

The 2015 State of the Estuary Report

WHAT: The San Francisco Estuary Partnership (SFEP) intends to produce a *2015 State of the Estuary Report* --the purpose of the report is to provide a well-reasoned synthesis of the ecological health of the Bay Delta system, a goal that requires a good deal of professional judgment. SFEP sees this document as part of a series, as we completed our second *State of the Bay* report in 2011 (note we did not have funding to address issues in the Delta at that time); the first health assessment having been completed in 1992. SFEP is aiming for a document, like the 2011 report, that is built on a scientifically credible foundation so that it can continue to be reassessed and improved in coming years.

The goal (what SFEP wants to achieve): SFEP's goal is to prepare a *State of the Estuary* report that provides an assessment of the ecological condition of the estuarine ecosystem. The report must be scientifically credible, using high-quality available data with transparent and scientifically valid methods. In addition, the findings must be synthesized and presented in a manner that is easily understood by the public and accessible to the mainstream media (such as a "report card"). The completed projects will demonstrate the mechanism that SFEP will continue to use on an ongoing, periodic basis to report on the ecological condition of the estuary. As restoration of the estuary is a key part of SFEP's mission, a periodic *State of the Estuary* report is one way for SFEP to evaluate its success.

Intended audience (who we want to influence): The primary audience for this report will be the agency and organizational decision makers and managers who have a primary role in: 1) deciding what issues will receive time and money expenditures, and 2) in developing policy and programs that address the health of the Bay Delta. Secondly, the audience is the general public and their elected representatives, as informed through the mass media including the Internet. The summary of the report will therefore need to be free of jargon and technical concepts, but must be prepared in a manner that maintains scientific credibility. The results will be presented in easily interpreted manner, such as "conditions are getting better, getting worse, or staying the same." The report is not intended to be of primary value to the scientific, engineering, or research community.

New Elements of the 2015 State of the Estuary Report: An effort will be made to include key ecological health indicators for the Delta in the 2015 report. This will require strong integration and assistance from the Delta scientific community, the California Estuary Monitoring Workgroup, the Delta Science Program, the Delta Stewardship Council, the Delta Conservancy, and the Interagency Ecological Program, to determine what indicators [health measurements] and benchmarks [publically or scientifically derived markers of progress toward a defined health measurement] can be included in the 2015 Report.

In addition, all 2011 report indicators and benchmarks are being reviewed, will be updated, revised or discarded depending on the outcome of the review. For questions about the development of the *2015 State of the Estuary Report* please contact Letitia Grenier, Ph.D., letitiag@gmail.com or Judy Kelly jakelly@waterboards.ca.gov.

The *2011 State of the Bay Report* may be viewed here <http://www.sfestuary.org/about-the-estuary/sotb/>