



Weston Ranch

# Strategic Plan

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**SAN JOAQUIN AREA**  
FLOOD CONTROL AGENCY

# Letter from the Chair of the Board of Directors for the San Joaquin Area Flood Control Agency (Agency)



Our first Strategic Plan – adopted in 2019 – articulated the Agency’s mission, clearly defined the fundamental goals and objectives by which to measure progress and set targets for delivery and accountability. The plan is a “living” document. As such, it’s appropriate to revisit our goals and objectives in the context of both progress and changing conditions. Over the last several years, the San Joaquin Area Flood Control Agency (SJAFC or Agency) has accomplished several important flood risk reduction and management actions to include:

- Completing the second construction season of the Smith Canal Gate Project.
- Partnering with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the State of California’s Department of Water Resources through signed local and federal Project Partnership Agreements and working with these partners to advance the engineering and design work required to build the first increment of the Lower San Joaquin River Project.
- Receiving more than \$40 million in Federal appropriations to deliver the Lower San Joaquin River Project and preparing for receipt of Federal funding this coming fiscal year and into the foreseeable future.
- Completing the Urban Flood Risk Reduction (UFRR) study in Mossdale Tract, setting the stage for the design and environmental permitting phase, and garnering additional state and (potentially) federal investment in this area of our region.
- Leading regional planning through the Department of Water Resource’s Regional Flood Management Planning update and identifying partnerships to advance the Paradise Cut and South Delta Restoration Project.

While we’re proud of the work we’ve accomplished, we’re at a pivotal point in our region’s approach to flood risk reduction and management. Critical activities in the coming years include:

- Complete the Smith Canal Gate structure.
- Prioritize solutions to reduce flood risks in the Mossdale basin and the Stockton metropolitan area while complying with SB-5 requirements.
- Support the continued advancement of the federal Lower San Joaquin River Project through close partnership with the State of California and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.
- Continue to strengthen our relationships across the region, and importantly, with our local agencies, community and business members, and non-governmental organizations as we look for mutual goals and strategic alignment.

We encourage continued community engagement and agency partnerships, like those that set the tone for our accomplishments over the last several years. Together we will reduce our flood risk, promote economic stability, and ensure our communities are safer places to live, work and play.

Dan Wright  
*Chair of the Board*  
*San Joaquin Area Flood Control Agency*

## **Mission**

**Reduce and manage the region's flood risk.**

- 1 Plan for and Implement System Resiliency**
- 2 Drive for Operational Transparency**
- 3 Facilitate Funding Structures that are Most Beneficial to Local Interests**
- 4 Support Appropriate, Mutually Beneficial Partnerships**
- 5 Promote Public and Institutional Awareness**

## **Goals**



# Introduction

## PURPOSE

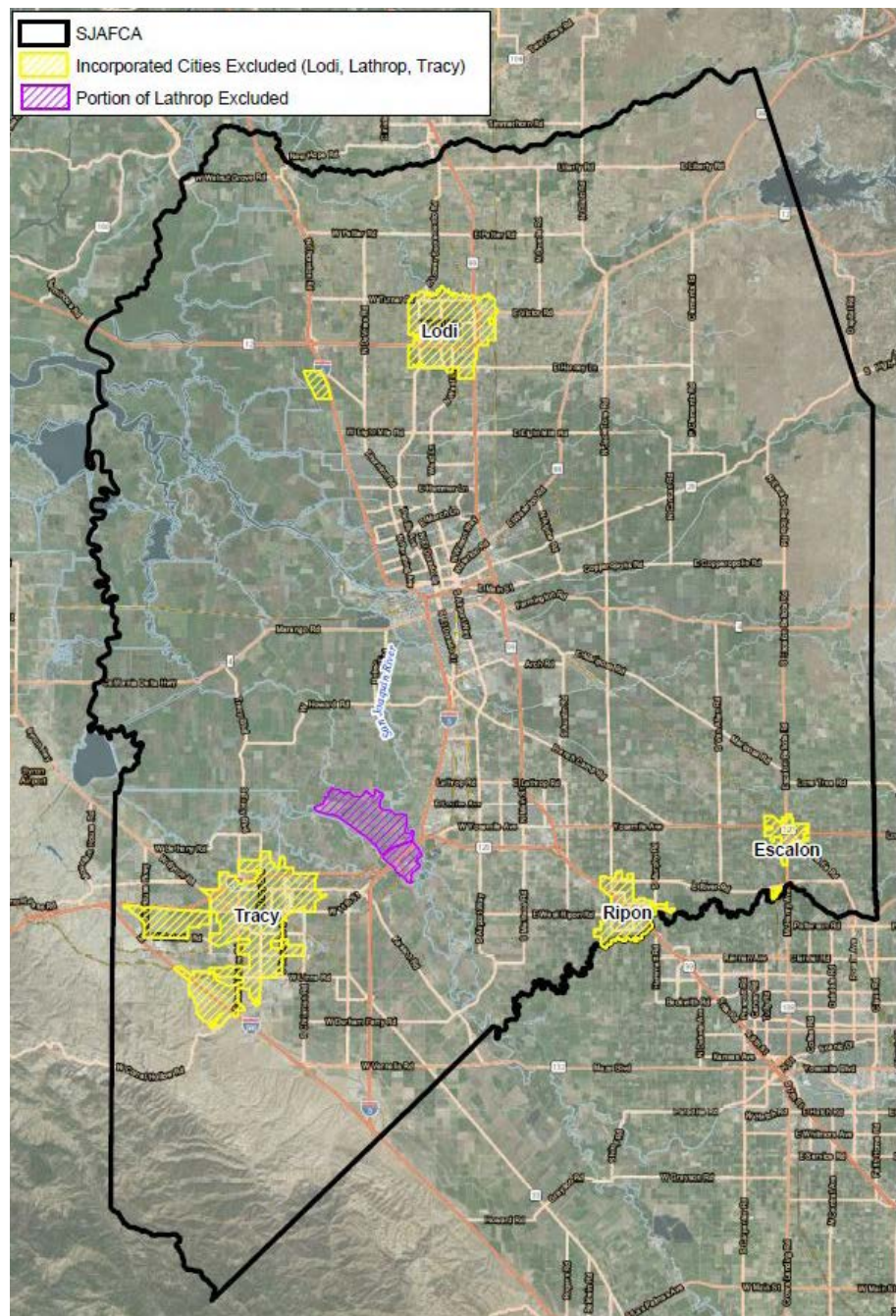
This Strategic Plan presents the San Joaquin Area Flood Control Agency's (SJAFCA) mission statement, goals, objectives, and priority actions. This document provides policy guidance to inform the agency's approach, decisions, investments, and actions as flood risk management programs develop within the region.

## REGIONAL SETTING

SJAFCA's mission is to reduce and manage flood risk within most of San Joaquin County (**FIGURE 1**). The County resides at the lower end of the San Joaquin River Basin and at the front end of the southern portion of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta in the Central Valley of California. The basin contains a system of levees, channels, bypasses, reservoirs, and other flood conveyance facilities to reduce flooding in the basin. Commingled floodplains are characteristic of this region, especially near metropolitan Stockton, growing portions of Manteca and Lathrop. Delta water levels are also a concern because high flows from the Sacramento River may "fill" the Delta prior to a peak inflow on the San Joaquin River as occurred in 1997, placing additional pressure on the Delta front levees.

The lower San Joaquin River system, much of it found within SJAFCA's boundaries, was originally built by local landowners prior to modern engineering knowledge, standards, and criteria. The system provides protection to urban and rural communities with populations estimated at 235,000, more than \$28B in property, over 71,000 acres of mixed-use land, critical infrastructure, and sensitive aquatic and riparian habitat. Portions of the system have been improved by SJAFCA and local reclamation districts (see SJAFCA History), however, improvements for the remainder of the system are still needed.

**FIGURE 1. SJAFCA Boundary Map**



## FLOOD HISTORY

The region has a history of flood events, with major floods occurring in 1955, 1958, and 1997. The 1955 event had the highest flows as recorded on the Calaveras River at Bellota, with approximately 1,500 acres of Stockton inundated to depths of six feet for as long as eight days. The 1958 event inundated approximately 8,500 acres between Bellota and the Diverting Canal, with flood waters up to two feet deep and inundation durations from two to ten days. The 1955 and 1958 floods occurred prior to completion of New Hogan Dam and Reservoir and improvements to the Calaveras River and Stockton Diverting Canal.

## SJAFCA HISTORY

SJAFCA is a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) that was created in May 1995 between the City of Stockton, San Joaquin County and the San Joaquin County Flood Control and Water Conservation District for the purpose of addressing flood protection for the City of Stockton and surrounding county area.

On November 16, 2017, the Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement (JEPA) was expanded to include the Cities of Lathrop and Manteca. SJAFCA now has a nine member Board of Directors with two (2) members from the San Joaquin County Flood Control and Water Conservation District and from the Board of Supervisors of the County; two (2) members from Stockton City Council; two (2) members from Lathrop City Council; two (2) members from Manteca City Council; and one (1) member of the public who resides or works within the boundaries of the Agency, appointed by a simple majority of the other Board members.

SJAFCA's first endeavor was to prevent the de-accreditation of levees surrounding the Stockton Metropolitan Area and to improve local levees to meet Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) standards. As a result, SJAFCA constructed the Flood Protection Restoration Project (FPRP) which consisted of flood wall and levee improvements along 40 miles of existing channel levees, 12 miles of new levees, modifications to 24 bridges and the addition of two major detention basins and pumps.

The 1997 event resulted in a voluntary evacuation of the Weston Ranch area of Stockton at the north end of Mossdale Tract. While the 1997 event did not directly damage areas of Stockton, Lathrop or Manteca, there were approximately 1,842 residences and businesses affected in San Joaquin County. There were also significant flood-fighting efforts conducted during the 1997 event in Reclamation Districts 404 and 17 and breaches upstream of Mossdale Tract along the San Joaquin and Stanislaus Rivers. Estimated damages in San Joaquin County for the 1997 event were approximately \$80 million.

Construction of the FPRP was completed in 1998, merely three and one half years after notification by FEMA that most of the City of Stockton would be remapped into a 100-year floodplain. SJAFCA formed an assessment district including more than 74,000 parcels to finance the \$70 million project. Since that time, property owners have collectively saved tens of millions of dollars on higher-cost, mandatory flood insurance, and the County has benefitted from responsible development free of moratoriums and restrictions associated with Special Flood Hazard Areas. In addition, SJAFCA established an annual Operations and Maintenance assessment for the upkeep of the improvements. The FPRP improvements are maintained by the San Joaquin County Flood Control and Water Conservation District through a maintenance agreement.

Section 211 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1996 authorized the local sponsor (SJAFCA) to construct flood control improvements and receive reimbursement for the federal share of project costs. The federal share of the plan approved by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) was estimated at \$33.4 million. In addition, in 1998, SJAFCA received an appropriation of \$12.6 million from the State of California for their share of the non-federal cost of the project. In 2019, SJAFCA received the balance of the Federal reimbursement that was owed for the project, totaling \$32.9 million.



RECENT CHALLENGES

Recent flooding disasters, such as the one prompted by Hurricane Katrina, have resulted in a reevaluation of local flood risk and flood protection. FEMA has undertaken a Map Modernization Program that has resulted in a levee recertification program with new and more stringent levee standards.

SJAFCA is facing a number of challenges to assure flood protection facilities meet both State and Federal regulatory requirements. State legislation went into effect in 2007 (Senate Bill 5), which mandates a 200-year level of flood protection for urbanized or urbanizing areas by 2028. State and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ levee standards and criteria are continuing to evolve and will continue to impact SJAFCA’s priorities going forward.

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

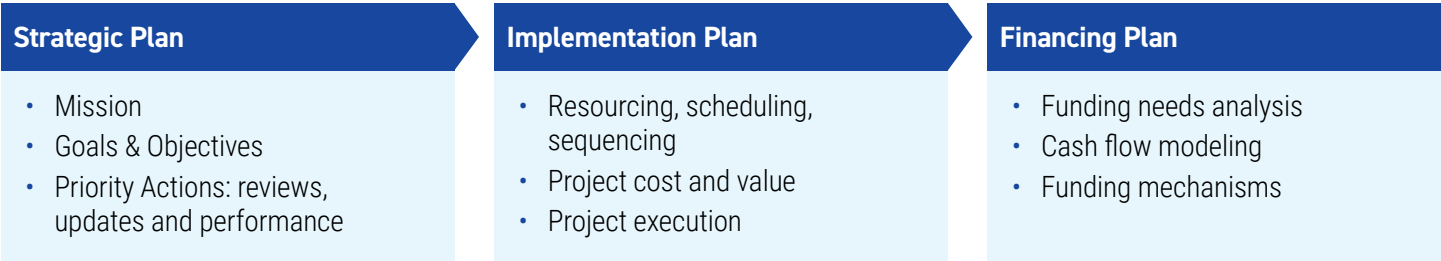
Through strategic planning, SJAFCA presents a clear mission statement accompanied with detailed, goals, objectives, and actions to deliver improved flood protection for the region. The strategic plan supports the organization as it advances improvement plans and refines its financing approach.



Photo: Kelly M. Grow, California Department of Water Resources

As SJAFCA’s programs and projects progress, staff, project teams and the Board of Directors refine implementation, financing, and strategic priorities as needed to adapt to changing conditions and opportunities (FIGURE 2).

FIGURE 2. Strategic Planning Products and Phases



The strategic planning process began in early 2019 with stakeholder input and consideration. SJAFCA held Board meetings to specifically discuss the Strategic Planning approach, needs, and content; it conducted an RD-focused stakeholder meeting; it sent out a questionnaire, made available for public input; and, it conducted a Strategic Planning Workshop on April 29, 2019. Through these mediums, SJAFCA gathered important information for its future programs.

SJAFCA considered ongoing projects throughout the process, which include the Lower San Joaquin River Project

that resulted from the Lower San Joaquin River Feasibility Study, the Smith Canal Gate Project, and the Mossdale Tract Urban Flood Risk Reduction Study. In addition, SJAFCA reviewed prior studies conducted by the State and regional interests, such as the Central Valley Flood Protection Plan, the Regional Flood Management Plan for the Lower San Joaquin River and Delta South, and the Basin-Wide Feasibility Study for the San Joaquin River.

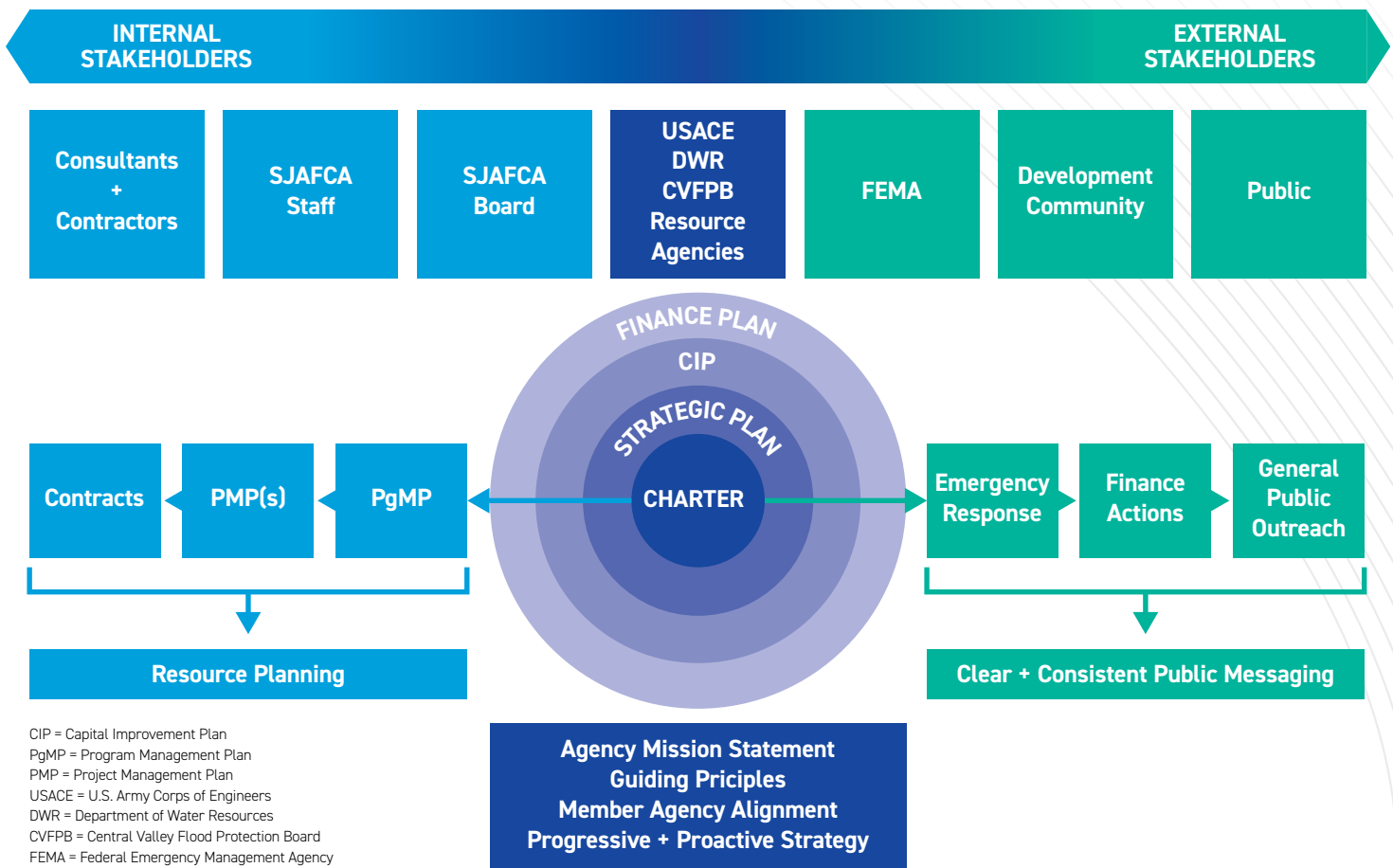
This resulted in SJAFCA’s first-ever Strategic Plan, published in October 2019. SJAFCA regularly briefs the Board of Directors on progress toward meeting its goals, objectives,

and priorities, often through in-depth presentations of on-the-ground activities, accomplishments, setbacks, opportunities, and key decisions and milestones. These help direct SJAFCA staff in its regular business operations and project development, while informing SJAFCA's priority targets.

The Strategic Plan guides SJAFCA's decisions and its focus over the next several years. It informs SJAFCA's approach to government affairs, public outreach, and program advocacy. As such, this update reflects a refreshed list of SJAFCA's Priority Actions, found in the last section of this document.

The Strategic Plan is a living document that is reviewed regularly and in conjunction with the budget setting process each fiscal year; it may require further revision over time to align with the latest developments of the region and evolving flood standards. SJAFCA's strategic plan serves as the backdrop for program execution and Agency decision making (**FIGURE 3**).

**FIGURE 3. Strategic Planning Interaction**



# Mission Statement

## REDUCE AND MANAGE THE REGION'S FLOOD RISK.

The mission statement is a concise description of the Agency's overall charge. SJAFCA endeavors to reduce the region's flood risk through lowering the likelihood of flooding. SJAFCA recognizes that this goal is not achieved without local, regional, state and federal partnerships. In many instances local flood agencies are the first line of defense and provide an invaluable, boots-on-the-ground perspective.

Regional interests, such as upstream stakeholders, resource agencies, and the San Joaquin County, play important roles as do State and Federal agencies. SJAFCA, in some cases, will lead projects and programs but will also serve as support to other agencies that deliver flood risk management services.

## Goals

- 1 Plan for and Implement System Resiliency**
- 2 Drive for Operational Transparency**
- 3 Facilitate Funding Structures that are Most Beneficial to Local Interests**
- 4 Support Appropriate, Mutually Beneficial Partnerships**
- 5 Promote Public and Institutional Awareness**

The goals are broad-based themes that define the agency's focus and serve as the underlying principles of the organization. The goals are in no specific order. SJAFCA strives to deliver these goals within its programs, projects, and activities. They support the mission to reduce and manage the region's flood risk.



## 1 PLAN FOR AND IMPLEMENT SYSTEM RESILIENCY

System resiliency refers to the system's ability to recover from a given flood event and deal with system uncertainties. A resilient system builds in redundancy in its design, meaning multiple mechanisms are used for flood prevention; it includes ensuring these system components are resistant to flood events, and, therefore, the system bounces back from potentially catastrophic events. Additionally, system resiliency speaks to the flood system's ability to avoid or mitigate safety and economic threats as it pertains to flooding. It also gives the agency flexibility to anticipate, plan, and implement system improvements and expansions. Examples include SJAFCA's Climate Adaptation Policy for Mossdale Tract or future land use coordination and expanded project footprints. Other examples may include wider-than-standard levees, flatter sloped levees, or a setback levee providing wider floodplains.

## 2 DRIVE FOR OPERATIONAL TRANSPARENCY

Operational transparency relates to the openness of the organization with interested parties and other agencies. SJAFCA makes its meetings, finances, and project and program work transparent; further, it makes resources available for partner agencies and the public in order to deliver the overall mission.

## 3 FACILITATE FUNDING STRUCTURES THAT ARE MOST BENEFICIAL TO LOCAL INTERESTS

Funding is a vital component of infrastructure projects, especially flood-related infrastructure. Often local financial support is sparse without the hindsight of a recent, catastrophic event. Developing creative, informative funding approaches to deliver this infrastructure requires continual planning. SJAFCA's goal in delivering its mission is to leverage funding approaches that stretch local contributions as much as possible, to include using those to secure state and federal investment. It also means evaluating the benefits associated with those initiatives, including opportunities for multi-purpose projects.

## 4 SUPPORT APPROPRIATE, MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL PARTNERSHIPS

SJAFCA looks for mission alignment with potential partners. SJAFCA will strive to identify and build relationships with partners that have common interests and ongoing work.

## 5 PROMOTE PUBLIC AND INSTITUTIONAL AWARENESS

A well-informed citizenry is safer in terms of flood risk awareness. Flood risk is often an "out of sight, out of mind" issue. It's also a technical, jargon-filled industry. With those things in mind, SJAFCA will elevate the public's understanding of the projects and ensure there is broad awareness of its role and goals through a strategic public outreach program. It will facilitate local support, encourage public engagement, and promote regional interest and support at all levels.



*Levees protecting homes and recreational facilities.*

Photo: Kelly M. Grow, California Department of Water Resources

# Objectives

These objectives link back to the goals to define the agency's focus over the next 5-10 years, and they complement the SJAFCAs JEPA, dated January 1, 2018. These objectives are in no particular order.

1. **Deliver projects and programs consistent with State and Federal regulatory requirements.**
2. **Identify and implement local and/or regional funding mechanisms; maximize State and Federal investment in the region for flood risk reduction efforts.**
3. **Develop public outreach programs to maximize public and institutional awareness and involvement.**
4. **When appropriate, optimize partnerships and integrate flood risk reduction efforts with local maintaining agencies.**
5. **Identify and include system resiliency needs in project development.**
6. **Monitor potential impacts to the system and advocate for Agency's needs.**
7. **Pursue multi-benefit approaches to incentivize investments from non-traditional funding sources and promote system resiliency and resource mitigation.**

**FIGURE 4. Goals & Objectives**

		1	2	3	4	5
		Plan for and Implement System Resiliency	Drive for Operational Transparency	Facilitate Funding to Structures most Beneficial to Local Interests	Support Appropriate, Mutually Beneficial Partnerships	Promote Public and Institutional Awareness
OBJECTIVES	1. Deliver projects and programs consistent with State and Federal regulatory requirements.	✓			✓	
	2. Identify and implement local and/or regional funding mechanisms; maximize State and Federal investment in the region for flood risk reduction efforts.			✓	✓	
	3. Develop public outreach programs to maximize public and institutional awareness and involvement.		✓			✓
	4. When appropriate, optimize partnerships and integrate flood risk reduction efforts with local maintaining agencies.		✓		✓	✓
	5. Identify and include system resiliency needs in project development.	✓				
	6. Monitor potential impacts to the system and advocate for Agency's needs.	✓	✓			✓
	7. Pursue multi-benefit approaches to incentivize investments from non-traditional funding sources and promote system resiliency and resource mitigation.			✓	✓	

SJAFCAs has also developed a suite of priority actions that support the Agency's goals and objectives. As the program changes over time, actions may be added, removed or revised. Actions should be updated with each budget year cycle, and agency objectives should be re-affirmed or revised.

# PRIORITY ACTIONS

★ Denotes update March 2022

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- ★ **ACTION 1:** Implement the Lower San Joaquin River Project in accordance with the authorized Federal Project by:
1. Supporting USACE in the completion of design, environmental permitting, real property acquisition and award of construction for the first reach at Tenmile Slough, TS30L, in 2022.
  2. Planning for future reaches of the project based on USACE implementation schedule and the availability of project funds and local cost-share match.
- *Supporting Objectives: 1, 4*
- 
- ★ **ACTION 2:** Complete construction of the Smith Canal Gate Structure to achieve flood risk reduction for the area by 2022 and submit Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) package to FEMA by 2023.
- *Supporting Objectives: 1, 4, 5*
- 
- ACTION 3:** Complete submittal request to USACE for credit associated with Smith Canal Gate Project construction within six months of project close-out.
- *Supporting Objectives: 1, 2*
- 
- ★ **ACTION 4:** Support USACE in initiating Phase 2 of the Federal Lower San Joaquin River Feasibility Study for Mossdale Tract through annual budget cycle data requests, appropriation processes, and congressional outreach.
- *Supporting Objectives: 2, 4, 5*
- 
- ★ **ACTION 5:** Complete design and environmental documentation toward the implementation of the UFRF recommended plan for Mossdale Tract: complete CEQA documentation and 65% designs by December 2023. Complete conceptual designs of restoration by December 2022.
- *Supporting Objectives: 1, 2, 4, 6*
- 
- ★ **ACTION 6:** Achieve 200-year level of protection in the Mossdale Tract Area by 2028 and present adequate progress reporting until improvements are complete.
- *Supporting Objectives: 1*
- 
- ★ **ACTION 7:** Refine project development plans considering emerging climate information in accordance with the Mossdale Climate Change Adaptation Policy.
- *Supporting Objectives: 1, 5*
- 
- ★ **ACTION 8:** Complete formation of the funding program including an Overlay Assessment and Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District for the Mossdale Tract Area by August 2022.
- *Supporting Objectives: 2*
- 
- ★ **ACTION 9:** Update capital improvement plans throughout project life-cycle, supporting annual budgeting and out-year planning.
- *Supporting Objectives: 1, 2, 6*
- 
- ★ **ACTION 10:** Develop and implement a public awareness and outreach program that supports SJAFCA's mission, goals, and objectives through targeted messaging and that leverages partnerships with member agencies.
- *Supporting Objectives: 3*
- 
- ACTION 11:** Engage and nurture strategic relationships with local, state and federal officials, business community, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholder groups.
- *Supporting Objectives: 3, 6*
- 
- ★ **ACTION 12:** Advance actions identified in Regional Flood Management Plan (RFMP) by working with local, State and Federal partners, through initiatives such as the State's Water Resilience Portfolio Initiative 25.4; scope regional efforts identified in the RFMP and chart path forward and goals for:
1. Paradise Cut Bypass Expansion and South Delta Restoration Project - complete preferred project alternative by June 30, 2022.
  2. Support local effort to evaluate water storage uses, including flood risk reduction and water supply, in close partnership with SJ County and local water districts.
- *Supporting Objectives: 1, 2, 6, 7*
- 
- ★ **ACTION 13:** Formulate an assessment district for the local share of the Lower San Joaquin River Project by August 2023.
- New 3/2022* ➤ *Supporting Objectives: 2*
-



# Board of Directors



SJAFC Board Members from L to R: Mike Morowit (*At Large*); Kathy Miller (*San Joaquin County*); Gary Singh (*City of Manteca*); Dan Wright (*City of Stockton*); Paul Akinjo (*City of Lathrop*); Charlie Halford (*City of Manteca*); Kimberly Warmesley (*City of Stockton*); Chuck Winn (*San Joaquin County*); Diane Lazard (*City of Lathrop*)



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