

Delta Vision

Context Memorandum: Recreation

This context memorandum provides critical information about recreation to support policy making. As they are developed, the context memos will create a common understanding and language about the critical factors in establishing a Delta Vision.

This is an iterative process and this document represents the beginning of a dialogue with you about how best to understand recreation and to inform recommendations by the Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force. You have two weeks to submit comments that may be incorporated into the next iteration.

You may submit your comments in two ways: either online at dv_context@calwater.ca.gov or by mail. If you are using mail, please send your comments to: Delta Vision Context Memo: Recreation, 650 Capitol Mall, 5th Floor, Sacramento, CA 95814.

Your attributed comment will be posted on the Delta Vision web site (<http://www.deltavision.ca.gov>). Please cite page and line number with specific comments; general comments may be keyed to sections.

Your participation in this iterative process is valuable and important and is greatly appreciated. Thank you for your comments.

Context Memorandum: Recreation

Iteration 1: June 12, 2007

1 Section 1. Background

2
3 **Recreation Opportunities in the Delta.** The Delta provides a wide range of
4 recreational opportunities, including fishing, hunting, boating, camping, picnicking, and
5 nature viewing. With approximately 700 miles of navigable channels, it is one of the
6 largest waterway complexes in the western United States.ⁱ For boaters, the Delta offers
7 a mix of broad, open channels suitable for water skiing and pleasure cruising, and
8 smaller meandering channels, cloaked in riparian vegetation, ideally suited to house
9 boating, swimming, and secluded picnics. The Delta provides world-renowned hunting,
10 fishing, and nature viewing opportunities. The Pacific Flyway passes directly over the
11 Delta. Waterways and islands provide habitat for 230 species of birds, 45 species of
12 mammals, 52 species of fish, 25 species of reptiles and amphibians, and 150 species of
13 flowering plants.ⁱⁱ The Suisun Marsh, the largest contiguous brackish water marsh
14 remaining on the west coast, is home to 158 private duck clubs and a number of public
15 waterfowl hunting areas, including the Grizzly Island Wildlife Area.ⁱⁱⁱ The marsh also
16 supports 80% of the state's commercial and recreational salmon fishery by providing
17 important tidal rearing areas for juvenile fish.^{iv}

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19 **Recreation Visitor and User Days.** The Delta's proximity to the Bay Area and
20 Sacramento region and its diversity of recreation settings and experiences makes it a
21 popular recreation destination. Approximately 7 million people currently visit the Delta
22 for recreation annually.^v By 2020, visitation is forecasted to reach 8 million visitor days.^{vi}
23 According to a 1996 survey of recreation in the Delta conducted by the Department of
24 Parks and Recreation (DPR), 23.5% of registered boat owners and 23.0% of licensed
25 anglers in California recreated in the Delta in 1995.^{vii} The majority of Delta boaters and
26 anglers come from nearby counties, but a sizable fraction come from much further
27 distances. In 1995 Los Angeles County alone accounted for 7.3% and 3.6% of Delta
28 boater and angler user days, respectively. Table 1 lists the top 10 counties of origin for
29 Delta boating and fishing recreation.^{viii}

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31 **Table 1: Top 10 Counties of Origin for Delta Boating and Fishing Recreation**

RANK	BOATERS	PERCENT	RANK	ANGLERS	PERCENT
1	Contra Costa	12.5	1	Sacramento	10.7
2	Sacramento	9.9	2	San Joaquin	10.0
3	Alameda	8.6	3	Alameda	8.0
4	Santa Clara	7.9	4	Santa Clara	8.0
5	Los Angeles	7.3	5	Solano	7.6
6	San Joaquin	6.9	6	San Mateo	3.8
7	Stanislaus	3.7	7	Placer	3.6
8	Marin	3.4	8	Lost Angeles	3.6
9	Solano	3.1	9	Stanislaus	3.1
10	San Mateo	3.0	10	Sonoma	2.0
	Subtotal	66.3		Subtotal	60.4

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Context Memorandum: Recreation

Iteration 1: June 12, 2007

1 People recreating in the Delta typically engage in more than one recreational
2 activity. In recreational surveying, a user-day is counted for each activity a visitor
3 participates in over the course of a day. Thus if a person visiting the Delta spent part of
4 the day fishing and part of the day pleasure cruising, that would be counted as two user
5 days of recreational activity. Surveys show that the Delta currently supports over 12
6 million user days of recreational activity annually.^{ix} Table 2 shows the estimated number
7 of user days occurring in the Delta, as derived from surveys of boaters and anglers.^x

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Table 2: Estimated Delta Boating and Fishing User Days

ACTIVITY	ESTIMATED NO. OF GROUPS	AVG. NO. OF DAYS PER YEAR	TOTAL GROUP DAYS	AVG. NO. OF PERSONS PER TRIP	ESTIMATED TOTAL USER DAYS PER YEAR
Boating	186,000	26.1	4,854,600	2.97	14,418,162
Fishing	169,200	24.0	4,060,800	2.91	11,816,928

*User day estimates for boating and fishing cannot be added together because this would result in double counting. Double counting would occur because most boaters also fished and many anglers also boated.

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Popular Delta Recreation Activities. The 1996 DPR survey found that fishing from a boat was the number one recreational activity in the Delta among registered boat owners and licensed anglers. The majority of surveyed boat owners also reported using the Delta for pleasure cruising, swimming, and water skiing. Among licensed anglers, shore fishing and tournament fishing were also popular. Table 3 shows the most common boating and fishing activities reported by Delta boaters and anglers.^{xi} The table also shows the top ten recreation activities after boating and fishing that survey respondents reported enjoying in the Delta. Because the DPR survey only included boat owners and anglers, survey results most likely under-represent the popularity of non-boating and non-fishing activities in the Delta, such as wildlife viewing, picnicking, land-based hunting, and hiking. Nonetheless, the Delta is primarily known as a boating and fishing recreation destination, and these two recreation activities account for the majority of recreation activity occurring in the Delta.

Delta Recreation Facilities. Most recreation facilities in the Delta are provided by private marinas. There are approximately 100 marinas in the Delta and over 11,000 boat berths.^{xii} As previously mentioned, the Suisun Marsh is home to 158 private duck clubs. There are an additional 19 private duck clubs in the rest of the Delta, mainly northwest of the Sacramento Deep Water Channel.^{xiii}

There are 22 publicly owned recreation areas in the Legal Delta (Primary and Secondary Zones). These include federal, State, county, city, land trust, and port-run facilities. Additional public lands are also reserved for wildlife protection and preservation.^{xiv} Public facilities include the Brannan Island State Recreation Area (SRA), the Grizzly Island Wildlife Area, five DFG fishing access/launching facilities managed by

Context Memorandum: Recreation

Iteration 1: June 12, 2007

1 Sacramento and Yolo Counties, and the FWS Stone Lakes Refuge. There are also
 2 public recreation facilities operated by the East Bay Regional Park District, San Joaquin
 3 County, and DWR, as well as a number of cities, including Antioch, Pittsburg, Rio Vista,
 4 West Sacramento, Sacramento, and Stockton.

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6 Figure 1 shows the location of public and private recreation locations in the Delta.

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8 **Table 3: Favorite Recreation Activities Among Delta Boaters and Anglers**

MAJOR BOATING AND FISHING ACTIVITIES					
RANK	BOATERS	PERCENT	RANK	ANGLERS	PERCENT
1	Fishing from boat	77	1	Fishing from boat	88
2	Cruising	76	2	Fishing from shore	74
3	Swimming from boat	71	3	Fishing in tournament	14
4	Water skiing	61			
5	Sleeping in boat	49			
6	Sailing	15			
7	Hunting from boat	5			

TOP TEN ACTIVITIES AFTER BOATING AND FISHING					
RANK	BOATERS	PERCENT	RANK	ANGLERS	PERCENT
1	Sightseeing	45	1	Sightseeing	52
2	Viewing wildlife	41	2	Boating	49
3	Fishing from shore	40	3	Viewing wildlife	49
4	Picnicking	34	4	Swimming	40
5	Hiking	32	5	Hiking	39
6	Swimming from shore	30	6	Picnicking	37
7	Attend special events	28	7	Nature photography	25
8	Nature photography	21	8	Attend special events	25
9	RV camping	20	9	RV camping	23
10	Visit historical/cultural sites	18	10	Visit historical/cultural sites	23

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10 **Delta Recreation Zones.** Different parts of the Delta support and concentrate
 11 different types of recreational activity. Boating is concentrated in the western and central
 12 parts while hunting and wildlife viewing are concentrated in the Suisun Marsh and areas
 13 in and around the Yolo bypass. The DPR survey divided the Delta into six recreation
 14 zones, shown in Figure 2, as follows:

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- 16 ▪ North Delta (Zone A)
- 17 ▪ Northwest Delta (Zone B)
- 18 ▪ Central Delta (Zone C)
- 19 ▪ West Delta (Zone D)
- 20 ▪ East Delta (Zone E)
- 21 ▪ South Delta (Zone F)

Context Memorandum: Recreation

Iteration 1: June 12, 2007

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The Suisun Marsh was not part of the DPR survey and is not included in this classification, so it can be considered the seventh Delta recreation zone.

The Delta’s recreation zones vary greatly in terms of the quality and character of the resource, their relative size, the number of existing navigable waterways, the number of facilities, and the number of expected users. The Department of Boating and Waterways (DBW) described the features of the six DPR zones as follows.^{xv}

North Delta (Zone A). The North Delta encompasses the most northern reach of the Delta. It consists of the Sacramento River corridor from the cities of Sacramento and West Sacramento to the town of Courtland. It includes portions of Elk Slough and the northern extension of the Deep Water Shipping Canal, Lake Washington, and the Sacramento Water Lock. The estimated 2,617 acres of water surface in the zone translates to approximately 61 linear miles of navigable channels. The majority of these miles are in the Sacramento River corridor (31 miles), the Shipping Canal (9 miles), and Elk Slough (9 miles), with the remainder found along Steamboat Slough (12 miles). The inventory of recreation-related facilities in this zone includes approximately 20 facilities with eight located in Yolo County. The remaining facilities are in Sacramento County. There are eight marinas in this zone, providing a total of 988 boat slips.

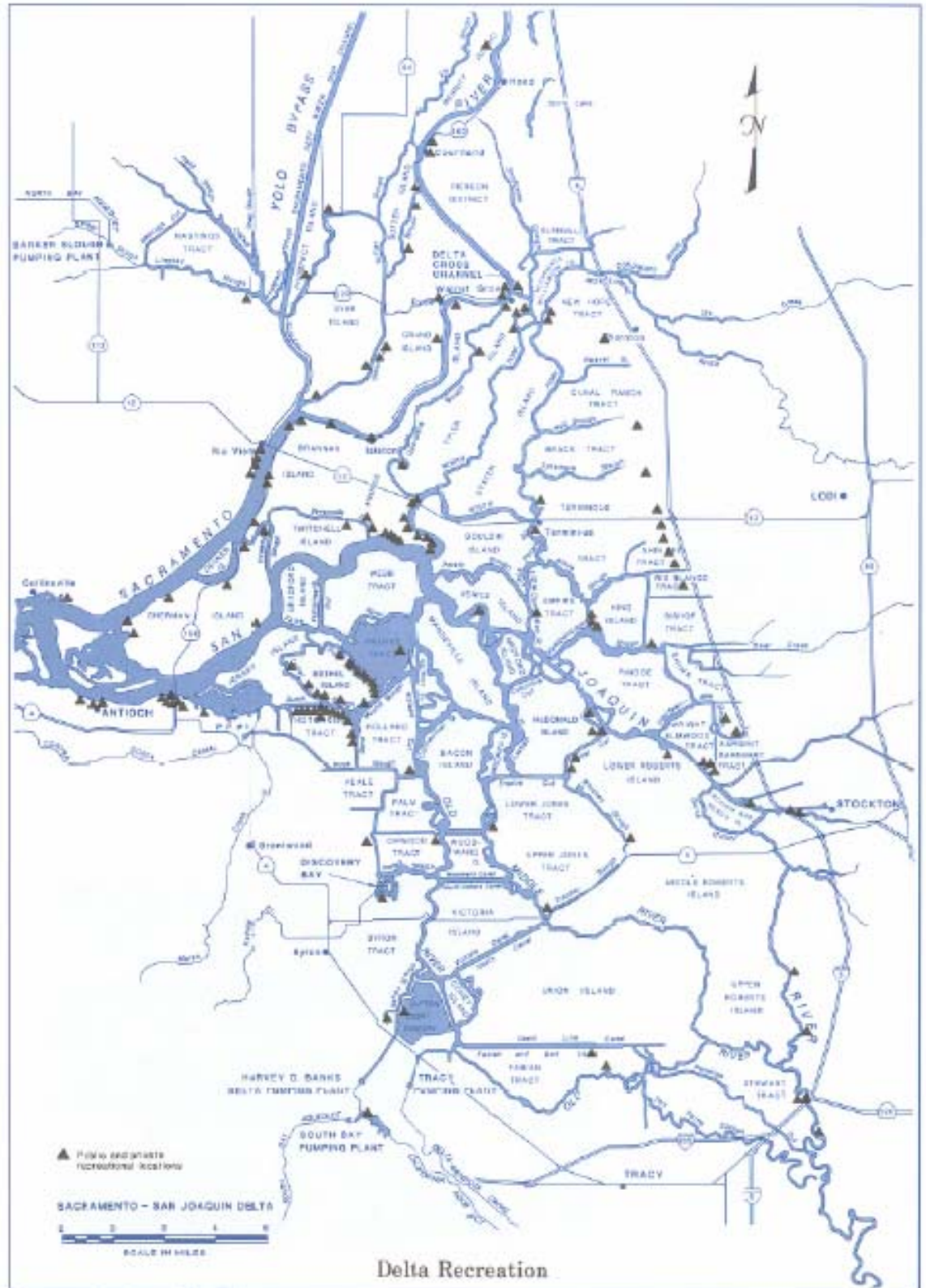
Features of this zone include Discovery Park, (a Sacramento County regional water-oriented park), frontage along Old Town Sacramento (a State Historic Park), Raley Field (home of the River Cats, an AAA baseball team), the West Sacramento Waterfront Promenade, upscale residential development in the Pocket Area, remnant fruit packing and shipping facilities along the Sacramento River, the Clarksburg public boat ramp (operated by Yolo County), and the Stone Lakes National Wildlife Preserve. Much of the levee system along the Sacramento River and Elk Slough has “naturalized,” with stands of cottonwood, alder, valley oak, box elder, and willow providing a scenic edge for water-based views. The North Zone could be considered the Sacramento region’s gateway to the Delta. The stretch of the Sacramento River in this zone is an intensively used artery linking the lower Delta with the Old Sacramento vicinity and navigable waters upstream on the American and Sacramento Rivers.

Context Memorandum: Recreation

Iteration 1: June 12, 2007

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Figure 1: Recreation Sites in the Delta



Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Atlas

Department of Water Resources

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Context Memorandum: Recreation

Iteration 1: June 12, 2007

1 navigable miles is along the Shipping Canal (18 miles). The remainder of navigable
2 miles is found within the shallow waters along Cache Slough and the adjoining channels
3 in the Cache Slough system. The Yolo Bypass is the dominant element in this zone. The
4 Yolo Bypass provides peak-flow flood area for the Sacramento River during the high-
5 flow periods, allowing the floodwater to flow directly to the lower Delta. The zone is
6 notable for extensive natural and restored habitat areas, including segments of Cache
7 Slough, portions of Liberty and Prospect Islands, and the Vic Fazio Yolo Basin Wildlife
8 area. This zone has relatively limited navigable waterways and minimal boating-related
9 facilities. Drainages from Putah Creek, Willow Slough, and Haas Slough support
10 additional natural habitat areas. The primary recreation uses in the Northwest Zone are
11 waterfowl hunting and wildlife viewing, with some fishing at the southern end of the zone.
12 There are also a number of bike trails located in this zone. Although there are several
13 recreation-serving facilities in this zone, these facilities primarily serve land-based
14 activities, including duck hunting and wildlife viewing. There is only one marina facility in
15 the Northwest Zone. It provides 76 boat slips.

16
17 Central Delta (Zone C). The Central Delta encompasses the north central part of the
18 Delta. It includes portions of the Sacramento River, Miner Slough, Steamboat Slough,
19 Sutter's Slough, Georgiana Slough, the north and south forks of the Mokelumne River,
20 the Delta Cross Channel, Snodgrass and Lost Slough, and Beaver, Hog, and Sycamore
21 Sloughs. The city of Rio Vista and the unincorporated communities of Courtland, Walnut
22 Grove, Locke, Terminous, and Isleton are situated within this zone. To the east of this
23 zone are the cities of Galt, Woodbridge, and Lodi. The estimated 5,552 acres of water
24 surface in the Central Zone includes an extensive system of approximately 132 linear
25 miles of navigable channels. The majority of these miles are along the Mokelumne River
26 corridor (North and South – 36 miles), the Sacramento River corridor (23 miles),
27 Steamboat Slough (13 miles), Georgiana (12 miles), and Snodgrass (9 miles). In some
28 instances, as with the Georgiana Slough and North Mokelumne River, the waterways
29 form circular loops for multi-route options. There are 12 marina facilities in this zone
30 providing an estimated 1,271 boating slips. Additionally, there are numerous boating-
31 associated facilities in this zone, including boat-accessed restaurants, resorts, and yacht
32 clubs. The Consumnes River Preserve, the McCormack Tract, and the Delta Meadows
33 (a California Department of Parks and Recreation facility) offer some of the most
34 attractive natural areas with designated anchorages. These are also popular kayaking
35 destinations. Sandy Beach Park is located on the Sacramento River near the town of Rio
36 Vista. Open year round, the park offers a 24-hour boat-launching ramp, camp sites,
37 picnic grounds, a hiking trail, miles of country roads for bicycling and a sandy beach
38 stretching for over half a mile. Walnut Grove has developed a public dock to enable
39 access to the community. The primary recreation uses in the Central Zone include boat
40 cruising, fishing, water-skiing, boat camping, and sailing. Much of the levee system in

Context Memorandum: Recreation

Iteration 1: June 12, 2007

1 this zone has been engineered with stone or rock slope protection, thereby creating a
2 sterile appearance for the waterside environment.

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4 West Delta (Zone D). The West Delta encompasses the western limits of the Delta
5 and serves as the gateway to the San Pablo and San Francisco Bays to the west. The
6 West Zone includes the lower Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers. The highest
7 concentration of marina facilities is located in this zone, as well as the greatest number
8 of boats on the water. The channels tend to be broad in this zone and contain the largest
9 ratio of water surface area compared with land surface, especially towards the western
10 limits of the zone. The estimated 29,522 acres of navigable water surface in this zone
11 includes approximately 152 linear miles of navigable channels. To a large extent, these
12 miles occur within the main flow of the Sacramento River (22 miles), the San Joaquin
13 River (28 miles), and Old River (14 miles). There are also many waterway connector
14 channels linking the larger water bodies. The cities of Pittsburg, Antioch, Oakley, Byron,
15 and Brentwood adjoin the zone, while the unincorporated community of Bethel Island is
16 located entirely within the zone. Besides the lower reaches of the Sacramento and San
17 Joaquin Rivers, this zone includes Old River and Middle River, as well as numerous
18 minor channels and sloughs. A unique feature of the West Zone is the many inundated
19 islands that have expanded the extent of water area and, in some instances, the range
20 of navigable areas. These inundated islands include, Franks Tract SRA, Little Franks
21 Tract, Lower Sherman Island, and Mildred Island. The extensive navigable waterways
22 include many channels sufficiently wide for larger boats and sailing vessels. The West
23 Zone offers unique microclimate conditions that enable some of the best year-round
24 conditions for windsurfing, sail-boarding, and sailing. These same winds tend to limit the
25 amount of water-skiing and wakeboarding in the area, since participants in these
26 activities typically prefer calm conditions. Because the West Zone is the primary
27 transition area between the saline Bay waters and the fresh Delta waters, it is known to
28 attract an abundance and diversity of fish, including striped and black bass, sturgeon,
29 salmon, bluegill, and crappie. Other unique features of this zone include Brannan Island
30 SRA, which includes Windy Cove day use access, public boat ramps, and over 140
31 campsites and areas for picnicking and swimming; Bethel Island (with the single highest
32 concentration of boating-related facilities in the Delta); and Lower Sherman Island (a
33 Sacramento County water-access area).^{xvi} There are 56 marina facilities in this zone,
34 providing approximately 5,990 boat slips. Similar to the Central Zone, there are
35 numerous boating-associated facilities in this zone. Also, like the Central Zone, the levee
36 system in the West Zone has typically been engineered with stone or rock slope
37 protection, creating a sterile appearance from the waterside environment.

38
39 East Delta (Zone E). The East Delta makes up the southeastern portion of the Delta.
40 Bordered by State Route 12 on the north, Interstate 5 on the east, State Route 4 on the
41 south, and a north-south line from Route 4 to Route 12 on the west, the estimated 7,560

Context Memorandum: Recreation

Iteration 1: June 12, 2007

1 acres of water surface in the East Zone includes approximately 122 linear miles of
2 navigable channels. This zone contains the Delta Loop, a 10-mile scenic loop accessible
3 by boat or car. The largest segments of these navigable miles are found along the main
4 channel of the San Joaquin River (19 miles) and the Middle River (24 miles). The city of
5 Stockton is the source for a significant number of users, as well as the economic hub
6 that links agricultural, shipping, and recreation activities in the general vicinity. The San
7 Joaquin River Shipping Canal traverses this zone from the northwest to the southeast.
8 The Middle River also flows through this zone. Besides the main river flows, there are
9 numerous channels and sloughs that define some of the higher-elevation islands, and
10 dead-end sloughs that generally run easterly along the eastern border of the zone. The
11 East Zone is considered a superior shore fishing area with many accessible connecting
12 and dead-ended sloughs. It includes a number of private yacht club facilities – typically
13 situated on vegetated islands along the larger channels. Mildred Island, a submerged
14 island adjoining Middle River, has characteristics similar to Franks Tract SRA, with
15 marginally navigable waters but reportedly very good fishing conditions. There are 13
16 marina facilities in the East Zone, offering 2,786 boating slips.

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18 South Delta (Zone F). The South Delta encompasses the southern extent of the
19 Delta. This area is bordered by State Route 4 to the north, Interstate 5 to the east, the
20 Southern Pacific Railroad easement on the west side, and Interstate 205 to the south.
21 The estimated 5,135 navigable acres of water surface in the South Zone includes
22 approximately 110 linear miles of navigable channels. The majority of these miles are
23 along the main channel of the San Joaquin River (15 miles), Middle River (24 miles), Old
24 River (42 miles), Victoria Slough (12 miles), Woodward Slough (4 miles), and the
25 navigable portions of Discovery Bay. The Clifton Court Forebay, the California Water
26 Project's primary collection reservoir, is located in this zone. Discovery Bay, a water-
27 oriented, residential development, where most houses front the water and have docks
28 and boat slips, is located off of Old River and east of the community of Brentwood.
29 Situated on the lee side of the Diablo Range, this portion of the Delta tends to be the
30 most sheltered in terms of wind exposure. This area tends to attract boaters drawn to
31 quieter waters and engaged in activities such as water-skiing and fishing. There are
32 presently five marina facilities in the South Zone, with approximately 563 boat slips
33 provided. Old River, portions of Middle River, and the main San Joaquin channel flow
34 through this zone. Because of the intake facility near Clifton Court Forebay, water flows
35 are heavily regulated in this part of the Delta. Also, many of the channels in this zone
36 have become impassable due to snags and vegetation encroachment. There are fewer
37 boating and water-associated facilities in this zone in comparison to the adjoining zones
38 to the north. Urban pressures are significant in this zone, with residential developments
39 moving closer to the legal Delta Zone. The rapid population increases in residential
40 pockets, such as Discovery Bay and the adjoining cities of Tracy, Byron, and Brentwood,

Context Memorandum: Recreation

Iteration 1: June 12, 2007

1 suggests increased pressure on this part of the Delta for accommodating future
2 recreation needs.

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4 Table 4 provides a summary of characteristics and recreation features for each zone
5 described above.^{xvii}

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7 Figure 3 shows the distribution of user days by recreation zone for (1) all boating
8 activities, (2) fishing from a boat, and (3) fishing from the shore.^{xviii} The highest levels of
9 use for each activity occurs in the West Delta (Zone D), followed by the Central and East
10 Delta (Zones C and E). The least amount of boating and fishing activity occurs in the
11 Northwest Delta (Zone B).

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13 Suisun Marsh. There is a scarcity of data on recreation occurring within the Suisun
14 Marsh. It is a popular destination for waterfowl and game hunting, as well as fishing and
15 wildlife viewing. It is also used extensively for dog training. Estimated recreation user-
16 days by activity for Suisun Marsh are based on unpublished July 2005 to June 2006
17 visitor data for the Grizzly Island Wildlife Complex operated by Department of Fish and
18 Game. These data were obtained during a telephone communication with the manager
19 of the Grizzly Island Wildlife Complex, Pat Graham, on November 16, 2006. Mr. Graham
20 used attendance records for the complex to estimate user-days by activity. He also
21 provided the approximate percentage of total Suisun Marsh recreation this represented.
22 The estimates are presented in Table 5.

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Context Memorandum: Recreation

Iteration 1: June 12, 2007

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Table 4: Delta Recreation Zone Characteristics

	North	Northwest	Central	West	East	South	Total
Total Water Surface (acres)	3,145	7,545	5,915	29,995	7,940	5,255	59,795
Navigable Water Surface (acres)	2,617	7,190	5,552	29,522	7,560	5,135	57,576
Navigable Surface Area (sq. miles)	4.1	11.2	8.7	46.1	11.8	8.0	89.9
Linear Miles of Navigable Waterways	61	58	132	152	122	110	635
Number of Marinas*	8	1	12	56	13	5	95
Boat Slips*	988	76	1,271	5,990	2,786	563	11,674
Water Features	Major channels provide linkages to other zones, city of Sacramento	Yolo Bypass: flood structure, shipping canal, and extensive tidal margin lands	Many navigable channels – some circular – the Delta Cross-Channel	Gateway to San Pablo and San Francisco Bays, many inundated islands	Numerous main river flows, channels, channel islands, sloughs, city of Stockton	Sheltered & quiet waters, Clifton Court Forebay, regulated water flows, many congested channels	
Typical Types of Recreation	Cruising, fishing, and channel exploring	Mostly land-based hunting and wildlife viewing	Cruising, fishing, water-skiing, camping, sailing	Wind-surfing, sailing, fishing	Fishing, sailing	Water-skiing, wake-boarding, fishing	
Unique Characteristics	Discovery Park, Old Sacramento, Stone Lakes Wildlife Preserve	Extensive natural and restored habitat areas	Consumnes River Preserve, Delta Meadows	Brannan Island, Bethel Island, Big Break Interpretive area	Mildred Island, several yacht clubs	Discovery Bay, many areas sheltered from wind by Diablo Range	

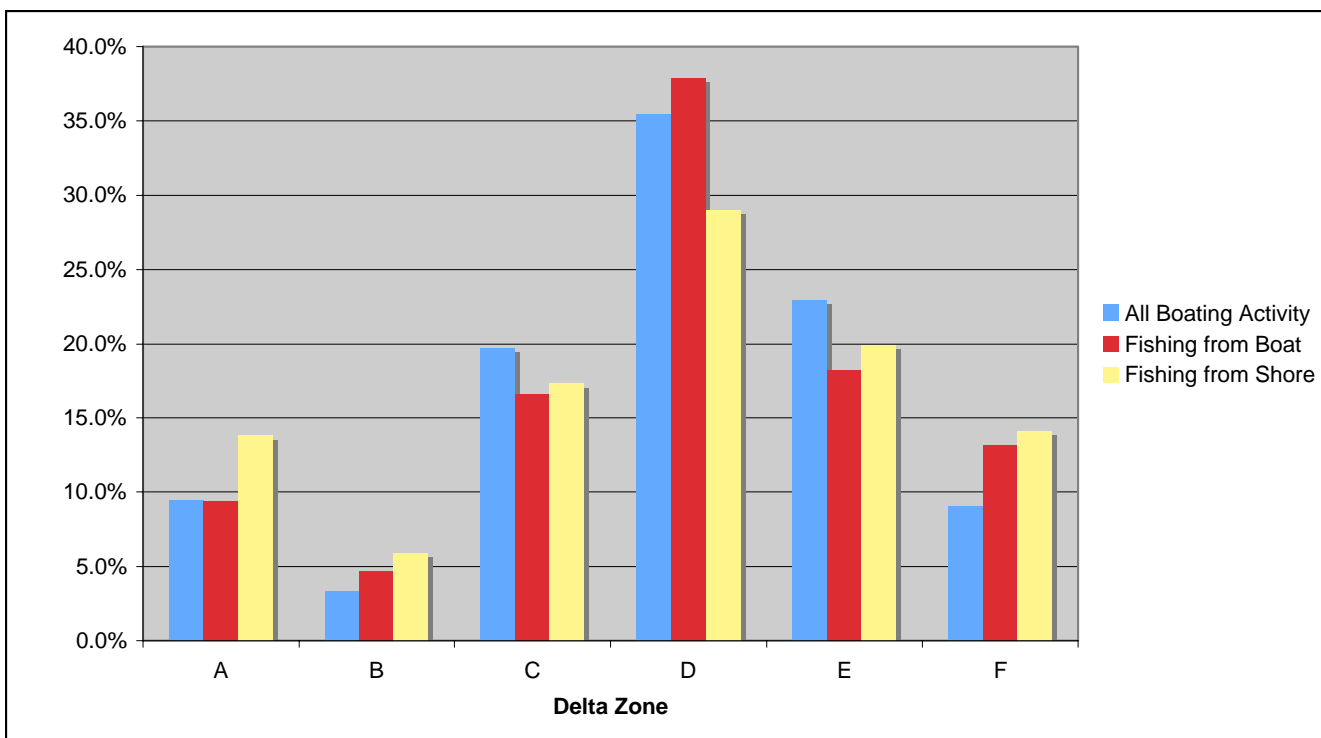
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Context Memorandum: Recreation

Iteration 1: June 12, 2007

1 **Figure 3: Distribution of Boating and Fishing User Days by Delta Zone**



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Table 5: Estimated Suisun Marsh Recreation User Days

Activity	Grizzly Complex	% of Marsh Total	Total Suisun Marsh
Wildlife Viewing, Dog Training, etc.	12,500	100%	12,500
Fishing	30,000	65%	46,154
Waterfowl hunting	6,000	*	67,620
Pheasant hunting	1,300	75%	1,733
Elk	40	100%	40
Pig, Rabbit	125	100%	125

* Private clubs in Suisun Marsh = 158 clubs x 10 hunters/day x 3 days/wk x 13 wks = 61620; Estimation method independently proposed by Pat Graham and Steve Chappell of the Suisun Resource Conservation District.

Source: Telephone communication with Pat Graham, Grizzly Island Wildlife Complex

5

6 **Economic Impacts of Delta Recreation.** Recreation is an important part of
 7 the Delta economy. People coming to the Delta to boat, fish, or engage in other
 8 recreational activities support the Delta economy through their expenditures for
 9 food, lodging, services, and supplies. The DPR survey estimated that in 1995
 10 boaters spent on average \$183 (adjusted to 2006 dollars) inside the Delta per
 11 boat trip, while anglers spent on average \$147 per trip. Estimated expenditures
 12 within the Delta by boaters and anglers in 1995 were in excess of 326 million

Context Memorandum: Recreation

Iteration 1: June 12, 2007

1 dollars (adjusted to 2006 dollars).^{xix} Delta recreation also benefits the rest of
 2 California's economy. In addition to money spent inside the Delta, the DPR
 3 survey found that Delta boaters and anglers spent on average \$126 and \$163,
 4 respectively, per trip on businesses outside the Delta. Estimated recreation
 5 expenditures in 1995 by Delta boaters and anglers benefiting businesses located
 6 outside the Delta were in excess of 270 million. Total Delta boater and angler
 7 recreation expenditures benefiting California businesses were estimated to
 8 exceed half a billion dollars in 1995. Table 6 provides a breakdown of Delta
 9 recreation expenditures estimated by the DPR survey.

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Table 6: Delta Recreation Expenditures in 1995

Activity / Expenditure	Average Expenditure Per Trip (2006 \$)		Estimated Expenditures for All Trips in 1995 (2006\$)		Total Annual (2006 \$)
	Inside Delta Dollars	Outside Delta Dollars	Inside Delta 1000 Dollars	Outside Delta 1000 Dollars	
Boating					
Lodging	31.55	16.62	56,306	29,660	85,966
Food	50.25	31.71	89,690	56,588	146,278
Supplies	68.26	53.08	121,824	94,731	216,555
Recreation	32.83	24.90	58,591	44,433	103,024
Total Boating	182.89	126.31	326,411	225,412	551,823
Fishing					
Lodging	39.76	43.23	66,499	72,306	138,805
Food	39.27	37.24	65,682	62,282	127,964
Supplies	41.07	54.30	68,685	90,828	159,513
Recreation	26.70	27.97	44,664	46,783	91,447
Total Fishing	146.80	162.74	245,530	272,199	517,729

*Note that total expenditures for boating and fishing cannot be added together. Adding them would result in double counting because many registered boaters are licensed anglers and vice-versa. The total annual expenditure estimates therefore provide a lower-bound estimate of recreation spending in the Delta.

12

13 An economic impact analysis using the DPR survey data done by UC Berkeley
 14 economists in 1998 concluded that Delta recreation had a sizeable impact on the Delta
 15 economy.^{xx} Using regional economic models of the Delta and California, this study
 16 estimated that Delta recreation contributed \$587 million (2006 dollars) to the Delta
 17 economy in 1995 and supported approximately 8,000 jobs in the Delta. These figures
 18 represent about 1.7% of income and 3.2% of employment in the Delta in 1995.

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20 For the state as a whole Delta recreation contributed just over one billion dollars
 21 (2006 dollars) to the California economy and supported approximately 14,000 jobs.

Context Memorandum: Recreation

Iteration 1: June 12, 2007

1 Because the surveys upon which the impact estimates were based only counted boaters
2 and anglers, and only if they were registered and licensed, the authors of this report
3 consider the impact estimates to be lower bounds of actual economic impacts resulting
4 from Delta recreation. Other popular Delta recreation activities, such as hunting, wildlife
5 viewing, sightseeing, windsurfing, biking and camping also produce economic benefits to
6 the region and state.

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9 *Section 2. Trends and Issues*

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11 **Delta Recreation Levels.** According to the Department of Boating and Waterways
12 (DBW), total outdoor recreation use in California increased at a rate nearly equal to the
13 State's population growth rate in the last decade. DBW found rates of participation in
14 some outdoor activities to be growing rapidly while rates of growth in other activities
15 were slowing or turning negative. The activities growing most rapidly included use of
16 personal watercraft (jet skis, etc.), nature study outings, sightseeing, and hiking or
17 walking for pleasure. Activities showing the slowest growth or negative growth included
18 fishing and hunting. In the Delta, the DPR surveys found that the majority of surveyed
19 anglers and boaters reported they were reducing the amount of time spent in the Delta
20 fishing, swimming, and hunting, with hunting and fishing showing the greatest reduction.

21

22 Overall recreation levels in the Delta are forecasted to increase over the next 10 to
23 20 years, but at a slower rate than regional or state population growth. The DBW
24 forecasted that Delta boating visitation would increase at an average rate of 0.79% per
25 year between 2000 and 2010, but then would slow considerably to an average rate of
26 0.46% per year between 2010 and 2020. Total annual visitor days are forecasted to
27 increase from their current level of about 7 million visitor days to about 8 million visitor
28 days by 2020.

29

30 **Urban Development.** Counties containing and surrounding the Delta are some of
31 the fastest growing regions in California. Development within the secondary zone of the
32 Delta has been increasing in recent years and more is forecasted. The use of Delta
33 recreation facilities mainly has come from people living within 40-60 miles of the Delta'
34 and thus demand for new facilities will likely come from people living in and near the
35 Delta. Several fast growing population centers including Sacramento, Stockton, Lathrop
36 and Tracy, the eastern Contra Costa County cities of Brentwood, Antioch and Pittsburg,
37 and the Solano County cities of Fairfield, Vacaville, Rio Vista and Suisun lie in the areas
38 surrounding the Delta.

39

40 Urban development in areas in and around the Delta has implications for Delta
41 recreation. On the one hand, people living in these areas are the most likely to visit the
42 Delta for recreational purposes and may serve as drivers for investment in upgrading

Context Memorandum: Recreation

Iteration 1: June 12, 2007

1 and adding Delta recreational facilities serving their interests. On the other hand, much
2 of the Delta's appeal as a recreation destination stems from its rural characteristics, its
3 wildlife and natural beauty, and its distance from the helter-skelter pace of urban living.
4 Poorly planned or piecemeal urban development in and around the Delta could degrade
5 some of the Delta's features that are most attractive to its visitors.

6
7 **Delta Recreation and Water Quality.** Surveys conducted by DBW found that public
8 perceptions of Delta water quality were an important determinant of attitudes about the
9 Delta as a boating destination.^{xxi} Both large- and small-boat owners cited poor water
10 quality as a significant impediment to using Delta waters. These perceptions are, in part,
11 attributable to the basic conditions/processes occurring in the Delta: i.e., peat soils and
12 estuarine conditions. But surveyed boaters also identified improper disposal of boat
13 wastes, reduced water flows from water diversions, invasive aquatic plants, and
14 obstacles and debris in the water as significant water quality concerns in the Delta. In
15 addition, illegal dumping and abandoned vessels throughout the Delta, some quite large,
16 also contribute to Delta water quality degradation.

17
18 **Delta Recreation and Aging Marina Infrastructure.** As previously noted most
19 recreation facilities in the Delta are provided by private marinas. Two-thirds of these
20 marinas are older than 40 years.^{xxii} DBW site inspections and marina surveys have
21 noted significant evidence of deferred maintenance. Similar problems have been noted
22 at Brannan Island SRA, which provides one of the few public access points for boating in
23 the Delta.^{xxiii} Dredging is the most commonly cited need among marina operators,
24 followed by docks/slips repair or replacement, dry boat storage, launch ramp lanes,
25 parking, and transient docks. Silting of harbors and slips is a problem for both public and
26 private access points and water quality concerns has made this an increasingly difficult
27 issue to address on a site by site basis. The cost to repair or replace identified needed
28 improvements to Delta marinas over the next two decades was estimated to range from
29 \$107 million to \$159 million.^{xxiv}

30
31 DBW provides loans to local public agencies and businesses for the development of
32 small craft harbors, grants to public agencies for the construction of boat launching
33 facilities, and state monies for public-access boating facilities on state owned or
34 controlled property. The department places a high priority for new and improved public
35 access to the Delta and encourages potential applicants to coordinate future projects
36 with the department.

37
38 **Delta Cultural/Historic Resources.** There is significant opportunity for cultural
39 resource rehabilitation and interpretation/education at Locke with the Locke Boarding
40 House project. DPR and Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency are partners
41 in the restoration of the Boarding House in Locke and construction is expected to begin

Context Memorandum: Recreation

Iteration 1: June 12, 2007

1 in early June 2007. There are numerous other cultural features throughout the Delta
2 that could become points of recreation attraction if described and interpreted.

3

4 **Delta Recreation and Public Access.** Most recreation in the Delta is water-based
5 and involves or requires boating. Sherman Island Wildlife Area, Franks Tract SRA and
6 Little Franks Tract are accessible from the water only. In addition, some private marinas
7 are accessible only by water, such as Tinsley Island, which is owned by the Saint
8 Francis Yacht Club. Land-based recreation in the Delta, while popular, is more limited,
9 partly because so much of the land in the Delta is privately owned and public access is
10 restricted. In 1994, the Delta Public Commission sponsored a study looking into Delta
11 recreation and public access.^{xxv} DBW also conducted a Delta boating needs
12 assessment in the late 1990s.^{xxvi} Findings from these studies included:

13

14 ■ It is difficult to develop recreational areas in the Delta because of the lack of
15 available land with good road and water access. Most of the land is privately held
16 and used for agriculture. When developments do occur they are usually concentrated
17 in one area. The concentration of facilities, however, can lead to congestion on the
18 water and land. When boaters using different kinds of craft and with different skill
19 levels get into a congested area, conflicts and accidents become more likely.

20

21 ■ There is perceived lack of quality destinations and, in general, poor connections
22 between the water-side environment and land-side facilities and recreation
23 destinations.

24

25 ■ There is a scarcity of day-use facilities/destinations throughout the Delta, thus
26 limiting the range of activities for Delta users. Many of the existing public day-use
27 facilities are in disrepair in the Delta. Beach access was identified as a high-demand
28 resource in the Delta that is in scarce supply. The existing public beach facilities are
29 generally in poor condition. Beach facilities are difficult to create and maintain due to
30 the fluvial processes that occur in the Delta.

31

32 ■ Non-motorized boating – canoeing, kayaking, and other paddle-driven boats – is
33 currently limited, in part by the scarcity of access sites and facilities.

34

35 ■ The Delta could be a good place for bicycling, hiking, wildlife observation, and
36 visiting undeveloped historic areas. However, there are few opportunities for these
37 activities.

38

39 ■ Sightseeing is a popular recreational activity due to the rural, scenic quality of the
40 Delta. Maintaining this quality is important for sightseers and the local community.

41 Assuring that views from Delta roadways are not marred by unattractive uses, such

Context Memorandum: Recreation

Iteration 1: June 12, 2007

- 1 as billboards, maintenance yards and junkyards, etc. will preserve the Delta's
2 recreation and access value.
- 3
- 4 ■ Because much of the land in the Delta is privately owned and actively used for
5 agriculture, there are many opportunities for conflicts between recreational users and
6 landowners. Many of these conflicts can be resolved through the proper design and
7 location of recreation and public access areas. Currently, there are very few areas
8 where travelers on the highways can legally park next to a river or slough to picnic or
9 view the water. Land must be acquired before public recreation projects can be
10 developed.
- 11
- 12 ■ Bank fishing is a very popular activity. Anglers can be seen fishing from many of the
13 levees along the major roadways in the Delta. There are only one or two areas in the
14 Delta where bank fishing opportunities have been provided as part of a public
15 project. As a result, fishing takes place on private land and in roadside areas that
16 traditionally have been used. Cars are parked along the road in informal pulloff
17 areas. Anglers may perceive these areas as public. However, many of the areas may
18 be inappropriate for parking and fishing because they are adjacent to roadways with
19 fast moving cars or on private property. Virtually no garbage or restroom facilities are
20 available. The provision of new public areas off main roads and with adequate
21 parking and support facilities could provide anglers with defined areas, while
22 diminishing the number of people who fish in undesignated, unsafe areas.
- 23
- 24 ■ Many of the Delta waterways have been designated as natural areas in the Delta
25 Waterways Plan. This designation means that these areas are valuable habitat and
26 that an area is too sensitive for development. Many of these areas are presently
27 being acquired for habitat preservation. Recreational activities such as uncontrolled
28 boating, waterskiing and jet skiing activities on Delta waterways can adversely affect
29 wildlife and wildlife habitat areas. It has been noted that some channel islands
30 providing wildlife habitat have been eroded. Several Delta landowners attribute such
31 erosion to boat wakes and water transport.

32

33 **Delta Recreation and Delta Water Supply, Ecosystem, and Flood Protection**
34 **Actions.** Proposed actions in the Delta to improve ecosystem function, water supply
35 quality and reliability, and flood protection have implications for Delta recreation.
36 Existing gates and other flow regulating structures, for example, can impede or interfere
37 with popular boating routes and destinations in the Delta. Likewise, improvements to
38 levees for flood protection may reduce the scenic quality of the Delta riparian landscape
39 valued by boaters, picnickers, and sightseers and affect riparian cover valued by
40 anglers. Levee projects may also require temporary or permanent closure of sloughs or
41 channels to all or certain types of boating, or greater restrictions on boating speeds and

Context Memorandum: Recreation

Iteration 1: June 12, 2007

1 wake formation. As already mentioned, habitat restoration actions may conflict with
 2 some forms of Delta recreation, but they may also enhance others.
 3
 4 As part of its boating needs assessment, DBW evaluated proposed CALFED
 5 actions in the Delta in terms of potential recreation opportunities. The evaluation is
 6 reproduced in Table 7.^{xxvii} The DBW evaluation focused mainly on recreation
 7 opportunities potentially created by these actions and not so much on potential
 8 recreation impacts. The list of proposed actions also does not reflect the current level of
 9 interest in strengthening Delta levees for flood protection.
 10

11 **Table 7: Possible CALFED Actions and Associated Recreation Opportunities**

Project	Potential Recreation Benefits	Potential Associated Recreation Facilities
1. The flooding of Holland and Bouldin Islands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased fishing opportunities ▪ Increased water surface area for boating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potential for shoreline access features and parking facilities ▪ Potential for boat launch ramps and marina facilities
2. Potential screened diversion and conveyance channel at Hood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No benefits to recreation identified at this time 	
3. Delta Cross Channel reoperation and diversion facility on the Sacramento River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No benefits to recreation identified at this time 	
4. Georgiana Slough restoration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased or improved fishing opportunities ▪ Improved wildlife viewing and nature study opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potential for shoreline access features and parking facilities ▪ Potential for car top non-motorized boat access points with parking and day-use facilities
5. North and South Fork of the Mokelumne River possible setback levees or channel modifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved wildlife viewing and nature study opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potential for car top non-motorized boat access points with parking and day-use facilities in conjunction with setback levees
6. Habitat restoration and flood control at McCormack-Williamson Tract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved wildlife viewing and nature study opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potential for shoreline access features and parking facilities ▪ Potential for car top non-motorized boat access points with parking and day-use facilities ▪ Potential for nature trails (water and land) for pedestrians, canoers, and kayakers.
7. Old River Channel enlargement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Opportunity for design to accommodate public access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potential for development of vehicle access and boat-in day-use areas adjacent to river.
8. South Delta channel dredging, screening, and consolidation of agricultural intakes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Boating navigation improved by dredging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potential to assist marina owners/operators with dredging needs
9. South Delta levee setbacks and improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved wildlife viewing and nature study opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potential for car top non-motorized boat access points with parking and day-use

Context Memorandum: Recreation

Iteration 1: June 12, 2007

Project	Potential Recreation Benefits	Potential Associated Recreation Facilities
		facilities in conjunction with setback levees
10. South Delta operable flow control barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to include boating facility needs in design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential for development of boating facilities in conjunction with flow control barriers that provide for movement of boats from one side of the barriers to the other via ramps or locks.
11. Clifton Court Forebay pumping station and fish screen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced losses to select sport fish species Delta-wide 	
12. Proposed Delta-wide Ecosystem Restoration Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced terrestrial and aquatic habitat in selected sloughs and waterways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential for expansion of non-motorized boating opportunities. Potential for enhanced wildlife observation and nature study opportunities. Potential for improved fishing opportunities.

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Section 3. Delta Recreation Policies

State Policies. The Delta Protection Act of 1992 declared that the basic goals of the state for the Delta are the following:

- 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.
- Assure orderly, balanced conservation and development of delta land resources.
- Improve flood protection by structural and nonstructural means to ensure an increased level of public health and safety.

With regard to Delta recreation the Act declared:

- The Delta's waterways and marinas offer recreational opportunities of statewide and local significance and are a source of economic benefit to the region, and, due to increased demand and usage, there are public safety concerns requiring increased coordination by all levels of government.
- Recreational boating within the Delta is of statewide and local significance and is a source of economic benefit to the region.

Context Memorandum: Recreation

Iteration 1: June 12, 2007

- 1 ▪ Cities, towns, and settlements within the Delta are of significant historical,
2 cultural, and economic value and that their continued protection is important to
3 the economic and cultural vitality of the region.
- 4
- 5 ▪ Agricultural, recreational, and other uses of the Delta can best be protected by
6 implementing projects that protect wildlife habitat before conflicts arise.
- 7
- 8 ▪ Regulation of land use and related activities that threaten the integrity of the
9 Delta's resources can best be advanced through comprehensive regional land
10 use planning implemented through reliance on local government in its local land
11 use planning procedures and enforcement.
- 12
- 13 ▪ The voluntary acquisition of wildlife and agricultural conservation easements in
14 the Delta promotes and enhances the traditional Delta values of agriculture,
15 habitat, and recreation.
- 16

17 **Delta Protection Commission Policies.** The Delta Protection Act of 1992
18 established the Delta Protection Commission (DPC). DPC jurisdiction includes portions
19 of five counties—Solano, Yolo, Sacramento, San Joaquin, and Contra Costa—and is
20 referred to as the "Primary Zone" of the Delta. The DPC consists of 23 members
21 including six state agency representatives, five local county supervisors, three regional
22 government representatives, five reclamation district representatives, the Delta
23 representative on the Bay Delta Authority, and three governor-appointed Delta residents
24 representing agricultural, habitat, and recreation interests.

25

26 Pursuant to the Act, the Commission completed a regional land use plan for the
27 Primary Zone of the Delta in 1995. The plan contains findings, policies, and
28 recommendations in several areas, including recreation, public access, and boating.
29 The plan is adopted in Delta county and city general plans and the policies are to be
30 adhered to by these local governments in making land use decisions and developing
31 land use management tools. The Commission serves as an appeal body in the event a
32 local land use approval is determined to be inconsistent with the Act or the policies of the
33 DPC land use plan. Upon successful appeal, the project is remanded back to the
34 authorizing local entity for reconsideration during which time the project approval is
35 stayed until the Commission reconsiders an amended proposal or litigation is settled.

36

37 Recreation policies and recommendations adopted by the DPC are contained in its
38 1995 "Land Use and Resource Management Plan for the Primary Zone of the Delta."^{xxviii}
39 This plan was revised and reprinted in 2002. It adopted nine policies and ten
40 recommendations related to recreation in the Delta, as follows:

41

Context Memorandum: Recreation

Iteration 1: June 12, 2007

1 P-1. Where public funds are limited, local governments shall promote maintenance
2 and supervision of existing public recreation areas over construction of new public
3 facilities.

4
5 P-2. To minimize impacts to agriculture and to wildlife habitat, local governments
6 shall encourage expansion of existing private water-oriented commercial recreational
7 facilities over construction of new facilities. Local governments shall ensure any new
8 recreational facilities will be adequately supervised and maintained.

9
10 P-3. Local governments shall develop siting criteria for recreation projects which will
11 ensure minimal adverse impacts on: agricultural land uses, levees, and public drinking
12 water supply intakes, and identified sensitive wetland and habitat areas.

13
14 P-4. Local governments shall improve public safety on Delta waterways through
15 enforcement of local, State, and federal laws.

16
17 P-5. Local governments shall encourage provision of publicly funded amenities in or
18 adjacent to private facilities, particularly if the private facility will agree to supervise and
19 manage the facility (fishing pier, overlook, picnic area) thus lowering the long-term cost
20 to the public.

21
22 P-6. Local governments shall support multiple uses of Delta agricultural lands, such
23 as seasonal use for hunting, or improved parking and access sites.

24
25 P-7. Local governments shall support improved access for bank fishing along State
26 highways and county roads where safe and adequate parking can be provided and with
27 acquisition of proper rights-of-access from the landowner. Adequate policing, garbage
28 cleanup, sanitation facilities, and fire suppression for such access shall be provided.

29
30 P-8. New, renovated, or expanded marinas shall include adequate restrooms,
31 pumpout facilities, trash containers, oily waste disposal facilities, and other facilities
32 necessary to meet needs of marina tenants. Use fees may be charged for the use of
33 these facilities but such fees shall not exceed the cost of maintenance.

34
35 P-9. Local governments shall encourage new recreation facilities that take
36 advantage of the Delta's unique characteristics.

37
38 R-1. Support a scientifically valid survey of current recreational uses and current
39 and future recreation needs in the Delta to determine type, number, and location of
40 needed recreation facilities. Study needs for trails, unified directional signage, and
41 billboard controls, in the Delta.

Context Memorandum: Recreation

Iteration 1: June 12, 2007

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R-2. Support a scientifically valid study of the carrying capacity of the Delta waterways for recreation activities without degradation of habitat values which minimize impacts to agriculture or levees.

R-3. New projects in the Secondary Zone, adjacent to the Primary Zone, should include commercial and public recreation facilities which allow safe, supervised access to and along the Delta waterways (pedestrian and bike trails, launch ramps including small boat launch ramps, windsurfing access, overlooks, nature observation areas, interpretive information, picnic areas, etc.).

R-4. Marina owners and operators should take advantage of grants available from the Department of Boating and Waterways to fund new pumpouts.

R-5. To protect rare and endangered fish species from adverse impacts of poaching, the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) should study the feasibility and value of banning night fishing in the Delta.

R-6. State and federal projects in the Primary and Secondary Zones should include appropriate recreation and/or public access components to the extent consistent with project purposes and with available funding. State and federal agencies should consider private or user group improvements on publicly-owned lands to provide facilities (example: windsurf access at Brannan Island State Recreation Area).

R-7. Local governments should develop design guidelines for new or enlarged recreation facilities to protect adjacent agricultural land uses.

R-8. Local governments should develop funding sources to provide adequate enforcement of existing laws to protect health, safety and welfare of Delta recreational users.

R-9. To provide adequate dilution of any potential discharges, new marinas or marina expansions should not be permitted within 1.5 kilometers (0.9 miles) of any drinking water intake located in an open waterway, nor within any waterway or dead-end slough that terminates in a drinking water intake. Projects not meeting this criteria should be considered on a case-by-case basis to determine if a proposed project can be mitigated to provide comparable effectiveness.

R-10. New, expanded, or renovated marinas should minimize toxic discharges (including paint, paint chips, chemicals, heavy metals, tributulin, oil, grease, and fuel)

Context Memorandum: Recreation

Iteration 1: June 12, 2007

1 and prohibit discharges of untreated sewage as required under local, State, and federal
2 laws and regulations.

3

4 **County Government General Plan Policies.** The general plan's of the five
5 counties within the jurisdiction of the DPC address recreation in the Delta to varying
6 degrees. Below is a summary of County general plan policies pertaining to Delta
7 recreation for each county.

8

9 Yolo County. The Yolo County general plan established the following recreation
10 and open space policies relevant to Delta recreation access and resource
11 development:^{xxix}

12

13 ■ The County shall encourage and support coordinated efforts by State and federal
14 agencies, cities, special districts, and non-profit and conservation organizations
15 to protect lands containing open space resources.

16

17 ■ The County shall utilize the following objective criteria when considering
18 conversion of open space lands to other uses:

19

20 ○ The use is directly related and essential to an otherwise approved

21

22 ○ Lack of suitable locations in Yolo County prevent the use from

23

24 ○ The site is not located in a conservation easement, contracted

25

26 ○ Farmland Security Zone, flood control bypass or channel, or

27

28 ○ The use will not diminish or prevent open space, recreational or

29

30 ○ The use can be developed without impairing the open space
31 experience, managed resource production and other open space uses
32 and activities in the vicinity; and

33

34 ○ The use does not conflict with any adopted local, State or federal
35 plans for protection of open space resources.

36

37 ■ Development shall be directed away from naturally occurring riparian areas and
38 wetlands.

39

40 ■ Lands reserved for bypass systems such as the Yolo Bypass and Sacramento
41 Bypass shall remain designated as open space in order to prevent flooding
hazards.

41

Context Memorandum: Recreation

Iteration 1: June 12, 2007

- 1 ▪ The County shall encourage and support the development of private recreational
2 facilities that preserve scenic and environmentally sensitive resources and that
3 do not result in the creation of land use conflicts.
4
- 5 ▪ The County shall support the efforts of the Cache Creek Conservancy and the
6 Yolo Bypass Working Group to preserve open space and improve scenic
7 resources within and along Cache Creek and within the Yolo Bypass.
8
- 9 ▪ The County shall work with willing landowners to create a continuous corridor of
10 natural open space along Lower Cache Creek, Lower Putah Creek, the
11 Sacramento River and within the Yolo Bypass with provision for limited access at
12 specific locations to recreational and educational uses from a County road or
13 highway. The County shall also consider establishing bicycle access to select
14 areas.
15
- 16 ▪ Only those uses that are river- or creek-dependent, such as fishing, canoeing,
17 boating, and nature observation shall be directly located on Cache Creek, Lower
18 Putah Creek, and the Sacramento River. More active uses, including parking,
19 restrooms, and picnic areas shall be located in areas away from sensitive habitat.
20
- 21 ▪ The County shall support improved access for bank fishing where safe and
22 adequate parking can be provided and with acquisition of proper rights-of-access
23 from the landowner. Adequate policing, garbage cleanup, sanitation facilities,
24 and fire suppression for such access shall be provided.
25
- 26 ▪ The County shall promote and support the growth of individual and collective
27 private sector agri-tourism and eco-tourism operations of all sizes that benefit
28 from wide expanses of open space and agricultural land, including overnight
29 agricultural adventures (staying overnight and working on a farm), other lodging,
30 markets and farmers markets, restaurants, wineries, bird watching, fishing and
31 hunting lodges and clubs and equestrian centers. The County shall work with
32 those operators to encourage regional marketing programs and to ensure that
33 public and private efforts are complementary.
34

35 Solano County. The Solano County Resource Conservation and Open Space Plan
36 (Phase 2), a part of the General Plan, identifies lands along the Sacramento River and
37 its Delta tributaries and within Suisun Marsh as significant outdoor recreational sites. To
38 protect these and other recreation areas, the Land Use and Circulation Element of the
39 Solano County General Plan, adopted December 1980 and as amended through June
40 2003, establishes policies regulating development in these areas. Policies unique to the
41 Sacramento River and Delta area include:

Context Memorandum: Recreation

Iteration 1: June 12, 2007

- 1
- 2 ▪ Preserving the scenic quality of the Sacramento River and Delta area as a
- 3 valuable element of the natural landscape and important scenic resource through
- 4 compatible land uses;
- 5
- 6 ▪ Providing for public and private recreation and access to the river and delta areas
- 7 for such uses as fishing, boating, picnicking, hiking, and nature study in a
- 8 manner that is compatible with surrounding land uses; and
- 9
- 10 ▪ Ensuring that the County shall support the policies and recommendations of the
- 11 Delta Action Plan.

12

13 As described in the Solano County Policies and Regulations Governing the Suisun

14 Marsh, the General Plan also sets policies related to land use in the Suisun Marsh and

15 Secondary Management Area. The Plan sets the following policies:

- 16
- 17 ▪ Within Suisun Marsh, provision should be made for public and private
- 18 recreational development to allow for public recreation and access to the marsh
- 19 for such uses as fishing, boating, picnicking, hiking, and nature study;
- 20
- 21 ▪ Recreational uses in the marsh should be located on the outer portions near
- 22 population centers and easily accessible from existing roads; and
- 23
- 24 ▪ Recreational activities that could result in adverse impacts on the environment of
- 25 Suisun Marsh should not be permitted.

26

27 Contra Costa County. The Contra Costa County general plan established the

28 following recreation and open space policies relevant to Delta recreation access and

29 resource development.^{xxx}

- 30
- 31 ▪ As a unique resource of State-wide importance, the Delta shall be developed for
- 32 recreation use in accordance with the State environmental goals and policies.
- 33 The recreational value of the Delta shall be protected and enhanced.
- 34
- 35 ▪ There are resource areas within the County, e.g., the San Pablo Bay and
- 36 throughout the Delta, where substantial potential exists for private recreational
- 37 development. These should be encouraged if the projects include programs for
- 38 environmental enhancements to their immediate areas and are limited to
- 39 extensive recreational facilities.

40

Context Memorandum: Recreation

Iteration 1: June 12, 2007

- 1 ▪ Additional marinas to serve the Delta and the Bay may be permitted in select
2 areas provided they can be clustered and located adjacent to similar uses, along
3 waterways having an adequate channel width as defined by the State Harbors
4 and Navigation Code, in areas having adequate public access, and when such
5 uses will not conflict with adjacent agricultural uses.
6
- 7 ▪ Maintenance of scenic waterways of the County shall be ensured through public
8 protection of the marshes and riparian vegetation along the shorelines and Delta
9 levees.

10

11 San Joaquin County. The San Joaquin County general plan established the
12 following recreation and open space policies relevant to Delta recreation access and
13 resource development:

14

- 15 ▪ Areas with significant development constraints, such as the Delta, should be
16 predominantly maintained as open space.
- 17
- 18 ▪ The County has designed several scenic roads: Lower Roberts Island Road,
19 Bacon Island Road, State Route 4, Eight Mile & Empire Tract Road. The policies
20 for scenic roads (1) require that development proposals along scenic routes shall
21 not detract from the visual and recreational experience; (2) initiate programs to
22 enhance its scenic routes by litter removal programs, route identifications signs,
23 and provision of parking at desirable viewpoints, (3) require landscape plans for
24 development along scenic routes, and (4) include in the Design Review Manual
25 guidelines for development in the viewshed of scenic routes.
- 26
- 27 ▪ Some limited commercial recreation may be permitted in agricultural zones.
28 Typical uses allowed include marinas. Marinas shall be evaluated to assess their
29 impacts on the waterways, riparian vegetation, adjacent land uses, and traffic
30 circulation.

31

32 Sacramento County. The Sacramento County general plan established the following
33 recreation and open space policies relevant to Delta recreation access and resource
34 development:^{xxx}

35

- 36 ▪ The Delta Primary Zone, defined by the Delta Protection Commission (DPC), is a
37 unique resource with a rich cultural heritage, a strong agricultural base, and
38 many opportunities for recreation and habitat conservation. In order to help
39 preserve these and other important values of the Delta Primary Zone, the Board
40 of Supervisors adopted a resolution incorporating the Delta Protection
41 Commission's "Land Use and Resource Management Plan for the Primary Zone

Context Memorandum: Recreation

Iteration 1: June 12, 2007

- 1 of the Delta” (DPC adopted 2/23/95) into the Sacramento County General Plan
2 (Resolution # 96-1083). The Board’s action excluded Policy P-3 of the Delta
3 Plan’s Utilities and Infrastructure Section regarding sewage treatment facilities
4 and disposal of sewage effluent and sludge. The Board adopted Delta Plan
5 policies relate to many aspects of open space and resource conservation, and
6 shall be considered when making decisions on projects within the Primary Zone
7 of the Delta.
8
- 9 ▪ Expansion of urban uses in rural areas shall be limited to the established Delta
10 communities of Freeport, Hood, Courtland, Locke, and Walnut Grove and to
11 specific small expansions which support the agriculturally and recreationally
12 based economies of the Delta.
13
 - 14 ▪ Southwest Sacramento County provides critical open space area extending east
15 from the Sacramento River and Snodgrass Slough to Highway 99 and Galt and
16 north from Dry Creek/Mokelumne River to the Urban Area. Together with the
17 Cosumnes River corridor east of 99, the Lower Cosumnes River and Stone
18 Lakes Basin comprise the heart of the County's open space preservation
19 strategy: a natural resource buffer between development progressing southward
20 from Laguna and Elk Grove and northwest from Galt. This area has nationally
21 important wildlife habitat. Flooding is frequent and extensive. During major
22 floods, large areas are inundated by a combination of Cosumnes River overflow
23 and the backup of Central Valley runoff unable to drain into the Delta. It is a key
24 Plan policy to retain the floodplain as open space, with prohibitions on leveeing
25 or filling to reduce the floodplain to accommodate development. Urban services
26 are not anticipated to extend beyond the Cosumnes/Deer Creek floodplain.
27
 - 28 ▪ Much of the water used in the Sacramento Area is withdrawn from the American
29 River and eventually returns to the Sacramento River as runoff or treated
30 discharge from the Regional Sanitation Plant. Area-wide water conservation
31 measures would benefit biological and recreational values in both the American
32 and Sacramento Rivers by reducing water withdrawal amounts and maintaining
33 natural discharge flows through the Delta.
34
 - 35 ▪ Marsh and riparian areas are an integral and vital element of the County's natural
36 landscape. Such areas serve as permanent or seasonal home to a plethora of
37 wildlife species, several of which are listed as threatened or endangered.
38 Furthermore, such areas preserve open space, enhance passive recreational
39 opportunities, and provide flood control.
40
41

Context Memorandum: Recreation

Iteration 1: June 12, 2007

1 Section 4. References

2

ⁱ <http://www.delta.ca.gov/delta.asp>

ⁱⁱ Ibid.

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.iep.ca.gov/suisun/facts/index.html>

^{iv} Ibid.

^v Wade, W. and J. Plater, "Estimating Potential Demand for Freshwater Recreation Activities in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Rivers Delta: 1997-2020," Energy and Water Economics, 2002.

^{vi} Ibid.

^{vii} 1997 Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Recreation Survey; <http://www.delta.ca.gov/recsur.asp>

^{viii} Ibid.

^{ix} http://www.delta.ca.gov/pdf/Delta_Fact_Sheet.pdf

^x <http://www.delta.ca.gov/delta.asp>

^{xi} 1997 Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Recreation Survey; <http://www.delta.ca.gov/recsur.asp>

^{xii} <http://www.dbw.ca.gov/PDF/DeltaAssessment-PDF/Chapter2/Chapter%202.pdf>

^{xiii} <http://www.delta.ca.gov/atlas/duckclub.pdf>

^{xiv} Delta Protection Commission, "Delta Protection Commission Recreation And Access Study," July 1994.

^{xv} <http://www.dbw.ca.gov/PDF/DeltaAssessment-PDF/Chapter2/Chapter%202.pdf>

^{xvi} Access for windsurfers at Windy Cove was closed by the winter storms of early 2006. Windy Cove is currently open, but the access to the water has been fenced off. Re-establishing an access point at Windy Cove would likely be expensive due to engineering needed to build the access on unstable soil. There is still windsurfing access at Sherman Island (Sac County Parks), which is a few miles south on 160.

^{xvii} Ibid. Table 4 is a reproduction of Table 2-1 in Department of Boating and Waterways.

"Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Boating Needs Assessment: 2000-2020."

^{xviii} 1997 Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Recreation Survey; <http://www.delta.ca.gov/recsur.asp>

^{xix} Goldman, G., et al., 1998. "The Economic Impact of Recreational Boating and Fishing in the Delta." Dept. of Agricultural and Resource Economics, University of California at Berkeley.

^{xx} Ibid.

^{xxi} Department of Boating and Waterways. "Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Boating Needs Assessment: 2000-2020."

^{xxii} Ibid.

^{xxiii} Department of Boating and Waterways has budgeted for the next fiscal year the repair and expansion of the Brannan Island SRA boat launch facility, including adding a new launch lane, which will increase capacity by one-third.

^{xxiv} Ibid.

^{xxv} Delta Protection Commission, "Delta Protection Commission Recreation And Access Study," July 1994.

^{xxvi} Department of Boating and Waterways. "Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Boating Needs Assessment: 2000-2020."

^{xxvii} Table 7 is a reproduction of Table 8-2 in Department of Boating and Waterways.

"Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Boating Needs Assessment: 2000-2020."

^{xxviii} <http://www.delta.ca.gov/plan.asp>

^{xxix} http://www.yolocounty.org/org/ppw/planning/general_plan_documents.htm

^{xxx} <http://www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/depart/cd/current/advance/GeneralPlan.htm>

^{xxxi} <http://www.saccounty.net/general-plan/gp-home.html>