

Anthropogenic water management practices have altered NDO in the following ways:

- Long-term data demonstrate that the difference between historical (actual) NDO and unimpaired NDO is increasing over time, indicating that water management actions have reduced Delta outflow significantly.
- During most months, water management practices have reduced Delta outflow relative to unimpaired conditions. From the mid-1940's to the mid-1980's, reservoir operations resulted in historical (actual) NDO slightly greater than unimpaired NDO slightly in a number of months, largely in the fall. However, since 1985, reservoir operations have resulted in increased NDO only in the wettest years, and NDO has declined in all other months.
- On average, water management practices have resulted in reduced Delta outflows in all months except September and October. The greatest reduction in Delta outflow relative to unimpaired conditions occurs in the months of March through June, when spring snow melt is captured in reservoirs and some of the remaining river flows are diverted for direct use.