

Why is the Delta so important – and why can't we “fix” it?

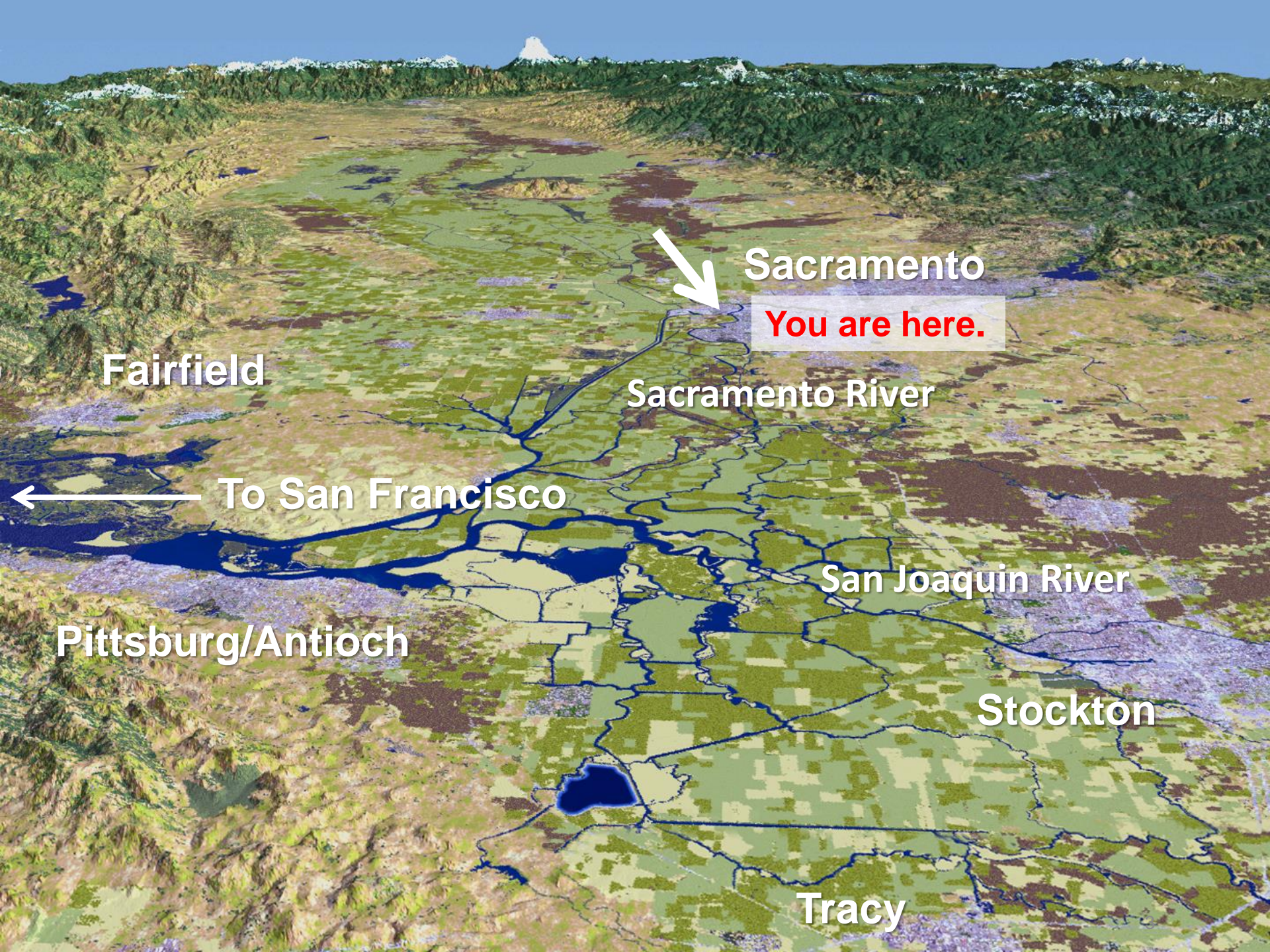
Jessica R. Pearson,
Executive Officer
Delta Stewardship Council

June 5, 2019



Overview of today's talk

- What is the Delta?
- How have human policy choices shaped the Delta?
- Why is the Delta so important to California?
- What are the major challenges facing the Delta?
- How is the Delta managed? Council's role?
- Looking ahead and things to think about on the tour



Sacramento

You are here.

Sacramento River

Fairfield

To San Francisco

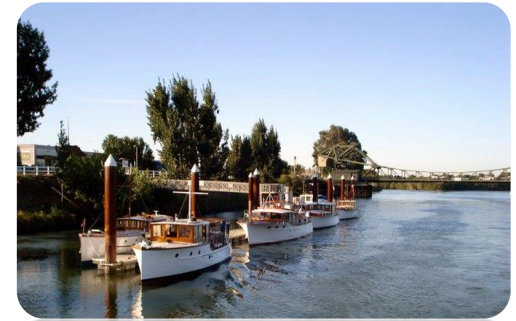
San Joaquin River

Pittsburg/Antioch

Stockton

Tracy

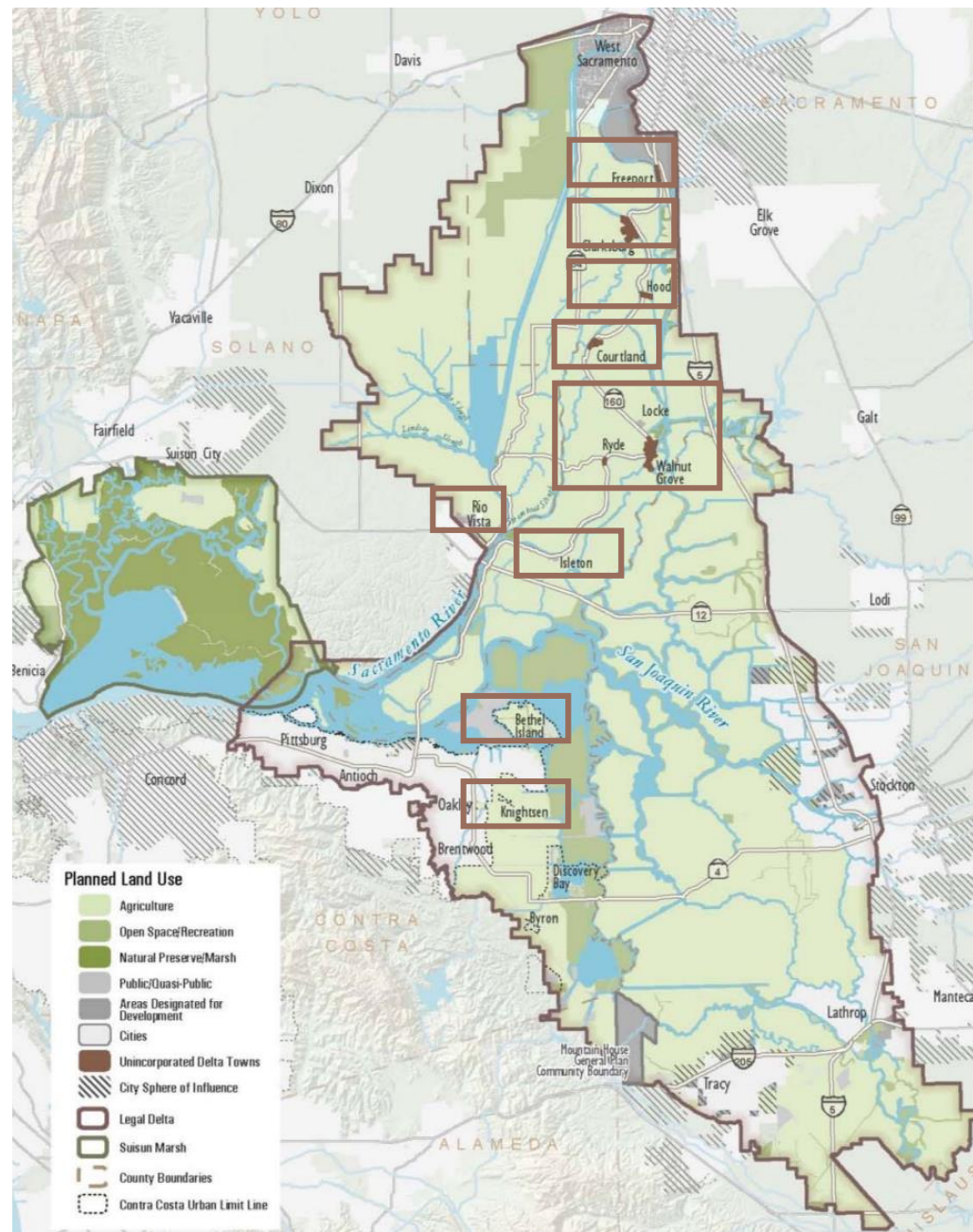
What is the Delta?



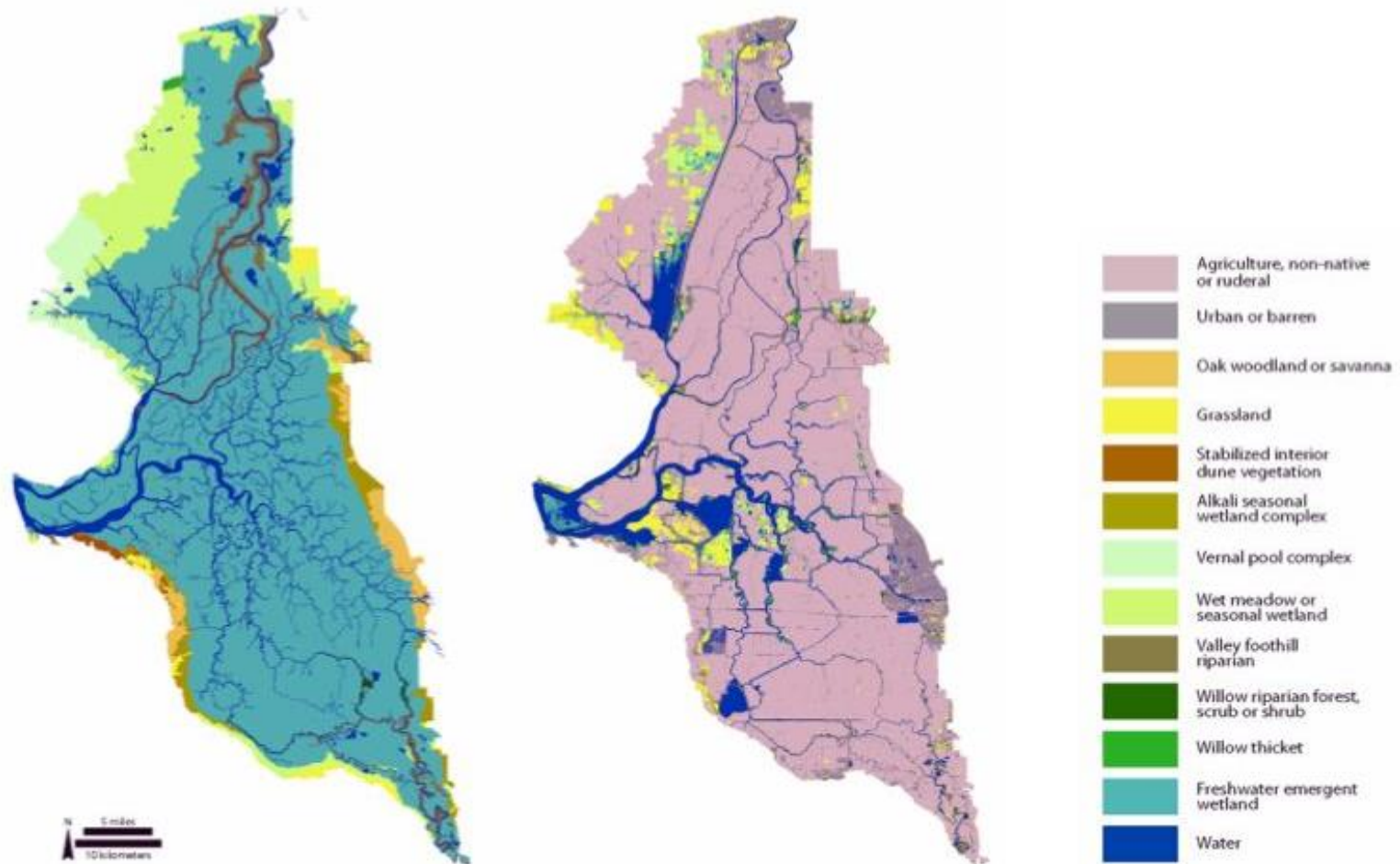
- The Delta is...
 - Home to more than 515,000 people
 - Home to 750 plant and animal species
 - Hub of California's water supply

Delta legacy communities

- Bethel Island
- Clarksburg
- Courtland
- Freeport
- Hood
- Isleton
- Knightsen
- Locke
- Rio Vista
- Ryde
- Walnut Grove



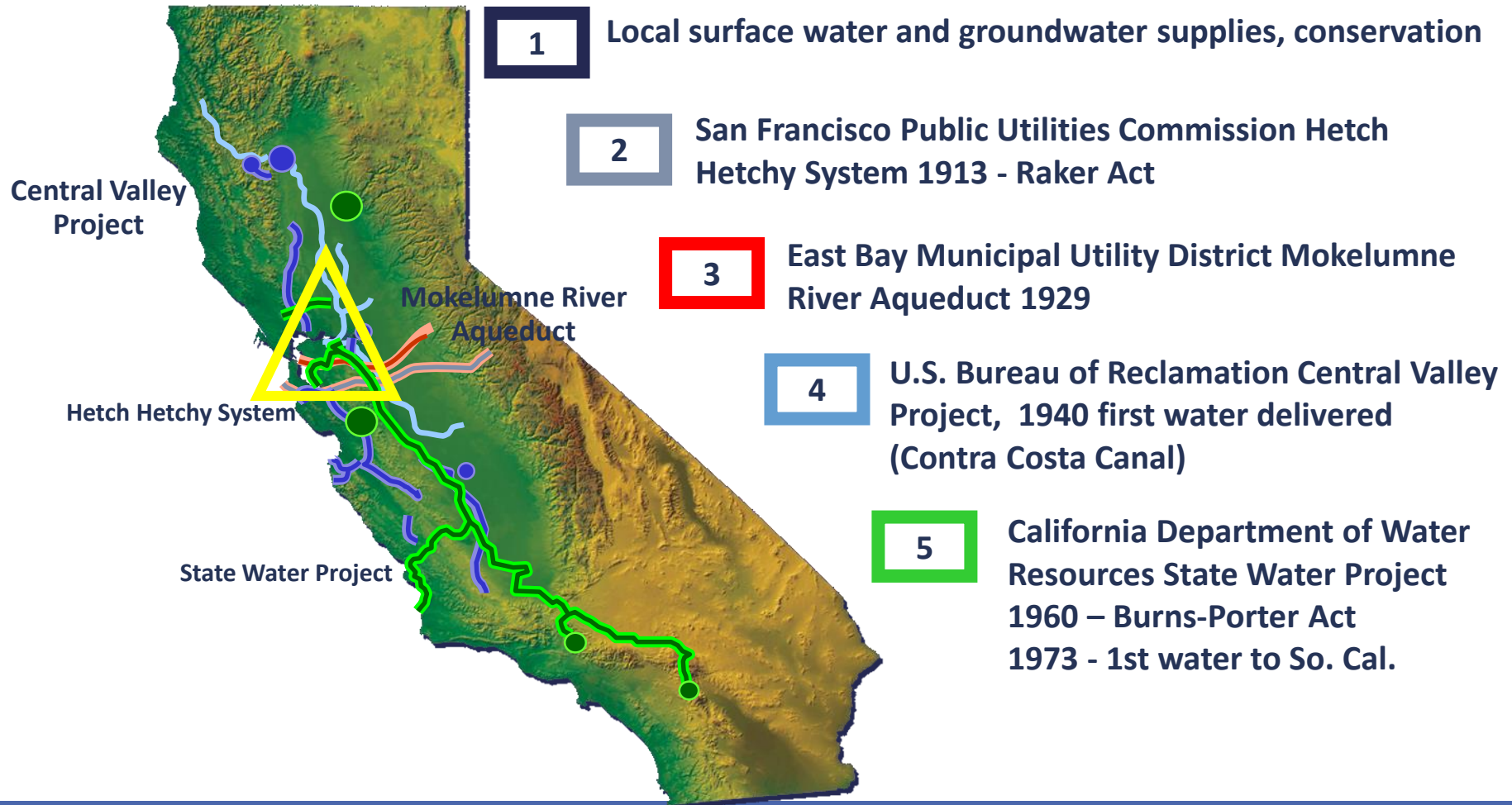
How has the Delta changed over time?



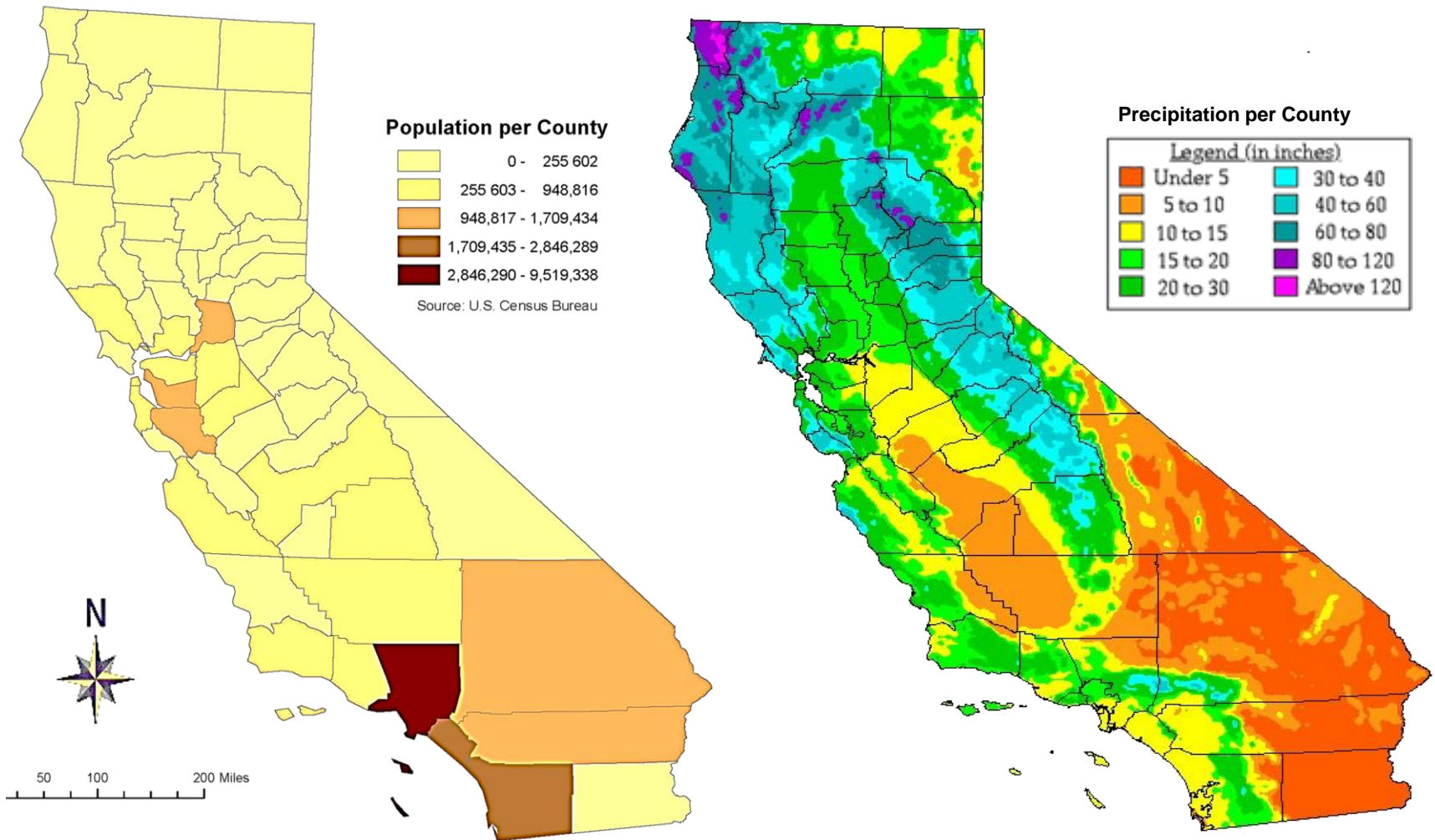
Change in Delta land cover, early 1800s to early 2000s. Graphic by SFEI-ASC

How has the Delta changed over time? cont.

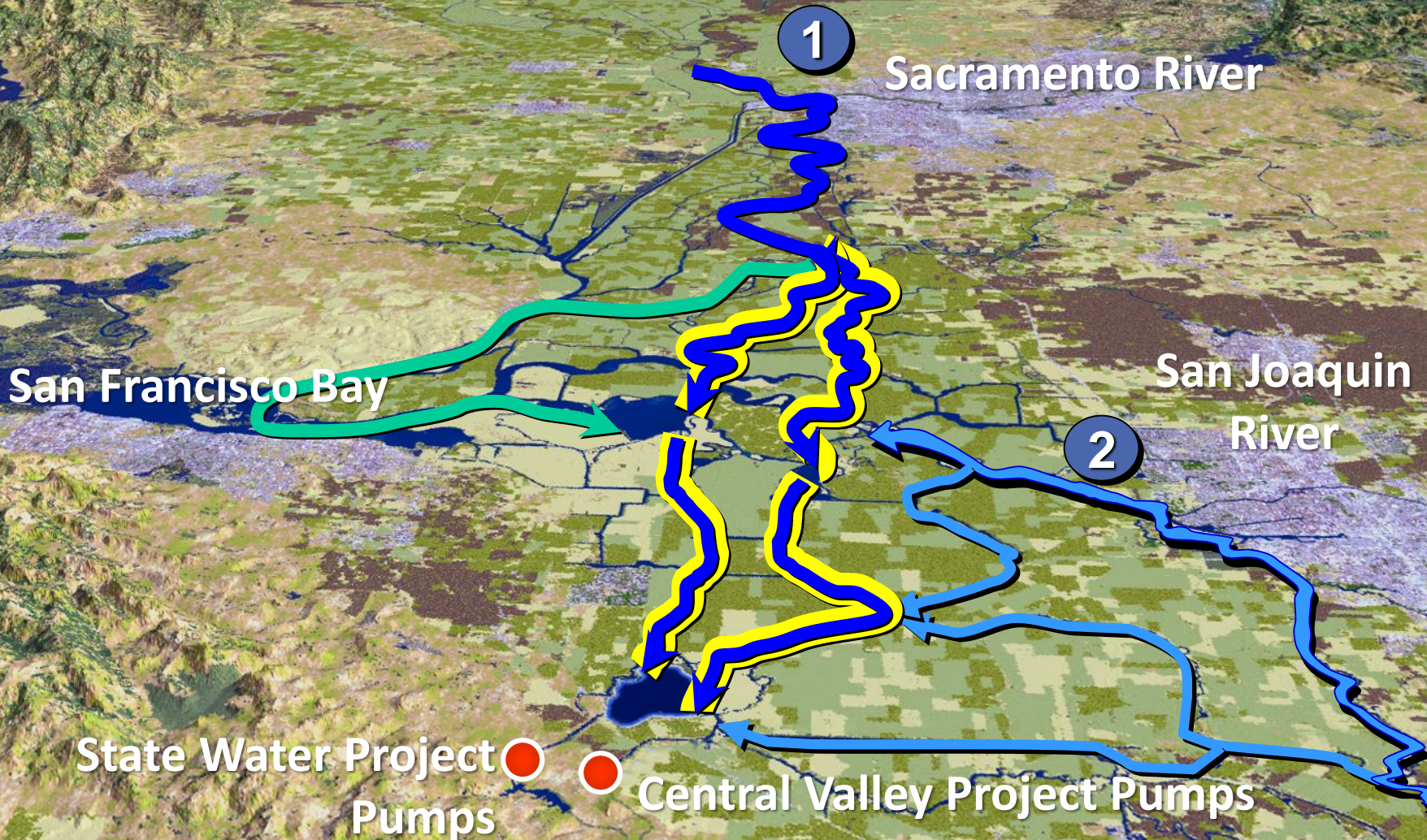
Evolution of California's water storage and delivery systems



Why is the Delta so important to California?



How is water moved across the Delta?



Water from the Delta supplies California's cities and farms

The Delta

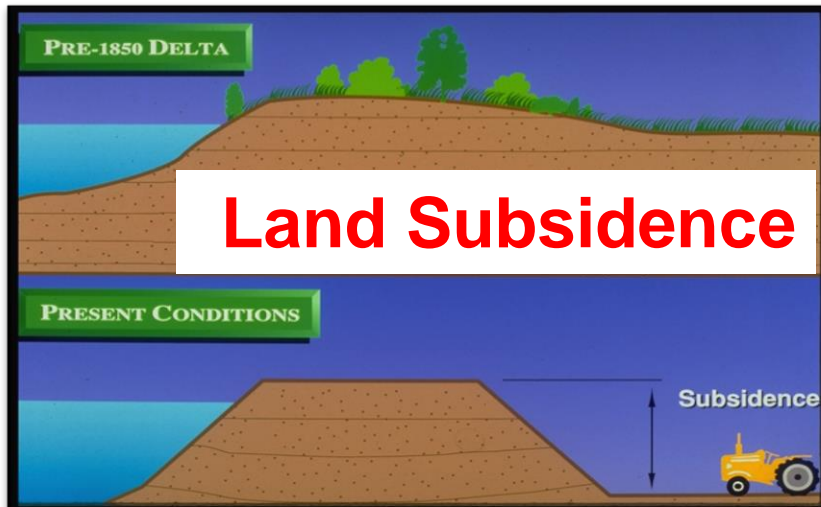
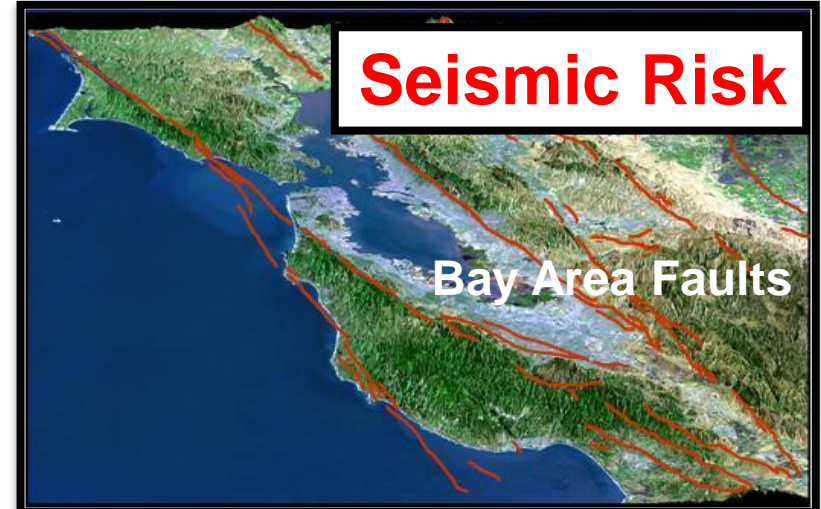
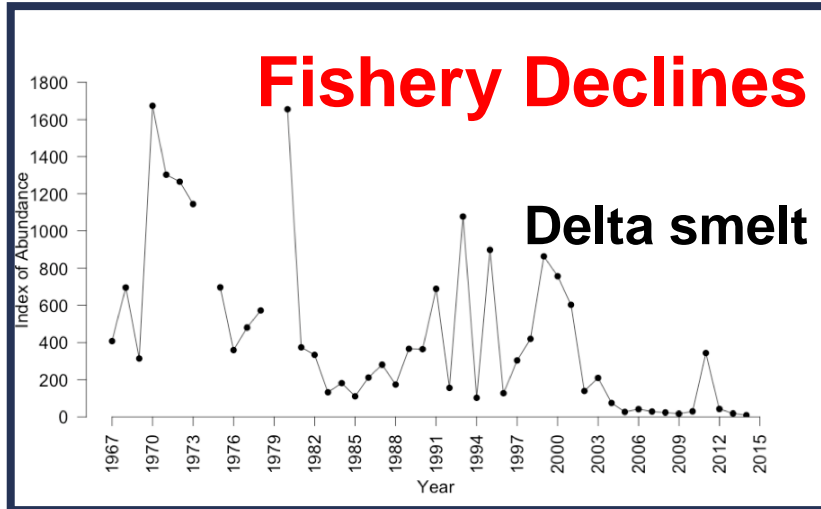
**Bay Area –
33%**

Central Valley – 23 to 90%

**Central Coast –
2 to 30 %**

Southern California – 30%

Major challenges





**CHALLENGES FACING
THE SACRAMENTO-SAN JOAQUIN DELTA**

Complex, chaotic or simply cantankerous?

SAMUEL N. LUOMA, CLIFFORD N. DAHM, MICHAEL HEALEY, JOHNNIE N. MOORE



How are we moving forward in the face of these challenges?

The Delta Stewardship Council



- CA Delta Reform Act of 2009 created the Council
- Charged with providing direction for the long-term future and management of the Delta and achieving the coequal goals:
 - Long-term reliable water supply
 - Protect and restore Delta ecosystems
 -all while protecting the Delta as a place



What is the Delta Plan?

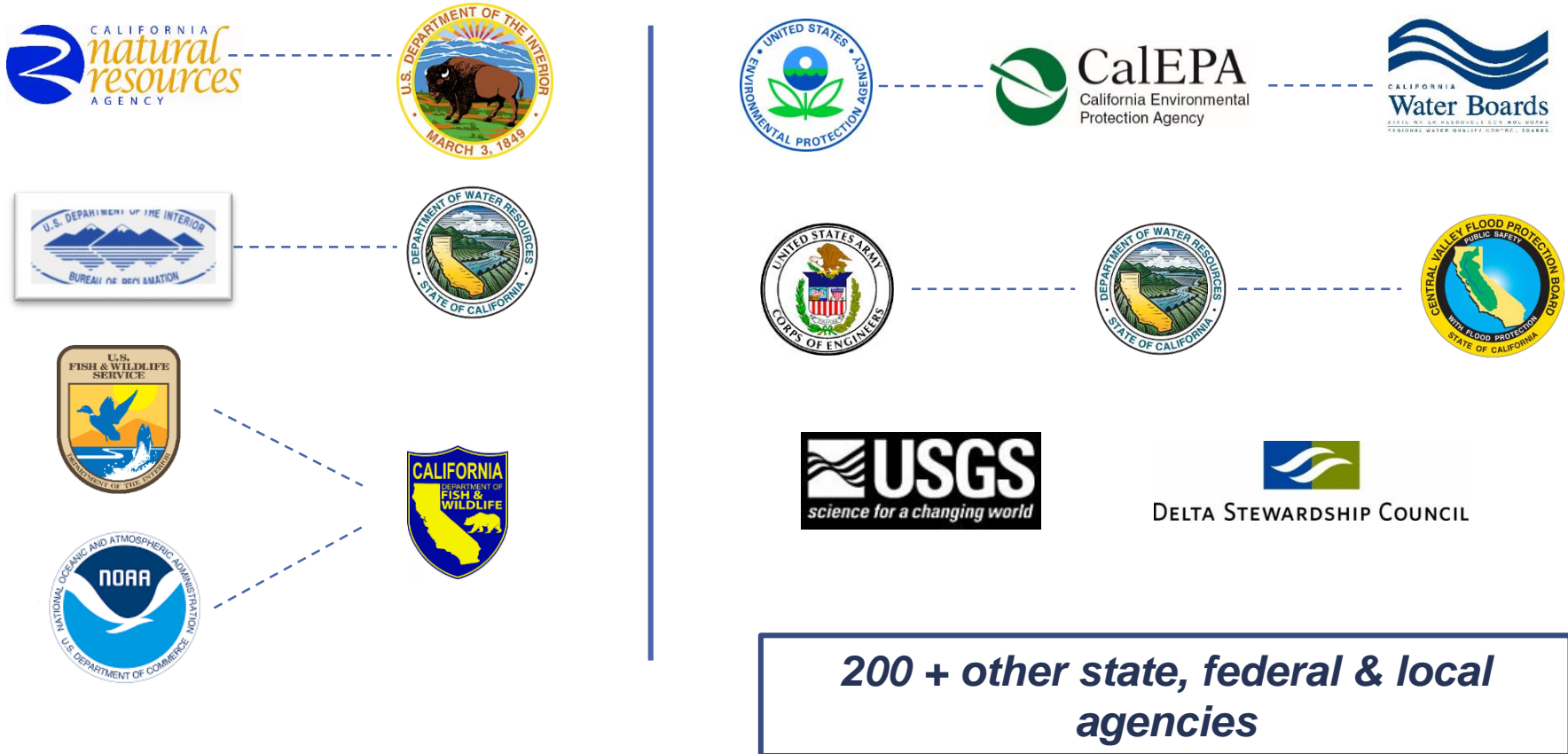
Recommendations, regulations, and performance measures for:

- Water conservation and efficiency
- Flood risk reduction
- Ecosystem restoration
- Water supply reliability and water storage
- Protect the Delta as a unique place
- Ensure best available science and adaptive management



Implementation of the Delta Plan is an interagency effort led by the Delta Stewardship Council

Who we work with



Council's key roles and activities

Implementing the Delta Plan

- Covered action authority
- Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee
- Measuring performance

Connecting decision-makers with the best science

- Synthesis, peer review, identifying and funding high-priority science

Amending the Delta Plan

- Setting priorities for state investment in Delta levees
- Promoting options for conveyance, storage, operations
- Weaving together a plan for ecosystem enhancement

Today's takeaways

- Delta's challenges are direct and indirect results of past policy decisions
- Looking ahead: Much work to do
- Any proposal will require tradeoffs – and trust
- The Council's comprehensive approach
 - Use science to increase likelihood of success
 - Landscape scale restoration and planning
 - Reduce reliance on the Delta
 - 'Portfolio' approach to water management

Questions?



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Join the conversation online:



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