



2022-2026 Science Action Agenda

Distilling Top Delta Management Questions | January 2021

What Are the Top Delta Management Questions?

The Delta Science Program facilitated the collaborative development of a list of top Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Delta) management questions as part of the update to the [Science Action Agenda](#) (SAA) – a regularly-updated science guide, created by and for the Delta community, that prioritizes and aligns science actions to inform the region’s management and science funding decisions. The SAA helps guide millions of dollars in funding, promotes collaborations, and galvanizes research in the Delta.

The 2022-2026 SAA update identifies priority questions that hone in on key uncertainties in Delta management and have enterprise-wide application. A subset of these top questions will be incorporated into the 2022-2026 SAA, forming the foundation for priority science actions.

Why Is It Important to Identify Management Questions?

This priority list of management questions will help inform future science investments that will respond to pressing Delta-wide management needs. The collaborative, transparent, and rigorous development of the list was done in response to recommendations from the Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee (DPIIC).

“The efforts that the Delta Science Program is undertaking to update the SAA with a cohesive set of questions will be extremely beneficial for us. It will help guide and direct our future efforts.”

– Jeff McClain, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

How Was the List of Top Delta Management Questions Developed?

To create the initial list of management questions, the Delta Science Program engaged with over 30 collaborative groups, circulated an online survey, and, beginning in early 2020, reviewed relevant documents and reports. Through this effort, managers, scientists, and stakeholders submitted 1,279 questions.

To refine the list, the Delta Science Program conducted the following efforts:



Screened, sorted, and merged the list of questions to reduce redundancies, resulting in a shortened list of 1,181 questions.



Formed an advisory committee of participants from the 2019 DPIIC Science Funding and Governance Initiative to help guide workshop planning.



Hosted a workshop with over 85 participants from federal, state, and local agencies, academia, non-governmental organizations, and water entities on September 29, 2020 to discuss, edit, and prioritize the list of 1,181 questions.



Circulated two online surveys, before and after the September workshop, to seek additional feedback on the questions from registered participants.



Incorporated participant feedback, further merging and refining the list.

The final list of 65 top questions is sorted by relevant management themes and based on rankings from the post-workshop survey.

"We see that there's tremendous value in having a common set of management questions developed collaboratively, with all stakeholders, and that these questions may/can help guide our research efforts."

– Darcy Austin, State Water Contractors

What's Next for the SAA Update?

A subset of the top questions will be selected, based on criteria and survey responses, for incorporation in the 2022-2026 SAA. The selected management questions will inform the identification of broader management needs (winter 2021) and a set of responsive science actions (spring 2021).

How Can I Get Involved and Learn More?

For more information on the 2017-2021 or 2022-2026 SAAs and how to participate in upcoming workshops and events, please visit scienceactionagenda.deltacouncil.ca.gov or email SAA@deltacouncil.ca.gov.

"The SAA is a tool that is very valuable in identifying science gaps that exist in the Delta that are necessary to fill to inform management decisions... ...I want to encourage you to support and participate in the SAA development. It's a very important tool, worthy of your time, effort, and interest."

– Randy Fiorini, Delta Stewardship Council (retired)