

San Joaquin coalition should look in the mirror

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A group of Stockton and San Joaquin County officials has shown a renewed interest in the current processes attempting to improve the ailing Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The group, called the San Joaquin County Delta Initiative Coalition, makes sense since much of the City of Stockton and San Joaquin County are within the primary and secondary zones of the Delta.

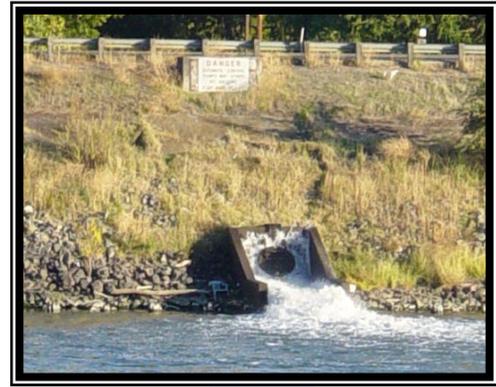
San Joaquin County officials and local leaders need to be more involved. Emerging plans for the Delta will have far-reaching impacts for the region and productive local input has been missing in many of these processes.

This group also has another unique opportunity and it should take it. The coalition needs to take a step back, look at itself in the mirror, and ask not what the Delta can do for them, but what they can do for the Delta.

Many key stressors on the Delta ecosystem originate in the Stockton/San Joaquin County region. A major concern has been wastewater and stormwater runoff that continues to cause pollution in the estuary. In-Delta diversions are also a contributor to the decline of the Delta.

The City of Stockton Regional Wastewater Control Facility, which processes all of Stockton's and much of San Joaquin County's sewage, received over \$60,000 in fines for violations last winter. A large portion of the fines came in relation to thousands of pounds of

excess ammonia, which is known to be extremely toxic to the Delta ecosystem.



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In addition, stormwater runoff from Stockton's and San Joaquin County's separate municipal stormwater sewage system (MS4), exceeded their MS4 permit's water quality objectives 17 times during last winter's reporting period; this included exceeding discharge levels for aluminum, copper, iron, zinc, E. coli, fecal coliform, and dissolved oxygen, all of which can have severe detrimental effects on the Delta ecosystem.

While it is important for stakeholders in the region to get involved in the planning processes that will shape the future of the region, it is also important that they acknowledge their own roles in the current ecosystem collapse in the Delta.



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A Project of the Coalition for a Sustainable Delta