The BDCP is a comprehensive conservation strategy aimed at protecting dozens of species of fish, plants, and wildlife, while permitting the reliable operation of California’s two most important water delivery systems.

Implementation
Implementation of a large-scale Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and Natural Communities Conservation Plan (NCCP) such as the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) is no small effort. The BDCP includes specific plans, processes and policies aimed at effective implementation of the Plan. The following section provides an overview of the BDCP implementation components:

- Adaptive Management and Monitoring
- Governance
- Schedule
- Cost and Funding

Adaptive Management and Monitoring
The BDCP biological goals and objectives will be advanced through an adaptive management program. The program will provide mechanisms to make adjustments to BDCP conservation measures and objectives based on new scientific information and insight gained from monitoring and targeted research. The program will also demonstrate progress towards attaining program goals. The dynamic nature of the Delta ecosystems, expected changes over time, and uncertainties associated with these changes make adaptive management critical to the success of the BDCP.

The adaptive management program will address gaps in knowledge regarding Delta ecological processes and species biology. It will provide flexibility in BDCP implementation and ensure that the BDCP becomes increasingly more effective and responsive to changing ecological conditions in the Delta.
Adaptive Management

The adaptive management program will:

- Identify questions that need to be answered to improve our knowledge base and inform ongoing BDCP implementation
- Use improved knowledge to identify alternative approaches to BDCP implementation and determine which approaches to implement
- Adjust the monitoring and research program so that it evaluates the efficacy of new and existing approaches and addresses questions that arise from changing environmental conditions

The following elements are included in the adaptive management program:

**Process Framework**
The process by which the adaptive management program will be implemented, including gathering data through monitoring and research, analyzing data, assimilating new knowledge, and making adjustments to the strategy.

**Research**
Experiments and pilot studies specifically designed to test uncertainties and the hypotheses underlying conservation measures, and to rapidly gain knowledge that could improve conservation measure performance.

**Status Reviews**
Required periodic reviews of the monitoring program, overall BDCP performance, achievement of goals and objectives, and status of covered species.

The BDCP adaptive management framework is based on the recommendations of the independent science advisors.

Governance

The proposed governance and implementation structure of the BDCP is envisioned as a collaborative effort with defined roles and responsibilities, and a clear process for addressing issues and conflicts as they arise. The implementation structure is designed to ensure that:

- Sufficient institutional expertise, capacity, resources, and focus are brought to bear to accomplish the BDCP goals and objectives
- The entities receiving regulatory authorizations are accountable to those agencies granting the regulatory authorizations
- The decision-making process regarding BDCP implementation is transparent and understandable to the public

The implementation structure includes these components:

- Implementation Office
- Authorized Entity Group
- Permit Oversight Group
- Adaptive Management Team
- Stakeholder Council

**BDCP Implementation Office**
The BDCP proposes to house primary responsibility for implementation with the BDCP Implementation Office, led by a BDCP Program Manager and governed by the Authorized Entity Group. This office would manage day-to-day implementation, including planning, budgeting, sequencing, scheduling, coordination, and public outreach. Specific responsibilities would include:

- Preparing annual work plans and budgets, and managing expenditures
- Contracting for services
- Securing, holding, and managing funds to support implementation actions
- Coordinating with the authorized entities, supporting entities, and adaptive management team
- Coordinating with regulatory agencies, Delta Stewardship Council, Delta Science Program, Delta Conservancy, local governments, Delta Protection Commission, flood control agencies, and other public agencies
- Addressing legal matters
- Overseeing Plan amendments
- Implementing NEPA and CEQA mitigation measures
- Acquiring and/or leasing property
- Management of land
- Maintenance of facilities and improvements
- Planning and reporting for water operations
- Maintaining permits and authorizations and obtaining amendments
- Public outreach
Authorized Entity Group

The Authorized Entity Group will be established to provide program oversight and general guidance to the Program Manager regarding implementation of the Plan. It will also:

- Provide input and guidance on general policy and program-related matters
- Monitor and assess the effectiveness of the Implementation Office in implementing the Plan
- Foster and maintain collaborative and constructive relationships with fish and wildlife agencies, other public agencies, stakeholders, local governments, and interested parties

The Authorized Entity Group will consist of the Director of DWR, the Regional Director for U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), and representatives of the participating state and federal contractors, if they are issued permits pursuant to the BDCP.

Permit Oversight Group

The Permit Oversight Group, composed of state and federal fish and wildlife agencies, will ensure that the BDCP is being properly implemented by coordinating agency review of BDCP actions and necessary compliance with Implementing Agreement, and associated regulatory authorizations. The Permit Oversight Group will have the following responsibilities, among others:

- Jointly approve changes to conservation measures or biological objectives with the Authorized Entity Group
- Jointly decide adaptive management matters raised by the Adaptive Management Team with the Authorized Entity Group
- Participate in decision-making about real-time operations
- Final decision-making authority for adaptive management and real-time operations decisions
- Provide input into the selection of the Program Manager and Science Manager
- Provide input to ensure that certain sections of the annual work plan and budget are consistent with the BDCP and with agency decisions
- Provide input to ensure the Annual Delta Water Operations Plan is consistent with the BDCP
- Provide input on and accept annual reports
- Provide input on and approve plan amendments

Dispute Resolution

If the Authorized Entity Group or Permit Oversight Group is unable to reach agreement on matters, the dispute will be resolved by taking the following steps:

1. Enlist the assistance of the Program Manager, Science Manager, or others as appropriate.
2. If the matter remains unresolved, the entity with decision-making authority will make a decision.
3. Any member entity of the Authorized Entity Group or the Permit Oversight Group may request review and resolution of the decision at the highest level of the relevant federal department or of the state, up to and including the appropriate department secretary or the Governor of California.

The Stakeholder Council, being an advisory body, will make reasonable efforts to provide input that reflects the general agreement of the members. However, all members will have the right to lodge a dissenting opinion.
Schedule

The BDCP seeks to restore and protect approximately 145,000 acres of habitat over its 50-year permit duration. This graph demonstrates the proposed sequencing of the implementation of habitat identified in the BDCP. As is generally required in conservation plans, the schedule has been developed to ensure that conservation measures are implemented roughly proportional in time and extent to impacts on habitats and covered species. The graph shows restoration and protection occurring gradually. Actual restoration and protection will occur more stepwise as large restoration projects are implemented.

Conservation Measures (CM) that address water operations and other stressors will be implemented beginning soon after permit issuance. Construction of the new conveyance facilities would begin approximately two years after permit issuance and continue for an estimated 9 to 10 years. Operations could begin as early as Year 11.

Cumulative Restored and Protected Acreage
Adaptive Management Team

The Adaptive Management Team will have primary responsibility for administration of the adaptive management program. The team will decide when and on what terms to seek independent science review to evaluate technical issues.

The Adaptive Management Team will be chaired by a Science Manager, and will consist of representatives of DWR, Reclamation, DFW, USFWS, and NMFS; the Interagency Ecological Program Lead Scientist; the State and Federal Contractors Agency Science Manager; and the Director of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Southwest Fisheries Science Center. A Delta Science Program representative will participate in an advisory capacity.

The Adaptive Management Team will have primary responsibility for:

- Primary responsibility for overseeing the functional steps of adaptive management, from problem formulation to proposals to alter conservation measures
- Proposed changes to conservation measures or biological objectives
- Integration of adaptive management and monitoring activities into one cohesive program

Stakeholder Council

The Stakeholder Council will be a forum for interested parties to assess BDCP implementation and to propose ways in which it may be improved. The Council will include broad representation by local governments and agencies; reclamation districts; fishing, hunting and recreation interests; agricultural interests; conservation groups; natural resource scientists; water purveyors; labor; and others.

The Stakeholder Council will form its input in large measure by evaluating whether the proposed action:

- Will adequately contribute to achievement of the goals and objectives of the BDCP,
- Is consistent with the requirements of the BDCP, and/or
- Is consistent with permits and authorizations.