

South Delta

IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM

The South Delta Improvements Program (SDIP) is a balanced approach to water management. It proposes a series of actions to improve water quality and protect salmon in the South Delta, and meet the water needs of California's growing population.

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) have prepared a draft Environmental Impact Statement/ Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) to implement the SDIP. The public is encouraged to participate in an extensive review of the proposed program.

Core Components of the Plan

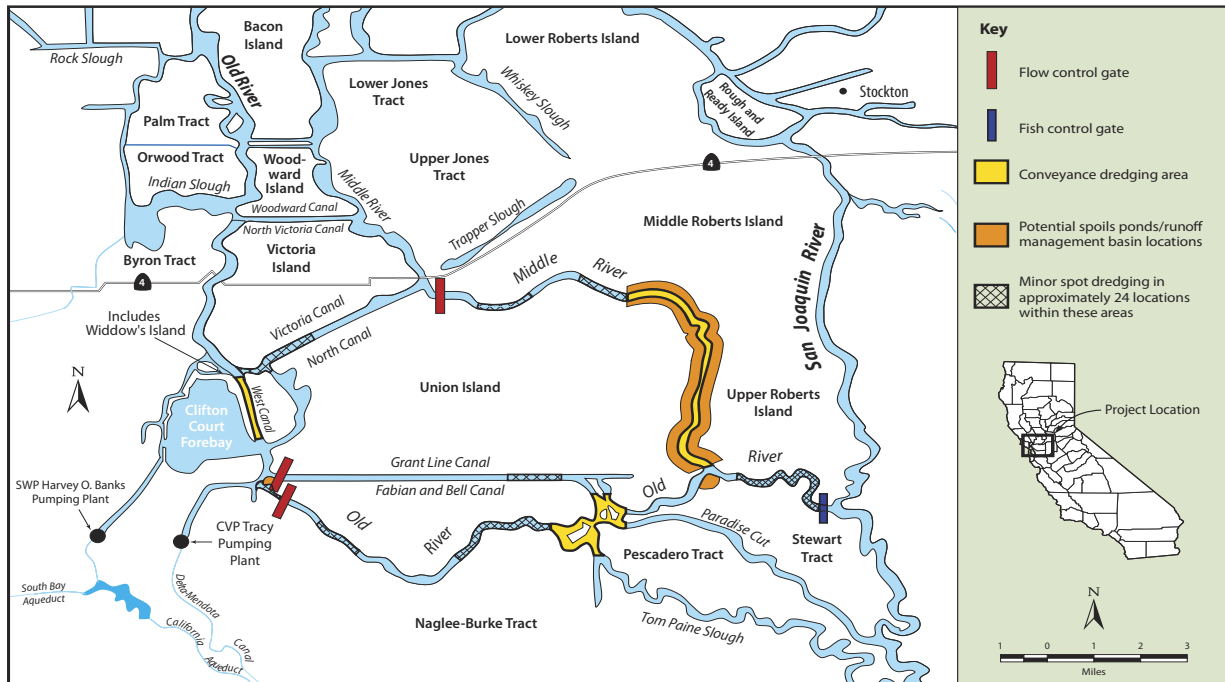
Physical/Structural Components:

- Constructing four permanent gates to improve water levels, circulation patterns, and protect salmon in the South Delta.
- Limited dredging in some Delta channels to improve water conveyance and access by irrigators.

Operational Component:

- Using existing facilities, increase the maximum permitted State Water Project diversion from the Delta to 8,500 cubic feet per second when water is available and environmental conditions allow. This change would increase total water diverted from the Delta for state and federal water deliveries, and water transfers about 3 percent to 5 percent on an annual average basis.

Preferred Physical/Structural Component



Delta Fish Conditions

In recent years, there have been dramatic and unexplained declines in certain fish species in the Delta. Federal and state fish agencies are conducting an extensive, in-depth scientific review to determine the cause of the decline of problems with certain pelagic (open water) species, including the delta smelt. As new information becomes available, DWR and Reclamation will do additional environmental analysis before selecting an operational component for the SDIP.

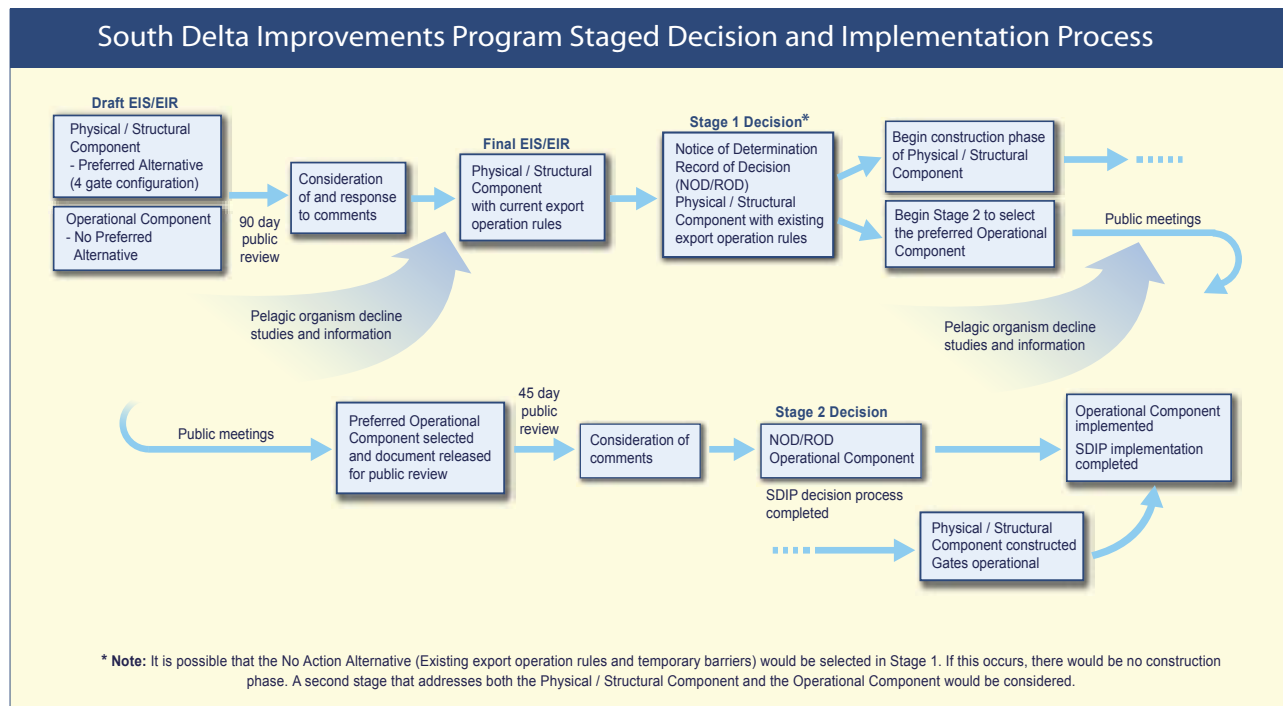
Two-Stage Decision-Making Process

Stage 1: Public Review and Decision on Proposed Physical/Structural Component

A 90-day public comment period follows the release of the EIR/EIS. Public meetings and hearings will be held in several locations throughout California. At the end of the comment period, DWR and Reclamation will prepare a final EIS/EIR that responds to public and agency comments, and issue a Notice of Determination/Record of Decision on the physical/structural component.

Stage 2: Public Review and Decision on Proposed Operational Component

During Stage 2, new information about conditions that are impacting Delta fish may become available and will be incorporated into the decision-making process. A supplemental document, consistent with environmental law, will be circulated for at least 45 days to provide the public an opportunity to review and comment on the plan. A second Notice of Determination/Record of Decision which addresses the operational component of the SDIP will be issued to complete Stage 2.



SDIP is an important step in planning for the state's water future...crucial to help protect the Delta infrastructure and ecosystem...and crucial to manage the water resource needs of all Californians.