



## **DELTA WATER PACKAGE IS NOT A DELTA FIX!**

**Despite the efforts of senate leadership late in the 2009 session, the Delta water package is still not the right solution to solve California's water crisis.**

The Legislature declined to take the package up for a vote on the last day of session for good reason, and so far, the package has not improved.

First and foremost, the policy bill was linked with an irresponsible, \$12 billion General Obligation Bond that:

- Provided \$3 billion to build environmentally harmful dams, the most expensive and least effective water supply option;
- Creates a debt service of \$800 million per year for 30 years, meaning \$800 million in additional cuts to services and programs funded by the General Fund.

Second, the Delta Policy bill language contained several problematic features, including;

- The establishment of the legally **undefined** “co-equal goals” as a policy imperative that will create even more uncertainty and litigation around the Delta’s water supply.
- The creation of a “Delta Stewardship Council” in the same mold as the late CALFED Bay Delta Authority – an additional layer of bureaucracy that lacks the authority to direct actions in the Delta and the funding to pay for needed actions.
- Ineffective mechanisms to achieve 20% urban water conservation target by 2020.

Finally, the Delta Policy omitted actions that are vital for saving the Delta, such as

- State Agency reform. Agencies such as the State Water Board and the Department of Fish and Game already have the authority to take the actions needed to save the Delta, including making in-stream flow determinations.
- The need to address third-party impacts. Everyone agrees that Delta actions will impact the environment, communities and jobs, yet the legislation is silent on all issues except for legally required mitigation.
- A sustainable funding mechanism. Fixing the Delta is expensive, and requires a long-term financial plan that includes new revenue sources, such as well-defined fees, revenue bonds, and federal funds.

## **WHAT CALIFORNIA CAN DO NOW!!**

Instead of taking a hasty vote on this half-baked package, the Legislature should demand that the administration tap the nearly \$300 million authorized in 2008 for emergency actions in the Delta (SB2x1, 2008). These funds can be used NOW to immediately begin restoring the Delta, while allowing the legislature the time needed to develop a smarter policy and funding package.