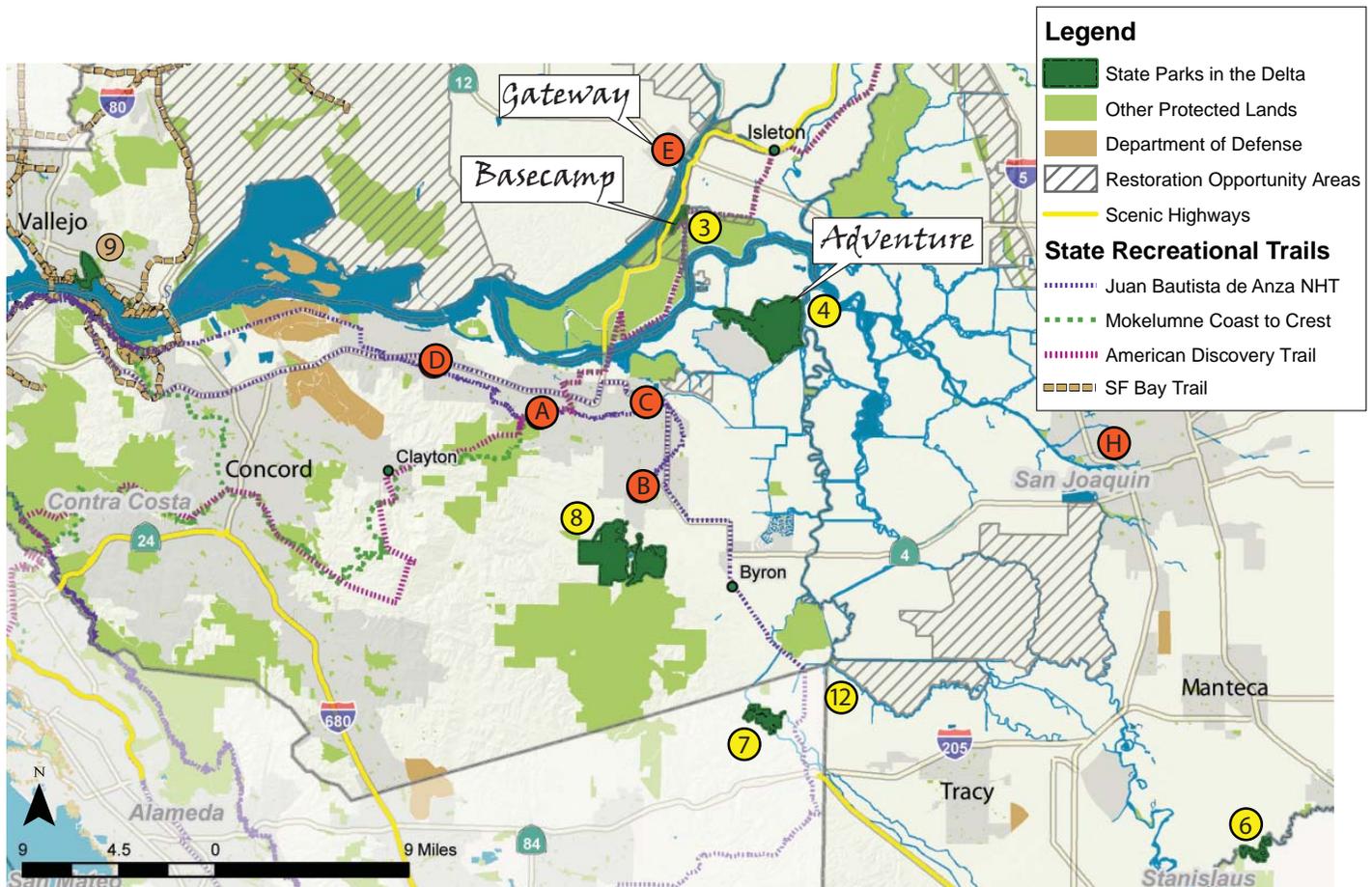
Parks outside the Delta and Suisun Marsh could potentially serve as gateways or basecamps for visitors exploring the region (see page 6).

⑤ **Old Sacramento SHP and California Indian Heritage Center:**

- Develop or enhance waterfront facilities where feasible, including excursion-boat berthing serving the Sacramento River and Delta.
- Partner with Old Sacramento stakeholders and DBW to interpret a Sacramento River water trail.
- Interpret heritage and environmental resources.
- Restore and interpret historic structures.
- Establish an excursion train and multi-use trail from the California State Railroad Museum south toward the Delta using existing railroad rights-of-way.

⑥ **Caswell Memorial SP:**

- Secure additional land for recreation facilities.





Picnicking at Caswell Memorial State Park. The group picnic area offers a shady respite from the summer heat.

- Protect, enhance, restore, and interpret this wildlife habitat.
- Increase camping, angling, and picnicking opportunities for families.
- Partner with Stanislaus County stakeholders to develop a Stanislaus River water trail extending to the confluence with the San Joaquin River.

7 Bethany Reservoir SRA:

- Partner with East Bay Regional Park District and DWR to increase picnicking, angling and camping opportunities, as well as interpretation of the State Water Project.

8 State Historic Park at John Marsh/Cowell Ranch:

- Preserve the historic John Marsh home.
- Develop campsites, picnic sites, and trails, as well as education and interpretive services.
- Connect the park to the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail, Mokelumne Coast-to-Crest Trail and the American Discovery Trail, if feasible.

9 Benicia Capitol SHP and Benicia SRA:

- Partner with Solano County stakeholders and DBW to develop water trail interpretation of the heritage, recreation and environmental resources of the Delta, Carquinez Strait, and San Francisco Bay.
- Provide information and interpretation on regional history and heritage tourism.

Potential Future State Parks in the Delta-Suisun Marsh Region

10 Barker Slough:

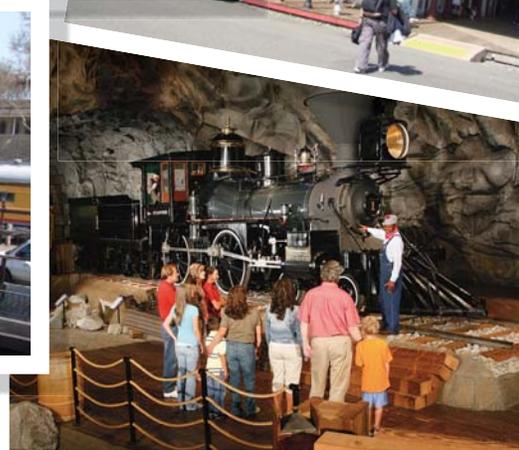
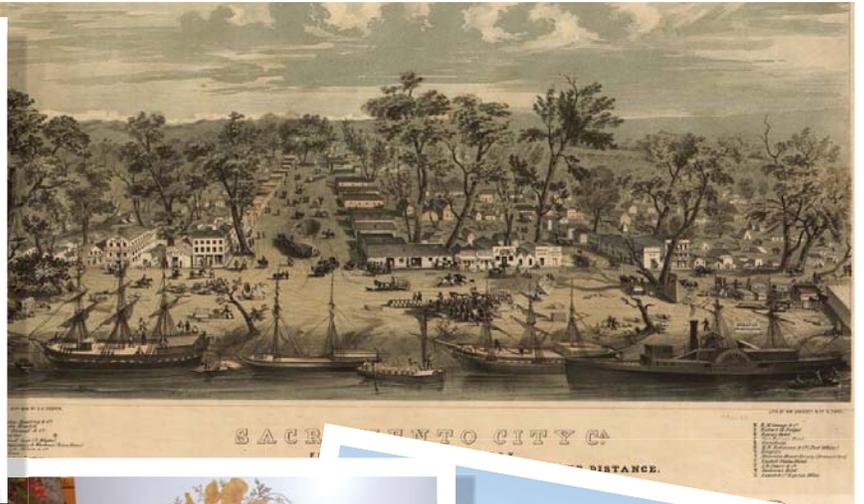
- Partner with DFG, Solano County and DBW to restore wildlife habitat and develop picnic sites, trails, facilities for kayaks and other small paddlecraft, and interpretive services.

11 Elkhorn Basin:

- Create basecamp by partnering with landowners on the Sacramento River to secure about 1,500 acres and restore habitat at this northern end of the Yolo Bypass.
- Partner with land trusts, Yolo County and others to provide campsites, picnic sites, trails, fishing, and interpretive services.

12 South Delta (possibly in the Old River area):

- Explore the potential to create a basecamp on an upland area of about 200 acres using construction spoils, and develop picnic sites, trails and education and interpretive services, and, when needed, campsites.
- Coordinate with DFG, DBW, and San Joaquin County to interpret a water trail connecting to the San Joaquin River.



Delta Days: Old Sacramento Adventure

"The horse-drawn carriage clattered over cobblestone streets past authentically-restored brick buildings full of shops on the way to the Railroad Technology Museum. A young boy pulls his mother by the hand to Old Sacramento's sunken ship exhibit, saying 'You won't believe what I saw on yesterday's Gold Rush field trip!' They stopped at a gift shop to

buy Grandpa a railroad cap, then wandered over to a waterfront restaurant for fish 'n' chips. The duo spent the afternoon at the Delta Museum, learning the history of this important region. 'Hmmm,' Mom thinks, 'maybe Dad and I will explore the Delta with Chris and Kim when they visit next month!'"

This story describes an excursion that is possible today or could be possible in the region as additional recreation opportunities are developed.

(Historic image of the City of Sacramento used with permission of the U.S. Library of Congress.)



Floating Campsite or Day-Use Area. Restored tidal wetlands in the Delta and Suisun Marsh offer extensive areas for exploration by boaters. Floating campsites (such as the one at Lake Oroville SRA shown above), toilets, and picnic sites allow necessary facilities to be placed within these sensitive, dynamic habitats. This allows visitors to spend a full day or several days in the wildest parts of the Delta and Suisun Marsh with little impact.



Hunting Programs. Boat-in waterfowl hunting could be expanded with programs to rent floating waterfowl blinds by the week, month or season in appropriate areas. Nearby parks or marinas could offer boat launching, camping or cabins, cleaning stations, refrigerated storage and provisions.

Recommendations for Other Delta State and Federal Lands

California Department of Fish and Game (DFG):

- Collaborate with agencies, non-profit partners, private landowners, and business partners to expand wildlife observation, angling, and hunting opportunities, where feasible.
- Explore recreation potential for the Cache Slough complex, including the United States Army Corps of Engineers' Little Holland Tract. Acquire flooded islands, as feasible, and develop them for environmental restoration and outdoor recreation, primarily wildlife observation, boating, fishing, and hunting. Coordinate with DWR, Yolo and Solano Counties, and landowners.
- Improve environmental interpretation of existing Wildlife Areas and Ecological Reserves, including Yolo Bypass, Suisun Marsh/ Grizzly Island, Lower Sherman Island Wildlife Areas, and Woodbridge Ecological Reserve.
- Incorporate recreation opportunities and support facilities into proposed Bay Delta Conservation Plan restoration areas, such as boat-in campsites, floating toilets, docks, and fishing piers.
- Consider partnering with Suisun City, Solano Land Trust, private duck clubs, and other organizations to provide a comprehensive ecotourism program that promotes Suisun Marsh and Bay, Amtrak, Suisun City marina, theater, and restaurants as a low-carbon safari from the San Francisco Bay Area.
- Explore the addition of recreation facilities as part of an expanded San Joaquin River floodplain at Mossdale/Vernalis.

California Department of Boating and Waterways (DBW):

- Develop, with federal, state and local agencies, a regional Water Trail plan.
- Coordinate with the US Coast Guard and state and local agencies on an updated marine patrol strategy for the region.
- Develop, with federal, state, and local agencies, a regional invasive species monitoring and prevention plan.

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans):

- Interpret historic ferries on Highway 84.
- Interpret representative types of historic bridges in the region.
- Provide several pull-outs with interpretation along scenic stretches of State Highway 160 and Interstate 5.
- Provide pull-outs with bank fishing access in several locations along State Highway 160.
- Consider incorporating bike lanes and sidewalks where feasible during State Highway 160 upgrades to facilitate traffic-separated, non-motorized travel and improve regional trails.

California Department of Water Resources (DWR):

- Open publicly-owned areas at Twitchell and Sherman Islands by providing bank fishing areas, hunting programs, levee-top trails, and environmental education.
- Consider safe recreation improvements, when feasible, at new State Water Project facilities in the Delta, such as intakes and forebays. Incorporate interpretation into proposed water infrastructure.
- Consider the addition of recreation facilities for bank fishing, windsurfing, and other appropriate activities at Clifton Court Forebay.
- Collaborate with agencies to interpret State Water Project and US Bureau of Reclamation water conveyance facilities such as the Delta Cross Channel, Banks Pumping Plant, Clifton Court Forebay and Bethany Reservoir in appropriate locations.
- Incorporate shoreline access, trails, boat ramps, and interpretive facilities where appropriate in restoration projects at Dutch Slough, McCormack-Williamson Tract, Suisun Marsh, and other sites.
- Update the California Water Plan to encourage recreation enhancement in water management activities. Provide financial and technical support to Integrated Regional Water Management groups for multi-agency projects that include enhancement of Delta and Suisun Marsh recreation.

State Lands Commission:

- Develop a strategy for managing the impact of rising seas on public and private docks and marinas in navigable waterways
- Maintain, to the extent feasible, navigable waterways.

Delta Conservancy and Coastal Conservancy:

- Collaborate with other State agencies on developing recreation opportunities in ecosystem restoration areas.
- Cooperate with Delta Protection Commission to prepare an environmental and cultural education strategy for the region.
- Collaborate with State and local agencies and businesses to promote recreation and tourism that support Delta economic sustainability.

Delta Protection Commission:

- Gain approval for, establish, and manage a National Heritage Area in the region.
- Coordinate the completion of the Great California Delta Trail.
- Collaborate with State and local agencies, business, farmers and not-for-profit organizations to enhance agritourism.

State agencies responsible for publicly-owned and -maintained levees:

- Incorporate, where feasible, recreation access for bank fishing, trails, nature observation, and hunting during levee improvement and maintenance activities.



Two recreation opportunities along levees and roads:

- **Recreation facilities on levees.** Steps and/or ramps from levee-top parking to fishing stations below offer safer access for anglers.
- **Scenic highway observation/interpretation facility.** An observation area immediately adjacent to both busy Interstate 5 and an attractive natural area could introduce hundreds of thousands of business and pleasure travelers to the Delta's unique ecosystem.

Trails Recommendations

Complete the **California Recreational Trails System** in the Delta. Connect to existing recreation land that provide facilities such as drinking water, campgrounds, and toilets. Increase promotional activities such as trail events and map distribution. Additional recommendations for individual trails:

- **The American Discovery Trail (ADT).** This system of multi-use recreational trails and roads connects the San Francisco Bay Area to the American River and beyond, ultimately extending more than 6,800 miles from coast to coast. Improve the route through the Delta by designating or constructing traffic-separated trails for hiking, bicycle, and equestrian use where feasible, and provide signage and interpretation.
- **The Mokelumne Coast-to-Crest Trail (MCCT).** This scenic, 330-mile non-motorized, multi-user trail corridor connects the Mokelumne River to the San Francisco Bay Area, often along East Bay Municipal Utility District rights of way. Improve the route through the Delta by designating or constructing traffic-separated trails for multi-use where feasible, and provide signage and interpretation.
- **The Juan Bautista De Anza National Historic Trail (Anza).** This 1,200-mile, shared-use trail and auto route traces the historical route of the Spanish pathfinder from Mexico to San Francisco. It skirts the south Delta in Contra Costa and Alameda counties, with expansive views of the Delta landscape. State and local agencies and the National Park Service should partner to improve signage and interpretation.
- **The Bay Area Ridge Trail and San Francisco Bay Trail** link Contra Costa and Solano counties across the Benicia-Martinez Bridge. Connect these popular routes to Suisun Marsh trails, Delta land and water trails, and nearby recreation lands and facilities.



Water Trails. Agencies and private interests can collaborate to create water trails on the many waterways of the Delta.

Other Major Trail Systems. Complete multi-modal trails and support facilities for the following multi-jurisdictional long-distance trails, including adding these to the California Recreational Trails System:

Great California Delta Trail:

- Cooperate with the DPC and local agencies such as East Bay

Park District to integrate the ADT, MCCT, Anza, and other land and water trails into this network.

Marsh Creek Trail:

- Complete this trail in Contra Costa County, which winds along Marsh Creek from Oakley to the state historic park at John Marsh's home in Brentwood and East Bay Regional Park District's Round Valley Regional Park.

Sacramento and San Joaquin River Water Trails:

- Organize and promote river recreation at boat-in campsites and day-use areas at existing parks and marinas. Use guidebooks, events, and the Internet.
- Collaborate with DFG, DBW, DPC, and other organizations on the development of water trail facilities.

San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail:

- Collaborate on the development of water trail interpretation at Benicia SRA to connect this trail to other proposed water trails.

California Delta Heritage Corridor:

- The California Delta Heritage Corridor would link historic Delta communities such as Rio Vista and Locke, recreation areas such as the Big Break Regional Shoreline near Oakley, wildlife and fish habitats such as Woodbridge Ecological Reserve, agritourism attractions such as "u-pick" fruit orchards and festivals, and Delta excursion boats.
- Increase support and cooperation among public agencies for resource preservation, especially if National Heritage Area status is a possibility.
- Partner with Delta stakeholders to improve amenities for visitors, such as maps, brochures, a website, multi-lingual programs, and kiosks.

Delta/Suisun Marsh Birding Trail:

- Connect the region's many Important Bird Areas (as designated by Audubon California) with an auto route. Partner with Delta stakeholders to connect and interpret sites such as Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area, Woodbridge Ecological Reserve, Cosumnes River Preserve, Stone Lakes Area, Jepson Grasslands, Suisun Marsh, Benicia SRA, and Concord Marshes.

Proposed National Heritage Area. A National Heritage Area is a place designated by the US Congress where natural, cultural, historic and recreational resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally-distinctive landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography. The DPC should continue to pursue this designation.



Heritage Landmarks. Walnut Grove is just one of the legacy towns that will benefit from the creation of a National Heritage Area.



Economic Activity in the Delta. *The purchase of equipment and supplies for day outings helps support local economies.*

Visitor spending in the Delta and Suisun Marsh counties' recreation, art, and entertainment sectors is about \$784 million annually, generating almost \$388.7 million in earnings and supporting over 15,000 jobs. About one in six of these jobs are in the Delta, according to a recent study.

Sacramento County benefits most from travel spending, followed by Contra Costa and Solano counties. The sector's impact in San Joaquin and Yolo counties is smaller.

(Photo by Bill Wells, www.californiadelta.org)

Economic Outcomes. Recreation and tourism contribute significantly to the Delta and Suisun Marsh region's economy. Benefits come from spending on recreation activities, supplies, equipment, and services; the jobs created in recreation and tourism businesses; land management agencies' payrolls; and sales and tax revenues that provide public benefits.

Spending varies by activity. Recreationists' spending differs along with their activities. For example:

- **Recreationists enjoying a day with family and friends at state parks** similar to Brannan Island State Recreation Area spend about \$16 daily, with 58 percent spent in the park and surrounding communities and 42 percent spent more than 25 miles away while traveling to and from the park. About 41 percent was spent on groceries and other supplies, 8 percent on equipment rentals and tours, 6 percent at restaurants, and 43 percent on gasoline and transportation.
- **Bicyclists** spend about \$11 per day of recreation, about \$24 annually for recreation services, and about \$167 annually for equipment.
- **Boating.** Boaters spend \$32 to \$42 per day. Non-motorized boaters spent about \$50 annually for recreation services, and about \$60 annually for equipment. Motor boaters spend even more.
- **Camping overnight** increases visitors' spending. At state parks similar to Brannan Island SRA, campers spend about \$52 daily, with 40 percent spent in the park and surrounding communities and 60 percent spent traveling to and from the park. About 45 percent was spent on groceries and other supplies, 9 percent on equipment rentals and tours, 3 percent at restaurants, 30 percent on gasoline and transportation, and 5 percent on overnight lodging expenses.
- **Nature-based recreation** also generates significant expenditures. Average expenditures for a day of wildlife watching are \$44 per person. Anglers spend about \$62 for a day's recreation, and about \$700 on equipment annually. High quality experiences receive a premium, with expenditures for Central Valley salmon fishing estimated at \$140 per fish. Hunters spend about \$68 per day, and over \$2,000 annually on equipment.
- **Cultural tourists**, especially the affluent and well-educated, spend more than other recreationists, spending an average of

\$994 per trip. Visitors spending a day at a state historic park spend about \$34 daily, with 41 percent spent in the park and surrounding communities and 59 percent spent traveling to and from the park. About 19 percent was spent on groceries and other supplies, 7 percent on equipment rentals and tours, 24 percent at restaurants, 27 percent on gasoline and transportation, and 23 percent on overnight lodging expenses. Visitors to agritourism sites typically spend \$10 to \$15 per visit, with winery visitors often spending \$12-\$15 more per visit.

Ways to increase spending. As the population of the Delta and Suisun Marsh region grows, demand for outdoor recreation also will grow. Ways to increase recreation's economic contribution to the area include:

- Improving and promoting outdoor recreation can increase residents' outdoor recreation spending within the region, rather than at other destinations, and attract additional visitors from the expanding populations of other parts of the San Francisco Bay Area, the Central Valley, and other areas.
- Increasing the variety of outdoor recreation available can broaden recreation and tourism spending in the area and attract visitors with diverse interests, responding to the increase in ethnic diversity. Variety also encourages visitors to stay longer, experience additional activities, convert lower cost day trips into overnight visits, or add additional days to a visit.
- Offering a mix of affordable and higher cost recreation can attract both area residents and visitors from the Central Valley and San Francisco Bay Area, as well as other areas.
- Increasing opportunities for increased visitor spending in the region on items that travelers might otherwise purchase near their homes (for example, recreation supplies and equipment) can shift visitor expenditures into the Delta and Suisun Marsh region's gateway communities.
- Enhancing and promoting scenic highways and multiuse trails can draw visitors deep into the heart of the Delta and Suisun Marsh, creating additional opportunities for those providing recreational services, such as equipment rentals, dining, groceries, tours, and other guided experiences.



Economic Activity in the Delta. A mix of affordable and higher cost recreation can appeal to residents and visitors alike.

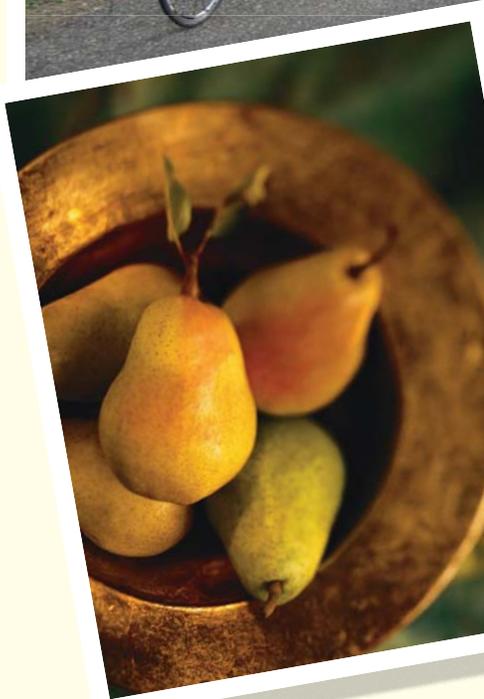


Ryde Hotel, Walnut Grove. Built in 1927 at the height of Prohibition, the hotel has been remodeled but retains much of its historic character.

Quality-of-life Outcomes. Recreation and tourism also contribute to the region's quality of life, enhancing its reputation as a good place to live, work, and do business:

- Parks and other open spaces have a positive effect on nearby residential property values, enhancing marketability and leading to proportionately higher property tax revenues for local governments.
- Flood damage cost is reduced on lands used as parks or open space rather than for development. These open spaces can also reduce the cost of protecting water quality.
- Recreation areas encourage healthy outdoor activity, such as walking or bicycling, promoting human health and reducing residents' medical costs through exercise.
- Recreation enhances the reputation of the Delta-Suisun Marsh region, branding it as an area of fun, beauty, and opportunity. Visitors, and the marketing and promotional efforts of the area's recreation agencies and tourism businesses, transmit this "brand" far beyond the region, aiding the area's efforts to distinguish itself from its competitors for businesses, customers, residents, and jobs.

This plan's recommendations were developed with consideration for all these contributions of recreation and tourism to the Delta and Suisun Marsh region's economy.



Delta Days: Biking Excursion

*Biking with friends on the Great California Delta Trail reveals the multi-dimensional West Delta. Watch massive ships from Singapore on their way to the Port, race long freight trains full of Valley rice and photograph tall smokestacks marking power plants and factories that appeal to the *kojo moe* (“factory lovers”). Antioch Dunes and Big Break Shoreline*

reveal the pre-industrial landscape, home to plants and wildlife that evolved in this dynamic landscape. Explore the Anza trail route of early Spanish explorers, buy juicy cherries from a roadside stand, then watch the sunset while noshing sturgeon enchiladas on the waterfront.

This story describes an excursion that is possible today or could be possible in the region as additional recreation opportunities are developed.

Conclusion



Delta Marina. *The contributions of many partners will help realize the vision for recreation described in this proposal.*

The Delta and Suisun Marsh offer outstanding outdoor recreation opportunities. Residents and visitors can play and relax on the region's waters and shorelines, enjoy nature through wildlife observation, fishing, or hunting, and learn about the region's history and culture at historic towns, farms, museums, and festivals. Millions of Californians and travelers are looking for these outdoor adventures.

Opportunities for recreation will change as the region's landscape evolves in response to current trends and new water management and ecosystem restoration initiatives. Improving public and private recreation facilities and services in communities on the edge of the Delta and Suisun Marsh and connecting them with destinations inside the region will expand residents' and visitors' opportunities. Recreation and tourism can also help sustain the region's economy and enhance its quality of life.

This report's proposals may remain just a glittering vision, however, without new funds for recreation improvements and services. Current state law, Public Resources Code Sections 11912 and 11913, provides that the general fund should support recreation associated with the State Water Project, rather than pass recreation's costs on to the project's water and power beneficiaries. Appropriations from the general fund, however, have dropped steadily, and are inadequate to operate and maintain the state's existing recreation improvements. Increases in this funding are unlikely in the foreseeable future. The water bond currently scheduled for a 2012 vote, the Safe, Clean and Reliable Drinking Water Supply Act, includes no funds for recreation in the Delta and Suisun Marsh. The Delta Reform Act establishes a Delta Investment Fund to implement the Economic Sustainability Plan that this proposal supports, but a source of funds for it remains unspecified.

For Californians to enjoy the recreation opportunities of the Delta and Suisun Marsh, the arrangements for funding recreation will need upgrading along with the Delta's water supply facilities and ecosystem. As the master plan for the region is completed, provisions to adequately fund recreation will be essential to attain the Delta and Suisun Marsh's full potential.

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**Recreation Proposal for the
Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and Suisun Marsh**

Created in response to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Reform Act of 2009 and SBx7 1, which amended and added to the Public Resources Code.

Submitted to the Delta Stewardship Council
and the Delta Protection Commission



California State Parks
Planning Division
