

From: [Chad Roberts](#)
To: [Sheila Allen](#)
Cc: [Lucas Frerichs](#); [Clerkoftheboard](#); [Bob Schneider](#); ["Sara Husby"](#); [Mica Bennett](#); ["Jim Barrett"](#); ["Alan Pryor "](#); [Ryan Pistochini](#); [Kristin Sicke](#)
Subject: Comments Re BOS Agenda Item 26 - Presentation Delta/Yolo Bypass Water Planning
Date: Saturday, September 5, 2026 2:56:43 PM

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Dear Supervisor Allen,

On Tuesday the 8th, the Board will receive a presentation from staff and make decisions regarding ongoing water resources planning issues affecting Yolo County. For the most part I concur with staff recommendations for BOS action, although I also have the following comments about concerns for water resources valued by Yolo County citizens, now as well as in the future.

A primary concern is that I do not believe that the comments forwarded by the county to state and federal agencies working on Delta and Bypass plans fully identify the concerns of many Yolo County citizens for environmental resources and values that are embedded in these multi-regional, statewide, and federal planning activities. The staff presentation clearly indicates that the county recognize the centrality of Yolo County in the ultimate compliance of state and federal government agencies in essential habitat management related to water projects in California.

As you know, the county's HCP/NCCP addressed selected wildlife habitat needs within the Delta and Bypass, but it does not address habitat issues related to fish, although these values are included in the county-adopted Resource Conservation Investment Strategy/Local Conservation Plan (RCIS/LCP), as well as in the county's adopted land use plans. I think it would be beneficial (and certainly would reflect citizen concerns) if the BOS added conservation-related (and multi-benefit) enhancements as outcomes that the county wishes to have considered as the planning progresses for the large-scale state and federal plans.

A second concern that I think warrants recognition is the recently established restoration focus for the lower Cache Creek watershed. This focus incorporates locally identified concerns for restoration within the county under the 1996 CCAP. The Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) Comprehensive Study really should address the effects of the CCAP and lower-watershed habitat restoration together with Bypass enhancements, because the ACOE study will functionally direct (or limit) what federal funding may be available to the county in the future. In my opinion this concern is also relevant for recently identified land subsidence issues resulting from groundwater overdrafting in the northeastern part of the county during recent drought-related conditions in the county and the upper Sacramento River basin.

The SGMA/subsidence-related concerns are fundamentally only part of a larger issue, which is how well or how adequately the Comprehensive Study and the State Plan of Flood Control incorporate potential consequences of climate change on the county, and on flows and flooding potential in the Bypass in particular. The Central Valley Flood Protection Board is the state entity that should most directly address these concerns, but I think it's in Yolo County's best interests to express concerns about what the future conditions will be and how they will affect the county. I don't think the county's current statement of concerns adequately incorporates these issues.

As a case in point, the near-failure of existing Bypass structure and operations to deal with flooding in 1997 raises real concerns about the effects of future meteorological climate conditions, given the known capacity of the current Bypass to address “100-year conveyance” hydrology for the Sacramento River. California is currently looking at a potentially record El Nino this winter, with potentially significant rainfall events a real possibility, and climate projections are unequivocal that future rainfall events may be more intense than have been seen in the past. I don’t personally have a good sense of how climate change-driven increased flows through the Bypass have been incorporated into current planning. Will substantial levee-height increases be required to address future flows? Will substantial setbacks of existing Bypass levees be needed to increase conveyance capacity? Are events such as [ARkStorm](#) and [ARkStorm 2.0](#) included in current planning, especially in the Comprehensive Study?

In my opinion, the county should look further into the future than issues based on the set of concerns identified 5 to 10 years (and more) in the past. I know that the county has limited budget and staff to address these planning issues, but I also know that there will be another General Plan update process initiated within the next 5 or 10 years, and the kinds of concerns identified above will certainly be included in those that need to be addressed.

Thanks,

Chad

Chad Roberts, Ph.D., Conservation Ecologist
Professional Wetland Scientist (*emeritus*), Society of Wetland Scientists
Senior Ecologist (*emeritus*), Ecological Society of America

“Conservation is a practice informed by the best evidence-based science and place-based knowledge whose outcomes protect and restore the natural environment — including its air, soil, water, biological diversity, ecosystem processes, and evolutionary potential — to ensure equitable benefits derived from nature and safeguard its value for current and future generations of all life.” – *Soc. Conserv. Biol. North America*