

Coalition for a Sustainable Delta

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STATEMENT FROM THE COALITION FOR A SUSTAINABLE DELTA ON TODAY'S FEDERAL DISTRICT COURT RULING ON DELTA WATER ISSUES

"The delta crisis is now a full blown catastrophe. We have effectively relinquished control of our major water supply systems – the lifeblood of our economy – to the federal courts," said Michael Boccadoro, spokesperson for the Coalition for a Sustainable Delta. "The truly sad part is today's court action will do nothing to protect the endangered Delta smelt, but will clearly further threaten our state's economic stability and the 25 million Californians who depend on the Delta for water."

Environmental groups took advantage of the Endangered Species Act and the uncertainty about the delta smelt's decline to force the Federal Court action. Today's court decision will significantly curtail the pumps which provide water to the State Water Project (SWP) and federal Central Valley Project (CVP). The Court's action came despite a clear and growing body of scientific evidence that the pumps play a limited and insignificant role in the smelt's decline.

According to Dr. Bryan Manly, one of the world's preeminent ecological statisticians, the CVP and SWP operations have an insignificant effect on the Delta smelt population. He and other scientists have identified a host of other factors – invasive species, unscreened in-delta diversions, municipal waste discharges, toxic urban and ag run-off and major power plant operations – as the root of the cause.

"You simply cannot solve a problem by addressing four percent of the root cause," said Boccadoro. "Until state and federal regulators and the courts turn their attention to the true causes and take appropriate actions, the state's economy and residents will remain unduly threatened."

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The Coalition for a Sustainable Delta is an ad hoc group of water users who depend on the Delta for a large portion of their water supplies. The Coalition is dedicated to protecting the Delta and is committed to promoting a strategy to ensure its sustainability.

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