Science Review and Input

Conservation plans require an extensive body of scientific investigation, study, and analysis. In California, the Natural Community Conservation Planning Act (NCCPA) requires the establishment of a process for inclusion of independent science to guide conservation plans as they are developed. The Bay Delta Conservation Plan uses and builds upon extensive scientific investigation, study and analysis of the Delta compiled over several decades, as well as new and ongoing independent research and study. BDCP Chapter 10 details the integration of independent science in the BDCP development.

To meet NCCPA obligations, the BDCP engaged independent scientific advice throughout the planning process and enlisted well-recognized experts in ecological and biological sciences. Six BDCP Independent Science Advisory Panels provided reports on a number of key topics that were used to inform development of the BDCP. See the timeline on the right for more information about the numerous scientific reviews that have guided the BDCP development.
BDCP Science Program: Continuing Independent Science Reviews

Science will continue to play a key role in the BDCP, providing information about the benefits of habitat restoration and increased flows for sensitive fish species, among other issues.

As part of the BDCP implementation, a Science Manager will be selected to manage the BDCP Science Program. The Science Program will be open, transparent, and collaborative. It will provide decision-makers and the public with the best science possible on the Delta, and should increase confidence in the results of BDCP implementation.

The information generated by the BDCP Science Program and BDCP’s extensive Adaptive Management program will be put to practical use, as BDCP is implemented (see Draft BDCP Chapter 6, Plan Implementation, and Chapter 7, Implementation Structure, for more information).

Areas of uncertainty or disagreement will be identified, such as the ecological role of freshwater flows during certain seasons. Through the BDCP process, it will be determined whether the area of uncertainty can be tested with timely, valid scientific research that is also logistically and economically feasible. Over time, such research should provide data that better informs future management and regulatory decisions.