



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
**U.S. Department  
of the Interior**

[www.doi.gov](http://www.doi.gov)

## News Release

Date: April 7, 2010

Contact: Kendra Barkoff (DOI) 202-208-6416

Sandy Cooney (CA) 916-653-9402

### **Interior, California Officials Commit to November 2010 Completion of Draft Bay Delta Conservation Plan**

**WASHINGTON, DC-** Interior Deputy Secretary David J. Hayes and California Natural Resources Secretary Lester Snow today jointly announced the commitment of federal and state agencies to complete a draft of the Bay Delta Conservation Plan in November 2010. The Plan is an ambitious multi-year effort involving many stakeholders to develop a long term solution to California's pressing water problems.

"The dire water shortages in California and the collapse of the Bay Delta ecosystem have put us in a crisis mode with short-term stopgap measures," said Interior Deputy Secretary Hayes. "This makes it all the more important that we make faster progress on developing a long-term solution. That's why we have committed to completing the draft Bay Delta Conservation Plan by November 2010 and moving forward to achieve the twin goals of restoring the ecosystem and improving reliability of water supply for urban and agricultural water users."

"We welcome the ongoing support of our federal partners; we are in this together," said California Secretary for Natural Resources Lester Snow. "Time and again we have said that these solutions must be comprehensive and that we must contribute to the restoration of the fragile Delta while we create a more reliable water supply system for all Californians. To that end, we are all committed to the completion of Bay Delta Conservation Plan to help ensure the sustainability of California's natural resources."

The goal of the Bay Delta Conservation Plan is to contribute to the restoration of the Bay-Delta ecosystem and to improve reliability of California's water supply. Developing the Plan is a collaborative effort of state, federal, and local water agencies, state and federal fish agencies, environmental organizations, and other interested parties. Agencies taking leadership roles on this initiative include the California Departments of Water Resources and Fish and Game; Interior's Bureau of Reclamation and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service; and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. In advance of completing the draft plan, high level federal and state officials will continue hosting public meetings to further its development and assure public access to working draft documents.

Completion of the Draft Bay Delta Conservation Plan this year will mark a significant milestone, but will not signal the end of analysis. In 2011, a draft Environmental Impact Statement/ Environmental Impact Report on the Plan will be complete. Both the Draft Plan and draft EIS/EIR will then be released for formal public comment. Based on comments received, the agencies will prepare the final environmental document, and then finalize and take action to approve the Plan. The Delta Stewardship Council will then consider the Plan as it develops a broader Delta Plan mandated by recent state legislation.

The Bay Delta Conservation Plan will function as a Habitat Conservation Plan under federal law and as a Natural Communities Conservation Plan under state law. It is being developed based on significant scientific analysis and input, and with the participation of water users, conservation organizations, and federal, state and local agencies.

###