

Thank you for the opportunity of submitting my comments on the current Delta Conveyance Design & Construction Authority (DCA) single tunnel design, as presented in the March 11 SEC Meeting. What is my background? I have spent significant time boating on the Delta for 30 years. I now live in Discovery Bay, with a home on the water and a boat in my “backyard” bay. I have been heavily involved in these projects for over ten years. I think I have a valuable insight to share. My comments here concern construction, although other concerns raised in the past, such as long-term in-Delta water quality and Delta flows, must also be addressed.

First, it seems that when I now meet new California Department of Water Resources (DWR) and DCA folks, they often don’t seem to know the pertinent background about the prior WaterFix twin tunnel project. Therefore, I’ll start by briefly recapping the history of WaterFix and why was withdrawn in 2019. Hopefully that will help you identify and avoid the same showstoppers.

I am glad that the new single tunnel project design is now no longer planning on putting construction traffic on the Contra Costa County Scenic Highway 160 and the western portions of Highway 12. However, our concerns remain about Highway 4. My detailed information backs up the Independent Technical Review (ITR) Committee saying that if the project remains with the Central Corridor or Eastern Corridor, Highway 4 would require significant upgrades and bridge replacements. It is now a very busy, congested, important road.

I appreciate the changes DCA made to the plans to address boating and recreation. The plan no longer includes the barge traffic in narrow sloughs that is so dangerous for boating, nor building many barge docks throughout the waterways, blocking recreation and boat traffic. **Thank you!** Although other boating issues remain, some of which I detail in this document, I appreciate DCA’s willingness to address identified issues, like they did in the last meeting where DCA was willing to move the Little Potato Slough dock closer to the channel and recommend there not be barge activity in that area on weekends to minimize impact on boating at “The Bedrooms.” **That kind of attitude is very much appreciated. I hope the additional comments about boating and recreation, traffic concerns, etc. will be similarly addressed. Thank you.**

After the section on impacts on recreation from some shaft locations, I point out a significant error in your map concerning fire stations and emergency services. That error exposes even more strongly the ITR Committee’s emergency and safety concerns about the Central Corridor.

Two other alternatives need to be considered for the NOP EIR: The Far Eastern I-5 Route recommended by technology experts in 2010 and again this year, and the “No Tunnel” alternative (in conjunction with Governor Newsom’s Portfolio projects). Last but not least, the location of the intakes in the North impacting legacy towns cannot be mitigated.

I appreciate your taking time to read this. Feel free to reach out if you have questions.

Jan McCleery

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Important WaterFix Events

WaterFix Remanded to DWR in November 2018

After many years of Delta folks submitting comments on the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) and going to Workshops, the BDCP morphed into the California WaterFix twin tunnel project. During those nine years, Delta residents attended meetings, wrote comments, traveled to Sacramento and stood up to say our comments in person, to explain why Delta residents were so concerned about the tunnel plans. Groups were formed to represent the Delta people who would be affected. Save the California Delta Alliance (STCDA), a small non-profit based in Discovery Bay, was one of those. STCDA bussed citizens to Sacramento to attend meetings, sold lawn signs, encouraged citizens to march and rally. STCDA held fundraisers to raise donations and hired expert witnesses give credence to our concerns with the WaterFix tunnel plan. Delta boating experts and technical experts testified to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Permit Hearings about issues with the proposed project.

During the SWRCB Permit Hearings, after listening to the substantive concerns, the SWRCB did not feel comfortable with issuing a permit until the Delta Stewardship Council (DSC) approved the WaterFix Project as “consistent” with the Delta Plan – a requirement for any project affecting the Delta. The DSC held a series of Consistency Hearings where the evidence was once again presented. Before the DSC took their final vote, they asked for their Staff’s recommendation. Here is the part of it the DSC Staff Recommendations dealing with construction:

Respect Local Land Use When Siting Water or Flood Facilities or Restoring Habitats **No**

DP P2 Summary: The Department [DWR] fails to demonstrate substantial evidence in the record to support its findings that the project is consistent with respect to compatibility with local land use plans, conflicts with land uses in existing Delta communities, conflicts with existing land uses due to impacts on cultural and historical resources, conflicts with existing Delta parks and **recreation uses, traffic impacts, and conflicts with existing land uses due to noise impacts.**

At the end of 2018, the WaterFix plan was remanded back to the Department of Water Resources (DWR) to resolve the issues. At about the same time, the idea of a single tunnel came up.

In 2019, WaterFix was Withdrawn

In 2019, DWR attempted to reuse the WaterFix EIR for the “new” single tunnel and claimed they didn’t need to write a new EIR. There were lawsuits. When the Judge was obviously going to rule against DWR, DWR withdrew their attempt to move forward and stated they were writing a new EIR.

Now we Citizens of the Delta Wring our Hands

So, we wring our hands and sit down to communicate to the DCA, a new group designing the tunnel. We sent in detailed comments on the BDCP and WaterFix for years and provided testimonies. Yet all of that background and information seems to be lost. We start again.

At the SWRCB Permit Hearings and the DCS Consistency Hearings, one of our expert witnesses was a traffic engineer, one a noise engineer, and several were boating representatives. So the question is this: Shouldn't the DCA evaluate their current plan against prior significant impacts? Do we need to raise money and re-hire witnesses all over again?

I am surprised that the first step the DCA took was not to review the testimonies from the SWRCB Permit Hearings and from the DSC Consistency Hearings that caused the DSC Staff to say the WaterFix was inconsistent with the Delta Plan and therefore could not go forward. That review should have included studying the Save the California Delta Alliance testimonies (those were prefaced by "SCDA" when uploaded to the SWRCB website and the organization was referred to as "The Alliance" in testimonies provided) concerning:

1. Noise pollution and other impacts on Legacy Towns in the North
2. Recreation impacts
3. Transportation expert evaluation of Highway 4 Gridlock

Other testimonies to the SWRCB included a tunneling expert opposing tunneling through the Delta due to soft alluvial soils. That expert testified that tunneling in soft soils has many issues, particularly under a train trestle and EBMUD water pipes. The ITR Committee experts agreed that the Central Corridor soils are not suitable for tunneling.

Regardless, the new plan still has the rejected intake locations in the North. And the new plan is still considering the through-Delta (now "Central Corridor") route.

The new Central Corridor route still contains huge issues as did WaterFix. I will elaborate those later in this document but to summarize they include:

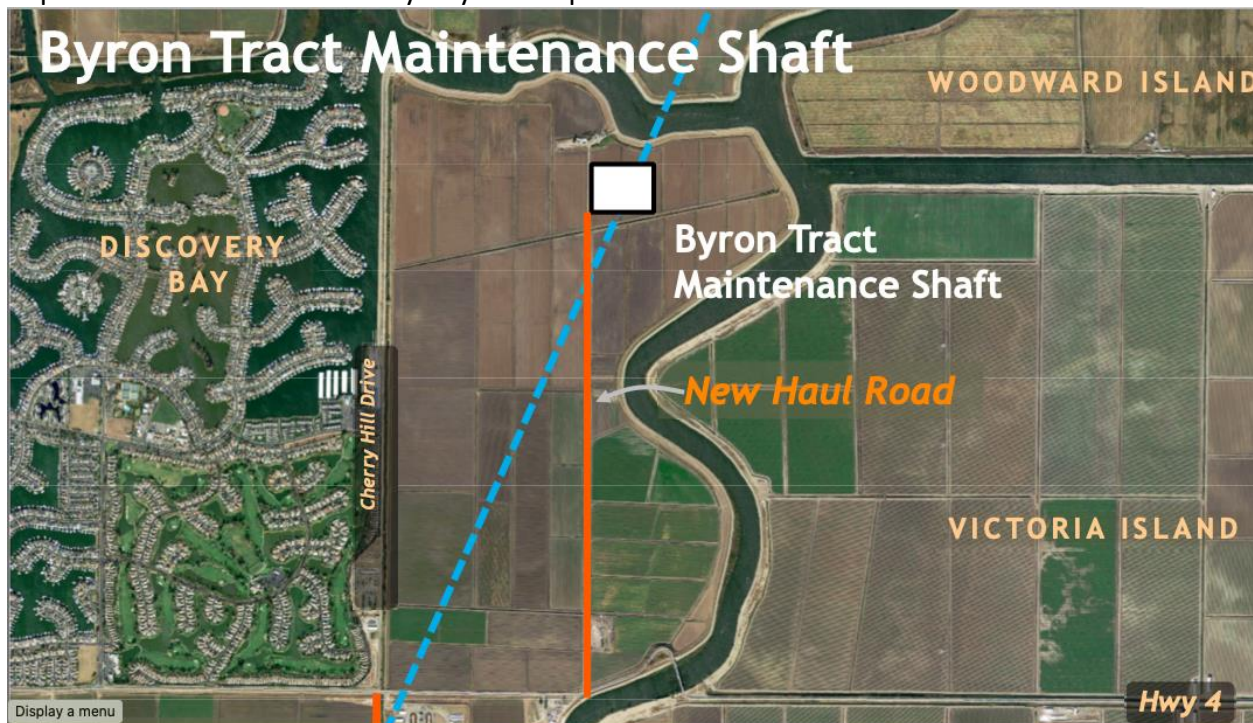
1. Highway 4 gridlock
2. Recreation noise and construction lighting impacts
3. New noise and pollution impacts due to new Byron Tract Maintenance Shaft
4. New tunneling concerns as the tunnel practically goes under Discovery Bay
5. Emergency services issues

New Byron Tract Maintenance Shaft

Right when we think DCA has listened to concerns expressed about noise and trying to minimize the impact on citizens, we see a decision to plop a maintenance shaft in Discovery Bay, less than a half mile from the Discovery Bay waterfront homes! From a personal standpoint, I will see and hear that shaft from my back deck and will hear the pounding all night for years.

[Side-note: That shaft has never been on the plans before. It makes me wonder, cynically, if the strong turn-out of Discovery Bay citizens over the years protesting the tunnels gave someone the idea to get back at the community. I hope not, that isn't a pleasant thought.]

STCDA's noise expert witness at the SWRCB Permit Hearings testified how noise pollution is more noticeable in rural areas and more amplified around water. This construction will severely impact the citizens of Discovery Bay and impact their home values.



In addition, the tunnel route now comes dangerously close to Discovery Bay homes. As commented above, a tunneling expert's witness testimony during the SWRCB Permit Hearings raised many issues that could occur tunneling through soft, alluvial soil. The new plan shown in the "Byron Tract Maintenance Shaft" illustration shows the tunnel route dangerously close to Discovery Bay homes.

Please move or remove this shaft and alter the tunnel route. Prior plans didn't have a shaft anywhere near Discovery Bay and the tunnel route wasn't this close. The WaterFix plan had the tunnel route going directly south from Bacon Island with a shaft on Victoria Island before the tunnel angled over to the Southern Forebay. Then the tunnel wouldn't go under a corner of Discovery Bay, potentially impacting homes there due to tunneling through soft soils.



WaterFix Through-Delta Route

Highway 4

I was taken aback when Phil Ryan, I believe it was, at the March SEC meeting said that Highway 4 didn't need any upgrades. Later, when talking about a new haul road next to Discovery Bay, he stated no new intersections were planned because traffic on Highway 4 is low.

I had been pleased when in earlier meetings I saw the two Highway 4 bridges circled as needing to be replaced and Highway 4 as needing upgrades.

If you travel Highway 4 between Discovery Bay and Stockton, you know that is not the case, most of the time and particularly during commute hours. But don't take it from me, take it from an expert. STCDA hired a traffic consultant that provided expert testimony during the SWRCB Permit Hearings. The same information was given to the DSC during their hearings. Highway 4 is a very heavily used road. It is the only road between Stockton and Contra Costa County and is filled with trucks and cars. During commute hours it is a commuting nightmare. The traffic expert's analysis was that adding construction traffic would bring Highway 4 to "gridlock." Please review that information.

The Independent Technical Review (ITR) Committee correctly pointed out:

"The consensus among the ITR was that the Central Corridor is logistically impractical and the ITR does not recommend this corridor be further studied. The shaft locations are located a significant distance from Interstate 5, accessible by only farm roads with hindrances such as narrow weight-restricted bridges and single lanes. This makes

supporting large operations, which requires a constant transfer of materials and people in and out, impractical and expensive as well as difficult to price.”

In the latest DCA plans, Highway 4 remains a roadway that will be heavily used, more so for the Central Corridor than the Eastern, but both have additional construction traffic. The ITR Committee stated the assumption it would be upgraded. That would include improved road with emergency shoulders, new bridges, and improved, raised intersections where construction traffic would go on and off.

A Levee Road and Two Old Bridges

The narrow two-lane levee road between the Old River Bridge and the Middle River Bridge and further east to Bacon Island Road would need major upgrades with either the Central or Eastern Corridor. Only the ITR Committee’s recommended I-5 route could avoid significant impacts to Highway 4. Check out these google pictures – does it look like a good place to add a column of construction trucks?



Highway 4 approaching Union Point and the Middle River Bridge



Dangerous curve just before the bridge



Narrow Bridges – single-lane for trucks and trailers

Damage from Construction Traffic

In addition, since it is a levee road, construction traffic would cause much damage. There was a segment on a Bay Area TV station a couple of years ago that highlighted the construction issues from the WaterFix project. It was focused on the highway and traffic issues. It would be great if you found that and watched it. It talked both about the Highway 4 gridlock and the issues with the segment of Highway 4 that is the levee road and how additional construction trucks would be so damaging to it.

Accident Risks

There are often serious accidents on that stretch of narrow road. Just last month a semi jack-knifed (once again) when approaching one of the bridges. It was probably due to the sharp curve before the bridge and the truck driver not being able to see that there was another truck or a boat on a trailer already on the bridge. (Two large vehicles cannot pass. They are one-at-a-

time.) Trying to stop while making the sharp turn likely caused it to jack-knife into the bridge columns.

The same month, a husband was trailering a boat and being followed by his wife and children in the car behind when he was hit head-on on the narrow section of Highway 4. He was killed and his sons were helicoptered to the hospital. I didn't read any updates about the family.

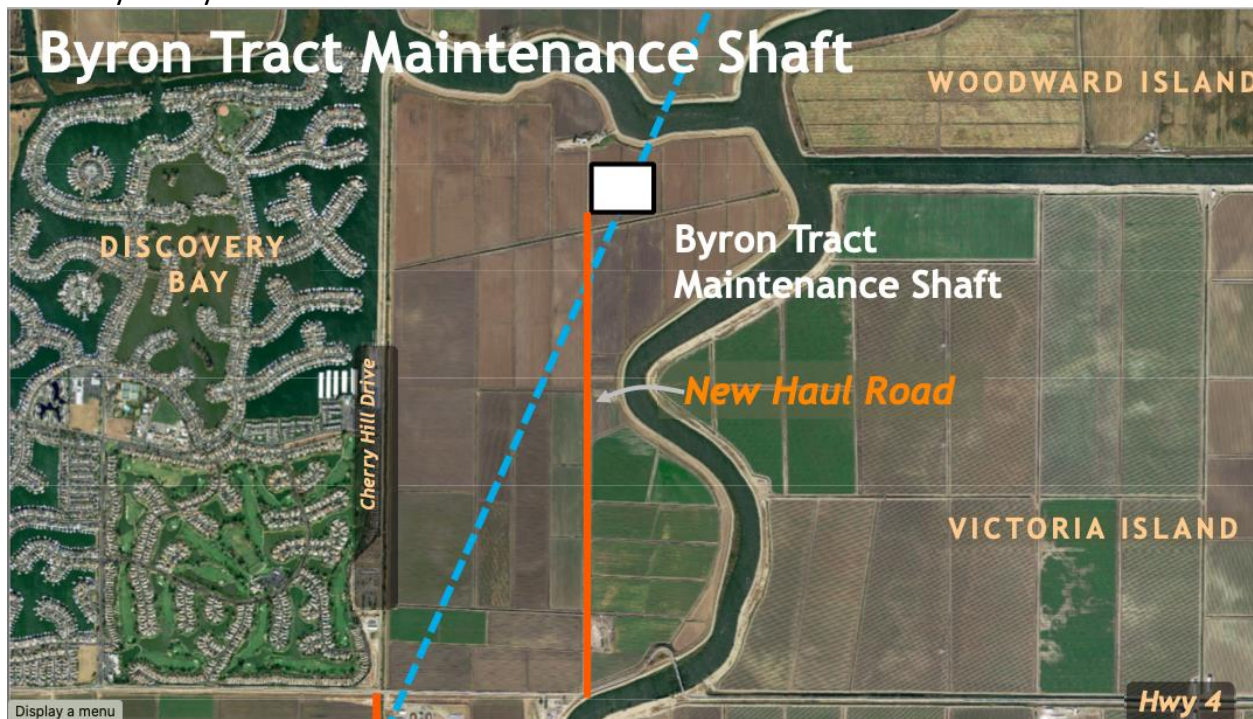
Tragedies like that happen far too often. Cars attempt to pass slow trucks. Accidents often result in one of the cars ending up in the sloughs. People die.

Why is it such a risky stretch of road?

1. Heavy commute traffic: A combination of commuters plus large trucks being used to transport goods and fuel from Stockton to Contra Costa County and produce from Delta farms to market.
2. Narrow road – no emergency shoulder.
3. Levee road - sloughs (water) on one or both sides of the road. Steep grade from the road down the sides causing rollovers.
4. Tule fog in the winter is commonplace.
5. Sharp curves before and after both bridges.
6. The bridges are one-at-a-time for trucks and trailers.

Central Corridor - New Haul Road for Byron Tract Maintenance Shaft

As mentioned earlier, this shaft should be removed, and the tunnel should go straight south from Bacon Island to Victoria and then angle to the Southern Forebay. That way the tunnel then stays away from houses.



That being said, if that shaft does remain, Phil Ryan said that no new intersections would be built for the two new haul roads. That isn't feasible. Phil had discussed trucks coming from the south, turning right on Highway 4, then turning left onto what is now the farm road. Highway 4 is not wide enough at that point for turn lanes. The picture below shows the road that is planned for the haul road where trucks would be turning left from Highway 4.



Byron Tract Farm Road Turn-off

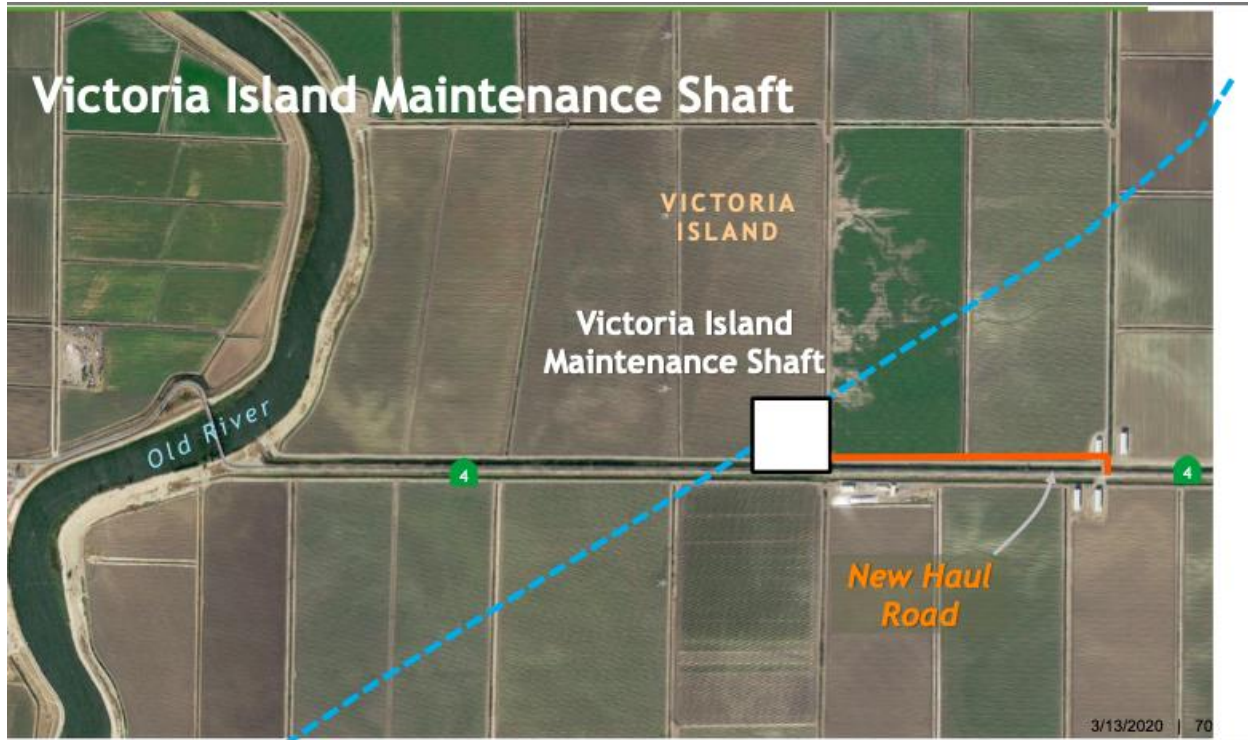
Also, the “new” haul road shown on the map is the existing farm road for the Discovery Bay farm there. So, are we talking about a “new haul road” or removing the existing farm road from use, taking Byron Tract out of production? The site is also right next to the farmhouse.

Obviously, if there is a “new haul road” the north/south haul roads at one spot and an overpass built over Highway 4 to avoid those trucks coming onto Highway 4 at all. Or link the north/south haul roads at one spot and add a traffic light. The approach depends on if trucks are always going just to/from the Byron Tract to the Southern Forebay, in which case the best would be an overpass. That stretch has heavy traffic. Accidents are common at the Old River Bridge and at the Discovery Bay Boulevard intersection, so adding another light could exacerbate the situation. The haul road location and overpass should be constructed to minimize disruption of traffic and of the existing farm activities, if possible. A better solution is not to put a maintenance shaft in Discovery Bay on Byron Tract.

Victoria Island

There is a map for a Victoria Island Maintenance Shaft as part of the Eastern Corridor. I contend the same should be used for the Central Corridor. (That being said, I am not familiar with the impact on Victoria Islands Farms.)

Either way, Highway 4 would need to be upgraded for that shaft.



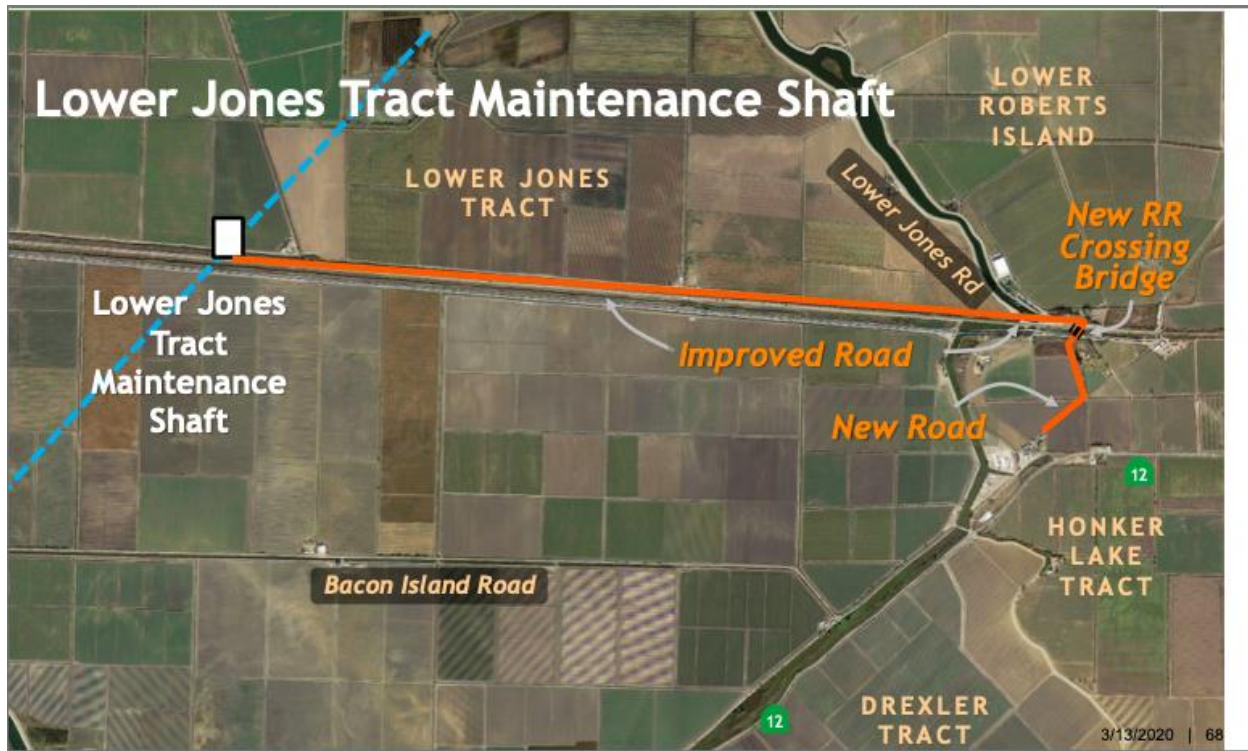
Here is what Highway 4 looks like traveling west to make the turn into Victoria Island:



Note there are no emergency strips wide enough for a vehicle to pull off. On each side, there is a thin amount of asphalt, then the side of the levee slants down at a steep angle. On the left side, the “greenery” is actually weeds floating on top of the slough – several feet of water. The same is true on the right side. We can’t have trucks pulling out often onto Highway 4 there. Trucks slowing down to turn on the farm road are also a hazard. Cars behind them could end up trying to go around them and having a head-on or end up in the sloughs.

Preferably, an interchange should be built that bridges over the slough.

Eastern Corridor - Lower Jones Maintenance Shaft



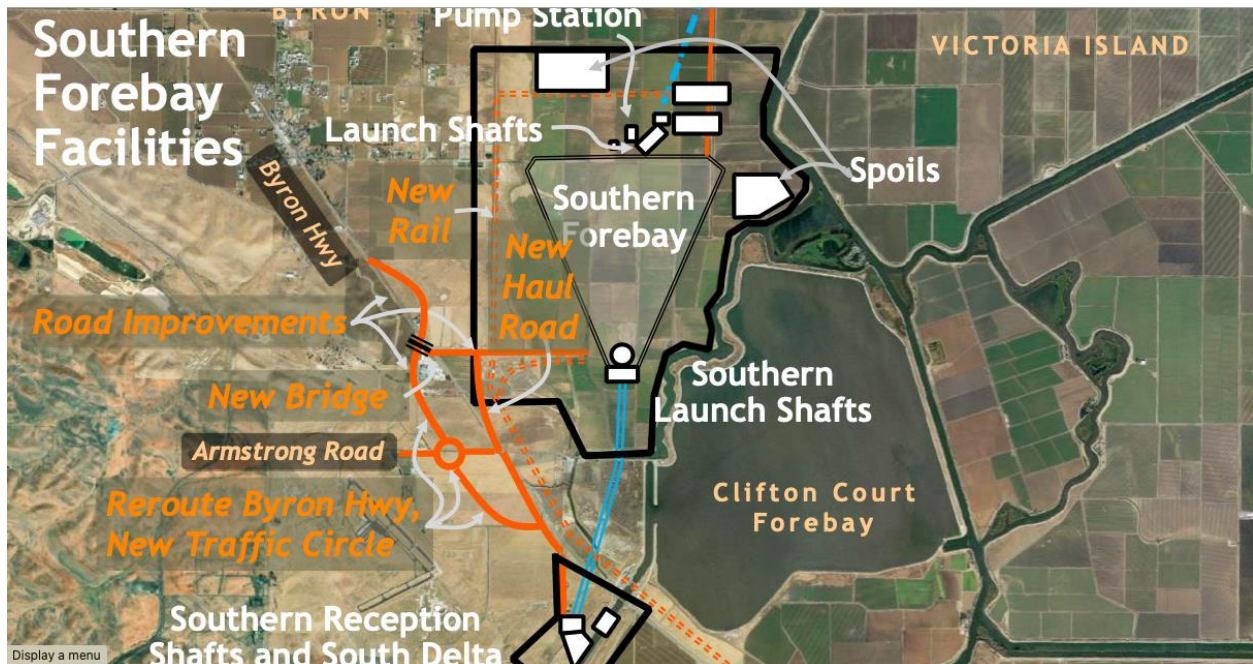
That route, again, puts construction traffic on Highway 4. There are at least turn lanes at Whisky Slough Road to access the new haul road. I hope a traffic expert takes a look to see, based on the number of construction trucks and frequency, if stopping to turn there would require an improved intersection or, at a minimum, a longer turn lane.



Highway 4 - Summary

These issues point again to the fact that to have construction trucks in this area requires a major upgrade to the Highway 4 and the two old, narrow bridges at Old River and Middle River, and explains clearly why the ITR Committee said the Central Corridor should be dropped from consideration and even the Eastern Corridor wasn't feasible from an access point of view. DCA/DWR should consider a far eastern route, from an infrastructure perspective.

Byron Highway



I was glad to see the Byron Highway is being considered for upgrades to accommodate an increase in construction traffic.

Excelsior Middle School

I can't tell what the construction traffic would be north of the Southern Forebay. A concern is that north of the Southern Forebay on the Byron Highway is Excelsior Middle School, the only middle school for both Discovery Bay and Byron. An analysis of the impact of the added pollution and noise on that school needs to be considered and mitigated.

Central Corridor Shaft Issues and Recreation

The Importance of Boating and Recreation

I am very pleased that the DCA moved away from barges in small sloughs, recognizing that they are a safety issue for boats. Thank you. Barges may be useful in the main channel, but use elsewhere should be avoided. Karen Mann, SEC member, related in an SEC meeting the near-misses she had as did several other boaters during a few weekends while a single barge was being maneuvered on Old River to do levee work around Woodward Island. From a boating and recreation standpoint, eliminating barges being used in significant way WaterFix planned and going to rail instead is very welcome. Barge landings pose other risks. We know pile driving impacts fish, and there is also risk for recreational boaters – pulling water skiers and wake boarders. Barge landings prohibit waterways from being used as recreational use. Those sloughs would have to be closed down or limited to 5 MPH zones. There was extensive testimony about barges and barge landings at the SWRCB Permit Hearings and the DSC

Consistency Hearing. Testimony was given that the barge traffic would virtually shut all boating down in the Delta, seriously impacting the marinas and boat-related businesses. Most of these are small mom and pop businesses.

Why Is boating and recreation important for the Delta? Boating and recreation businesses comprise the bulk of the economy of the communities in the Delta. Boating and recreation is what brings tourists to the area. Take Discovery Bay, for example. Boat-related businesses make up, by far, the majority of the town's economy. When the housing crisis of 2008 hit, in Mountain House, a town south of DB providing an easier commute to the tech centers like Silicon Valley, nine out of ten homes went into foreclosure. Discovery Bay wasn't as hard hit because of the desirability of the location for boating, even though commute times are greater. In addition, water-front homes command even higher prices. To have boating stopped for ten or more years would destroy the community, people would lose their homes. In addition, causing gridlock on Highway 4 would negatively impact people from getting their boats into the Discovery Bay Marina.

For Bethel Island, there are marinas that ring the island interspersed with restaurants and small boat-related businesses. Waterways full of barges would result in boaters not wanting to keep their boats at Bethel Island or launch their boats there, that economy would crash, and the mom and pop businesses would fail as would marinas throughout the Delta.

That is why there was a focus in the Reform Act and Delta Plan that boating and recreation is important to preserve. That, plus the only way to really see and enjoy everything the Delta has to offer is by boat.

Committing to not use barges or build barge landings is a significant step in working to maintain the Delta for boating and recreation. However, construction issues still remain due to the noise and pollution from shaft sites impacting places to anchor in the Delta. The Bedrooms Anchorage is one that is affected by noise and construction lights for boats anchoring out to enjoy the peace and quiet. The other significant anchorage is Mildred Island.

The remaining issue is one of noise. The reason boaters like to anchor out is to enjoy an evening of peace and quiet, in nature, being lulled to sleep by the sound of water ripples lapping softly at the hull. 24x7 construction pounding and construction lights are incompatible. I would hope the work could be shut down entirely, not just the barges restricted, from Friday through Sunday during the boating season (June through the end of September) to allow boating and recreation to continue.

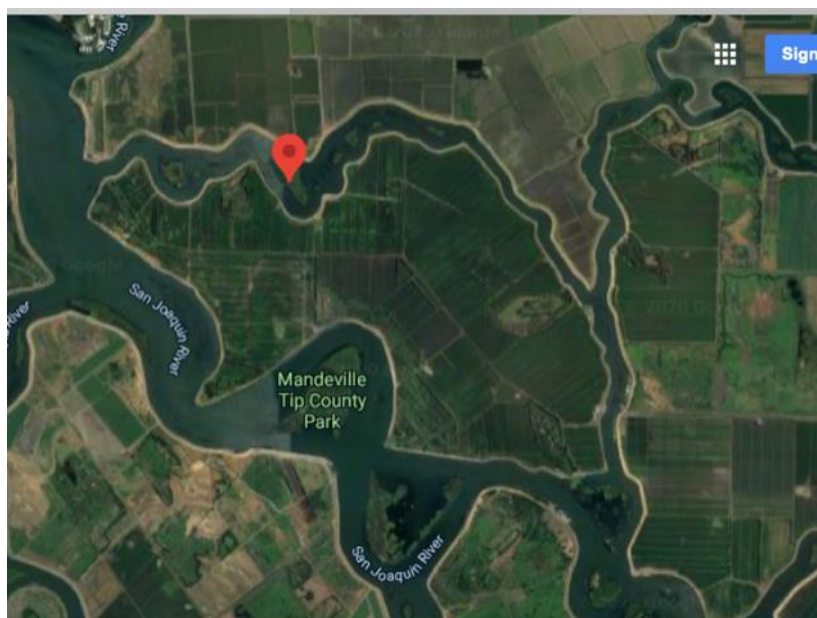
I don't know if the suggestions I offer can solve the noise and pollution issues sufficiently for boating to continue if the Central Corridor route is chosen, but I'd like to elaborate on them to help you see why that route should not be selected.

The Bedrooms Anchorage versus Bouldin Island Launch Shaft

As stated earlier, the barge location in Little Potato Slough would conflict with a popular boating area referred to as “The Bedrooms.” DCA stated they would review moving the dock closer to the channel and recommend there not be barges activity around that area on weekends. Thank you!



The pin drop below is the approximate location of “The Bedrooms” on Little Potato Slough where the “New Barge Landing” is shown above.



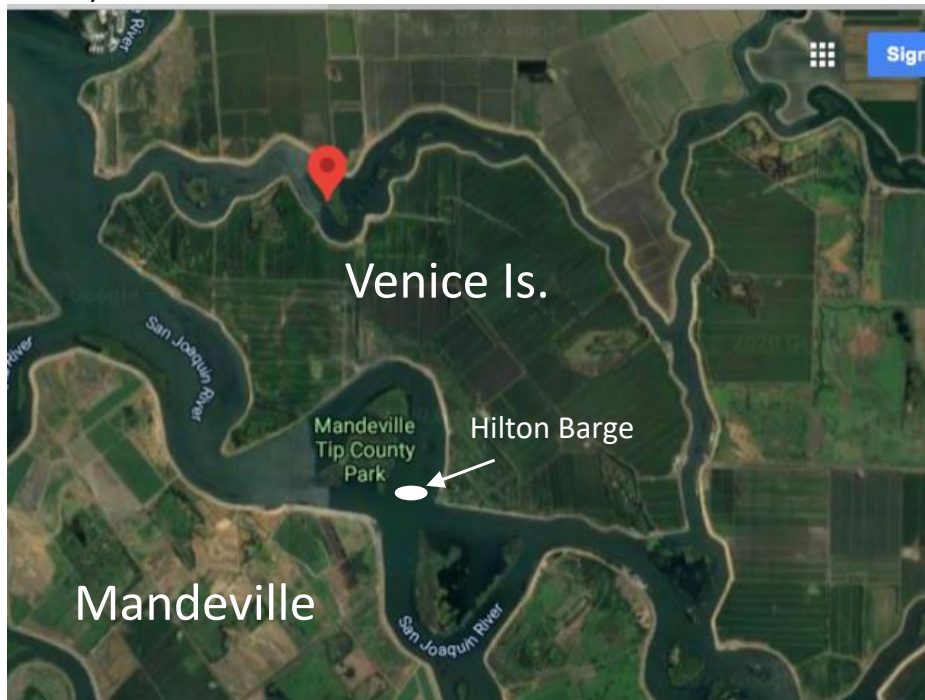
“The Bedrooms” – a common anchorage for weekends. Besides being used heavily by local Delta boaters, “The Bedrooms” are a popular anchorage in the summer for folks from the Bay area. Bringing in people from other areas supports local marinas and businesses.

One of the ongoing frustrations with this project is that when three Delta boating experts testified at the SWRCB Permit Hearings, they brought up what a bad spot for a barge anchorage that would be....so much of the information that has already been prepared and presented continues to be ignored or lost.

Besides a lot of boats in The Bedrooms on weekends, there is the issue of the 4th of July.

4th of July Hilton Firework Display – Mandeville Island Shaft

Referring again to a similar picture as above showing The Bedrooms Anchorage as the pin drop, the map below shows where one of the biggest events on the Delta occurs during the 4th of July holiday.



The Hilton Fireworks Barge

The Hilton Family used to own a hunting lodge on Venice Island. Every year they hire a barge filled with one of the most awesome fireworks and put on the best 4th of July fireworks displays in Northern California. The barge is anchored between Mandeville Tip and Venice Island as shown above. The weekend before the event, boats head out to secure a place to tie up, raft, anchor, etc. as shown in the photographs below.

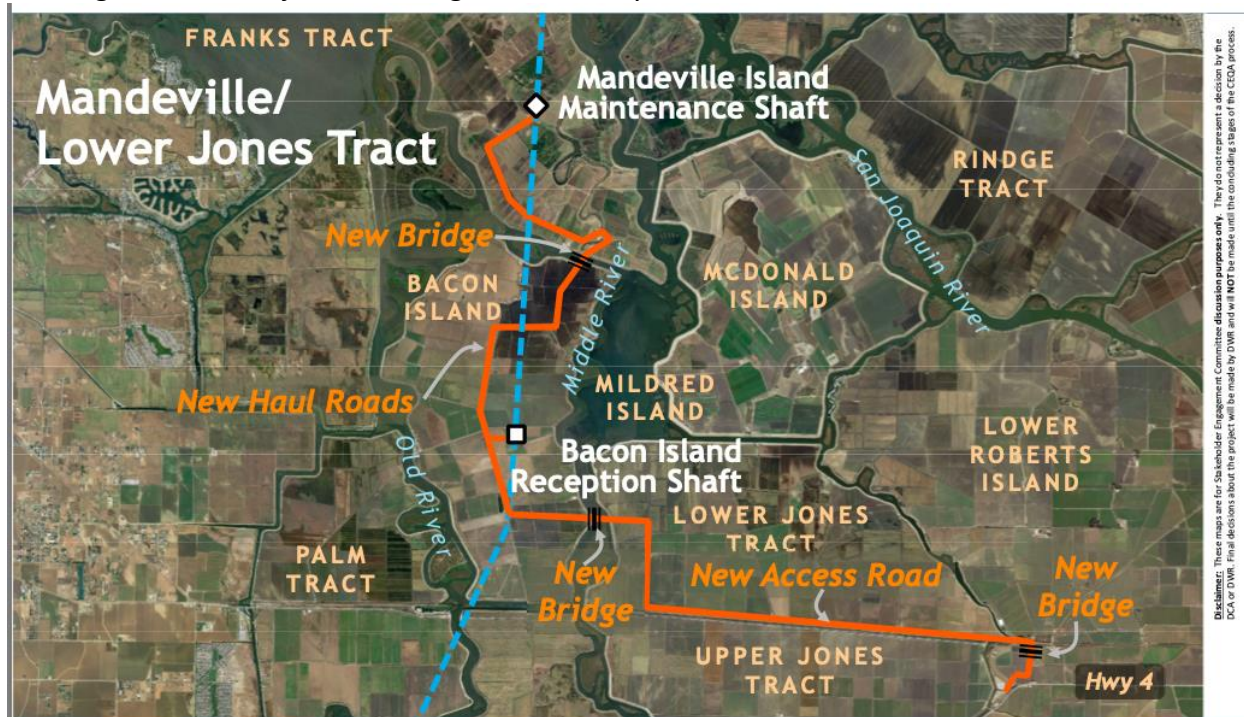


Note: Photos are from the Internet and may be subject to Copyright

If the 4th of July falls on a Wednesday, the boaters will be out on Saturday and not leave until Thursday or later. They'll fill the waterways on three sides of Mandeville Tip, the area the other side of the channel that is labeled above as the "San Joaquin River" and is referred to as "Three Mile Reach." They fill Middle River and "The Bedrooms" and all waterways nearby. Sheriffs patrol on jet skis. A floating hot dog stand is often seen. Typically, 2,000 to 3,000 boats are in the area nearby, each with at least two people aboard. Recreational boats will also come into the area during the day and stay for the fireworks at night.

Although the Hiltons have sold their hunting lodge, Barron Hilton left an endowment to continue the fireworks in perpetuity.

Similar to the earlier comments about The Bedrooms Anchorage, since the Mandeville Island Maintenance Shaft is so close to where this activity occurs, it is very important that that work be shut down there also during the July holiday timeframe. I'd recommend working with yacht clubs each year to coordinate the best schedule to not impact thousands of boaters with evening noise and objectionable lights while they anchor out.



Mildred Island Anchorage and the Bacon Island Reception Shaft

An area that is never recognized or talked about in any of the tunnel documents is the Mildred Island Anchorage, even though we have discussed it ad nauseum with DWR representatives. I even took photos to give the BDCP when I was in Sacramento at my first workshop meeting and have done so in comments, writing, etc. repeatedly ever since then.

So, what is the importance? Mildred Island is a flooded island situated in the center of the South Delta waterways. Mildred Island is about halfway between Bethel Island and Discovery Bay, in the center of the South Delta. Mildred Island flooded in the early '80s and was never reclaimed, making it the perfect anchorage spot. Mildred is the best-known anchorage spot in the South Delta. Having boats anchoring out is important for the marinas in the South Delta and is why we kept our boat for years at Bethel Island before we moved to Discovery Bay, so we could commute from Silicon Valley with our family and anchor at Mildred on the weekends.

An anchorage draws boaters from all over Northern California. We've met people anchored at Mildred from Benicia, the San Francisco Grand Banks Club, sail boats from Stockton. People anchor out for the weekend and then during the day they water ski or wake board in the nearby sloughs. The best, most popular slough for that is the slough between Bacon Island and Mildred.

Mildred Island and Horseshoe Bend Anchorages – and distance from Bethel/DB



Mildred is a well-known anchorage. On Labor Day, the Sea Ray Club brings 40 to 100 boats and forms a complete, perfect circle: quite an engineering feat. Numerous boating and yacht clubs use the Mildred Island anchorage regularly. In addition, numerous other groups and single boats anchor at Mildred Island for a weekend, a week, or more. No other South Delta location can provide an anchorage for so many boats.

Mildred is the only place in the Delta large enough for the Labor Day Sea Ray Circle shown to the left. You can see all of the other boats anchored around throughout Mildred Island.

The importance is that all of these boats that have been drawn into the South Delta to anchor out use their runabouts during the day. They will run over to Bull Frog Marina for gas and an ice



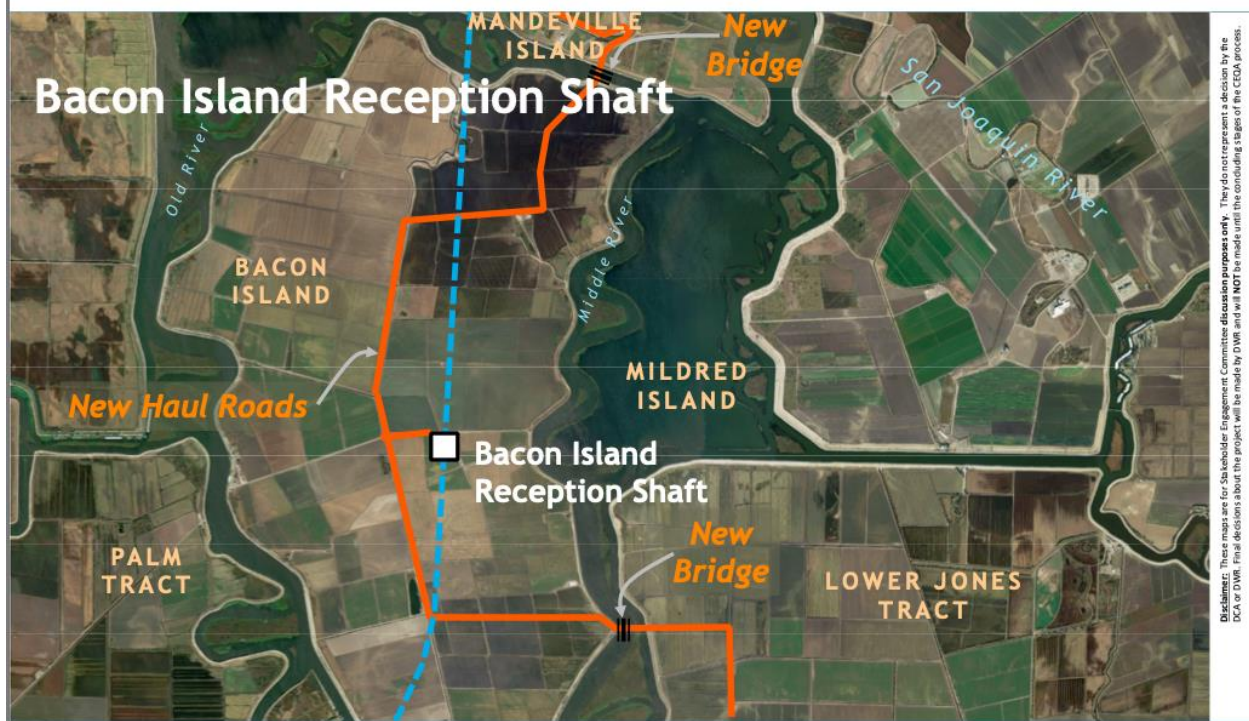
What began 20 years ago as an offhand suggestion has grown into a beloved occasion-and a remarkable photo opp.

cream, or to Tiki Lagoon, or to other small marinas while they spend the day out water skiing or wake boarding throughout the favorite recreational sloughs.

Or they go to Discovery Bay for gas and to the Chandlery to buy forgotten items. They may eat lunch at The Boardwalk Grill in Discovery Bay, or the Union Point Grill on Middle River, or jaunt over to Bethel Island to one of the restaurants there.

It is important for the small marinas and business throughout the South Delta to have a nice large anchorage to lure boaters in.

But there is the Bacon Island Reception Shaft – right next to the doggy beach where people like to anchor to paddle their dogs ashore.



A noisy, lit up construction site is incompatible with an anchorage. Mildred fills up on Labor Day and the 4th of July for the fireworks display. Although it's further away from the Hilton Barge,

many of us have tired of the partying and melee that can happen with thousands of boats anchored close together, especially if a high wind comes up. These days, we anchor in Mildred and still “ooo” and “ahh” watching the fireworks show from further away. The Mildred Island boats are in addition to the thousands in the Hilton Firework count. So, in addition to the other launch shafts, the Bacon Island work should be shut down during the July 4th holiday timeframe.

Objectionable noise and lights near Mildred should be restricted during the weekends (Friday through Sunday, since everyone goes out to anchor on Friday to get a good spot) throughout the summer months (June to the end of September). Especially over Labor Day the “quiet time” should be extended through Monday and include a span of days surrounding the 4th of July.

This further points out why the Central Corridor, even with the decision to not fill it with barges, construction noise will still ruin the boating experience.

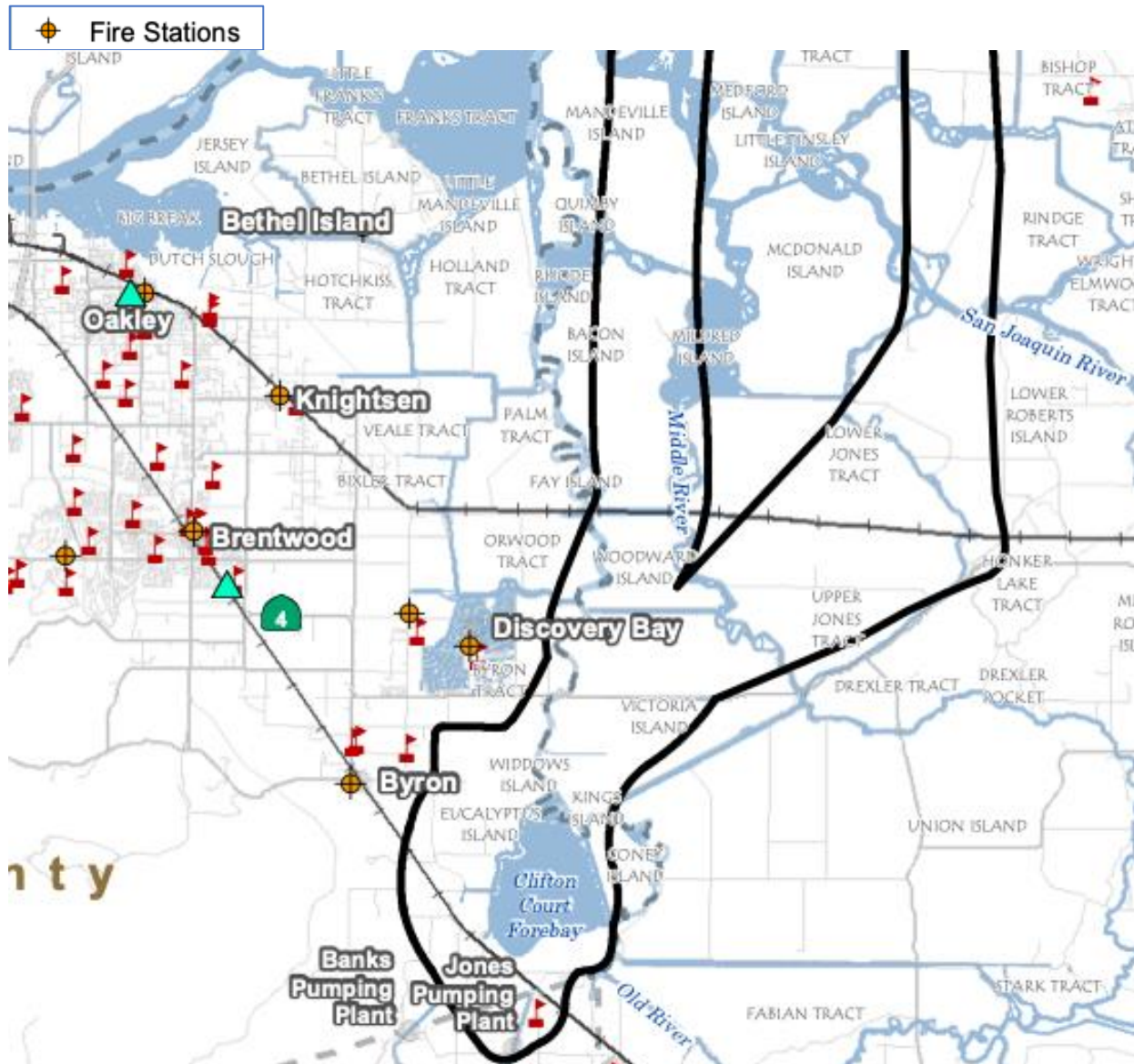
The other concern is that boaters anchored in Mildred Island enjoy the sunsets, watching the sun set over Mt. Diablo to the west. A raised shaft, electrical transmission wires, etc. across the view are yet another way this project will ruin the enjoyment of the Delta for many, many years.

It “may” help if the Bacon Island shaft could be positioned for minimum impact on the Mildred Island anchorage, preferably moved to the far south end of Bacon or over to Woodward Island. Woodward Island has a new, 30-foot high bridge and upgraded levees to protect it from risk of levee failure.

Emergency Services

The ITR Committee correctly noted that the Central Corridor was not suitable because: “addressing safety, including hospital access and tunnel safety duplication, creates a costly layer or redundancy without definitive costs.” They were so correct. This is a big deal.

The map in the March 11 materials showing emergency services is incorrect.



Map of fire stations, etc. posted on the DCA website with March 11 materials.

As you can see from the chart below, the three shown above closest to Clifton Court Forebay and to both corridor construction sites in the South Delta have been closed since 2008.



What the lack of fire stations in the area currently means is that for residents that live on the Discovery Bay east side waterways and golf course, emergency help (e.g. paramedics) cannot get to our homes within the eight minutes required to prevent a coma in the case of a heart attack or similar. I lost our neighbor two houses away from my house due to exactly that scenario. In case of a house fire, the fire department often can only save nearby structures. The house on fire is left to burn. The lack of sufficient emergency services in East Contra Costa County is a failure of Prop 13 and the Delta being classified as a “rural” area.

The existing three to four stations have to cover 249 square miles and 128,000 residents. In addition, they cover accidents on Highway 4, the Byron Highway, and Vasco Road. And would be responsible for responding to any construction emergencies at the Southern Forebay and the shafts south of the channel, especially if the Central Corridor is selected. The Eastern Corridor may have some support from Stockton.

It would be an extreme risk to locate this huge construction project within the jurisdiction of ECCFPD without paying to reopen Discovery Bay’s fire station on DB Blvd, Byron’s, and perhaps adding a new one on Highway 4. You should talk to the ECCFPD Fire Chief about what would be needed to support an accident, rescue, or other emergency aid at any of the South Delta construction sites.

Muck (aka “RTM”)

Every expert I’ve heard on the subject is in alignment with what the ITR Committee stated:

“Based on ITR experience, soft ground tunnel material is not a commodity (has no residual value) and is difficult to dispose or find a use for. These two factors were part of the reasons the ITR recommends (above) moving the alignment closer to industrialized land, close to multiple modes of transport, to handle removal of it in the most economical manner. “

In addition, when considering the central Delta soils, those have reported to have significant mercury and arsenic. Plus there are RTM treatment chemicals that were stated to not be harmful to humans but are hore on the eyes. I heard an SEC member comment quietly, “Don’t fish have eyes?” And we know humans and dogs who may be swimming nearby do.

Instead of muck ponds in the central islands of the Delta, where run-off can flow into the Delta waters, muck should be hauled off, or at least stored far from the Delta waterways where it can be properly treated.

I was surprised that the DCA so quickly discounted the ITR input.

Northern Intake Locations

The current intake locations were rejected by the DSC Staff and were about to be rejected by a Judge subsequently. Other intake locations and configurations must be reasonably evaluated. Having an existing water right is not the legal criteria for evaluating intake locations.

This was brought up in an earlier SEC meeting but deserves repeating. The noise impacts from expert testimony about the effect of building the intakes so close to the legacy towns in the North and the total ruin of the town of Hood. Similar impacts occur across the waterways at Clarksburg and Courtland. I appreciate how the DCA is working with the Stakeholder Engagement Meeting. But unless the location is moved and not just “pick 2 of the previous 3” unacceptable locations, it is still unacceptable.

SEC member Karen Mann read this statement at a prior SEC meeting about the impact on the towns in the north:

“It is clear that the intakes cannot be placed in any of the locations shown on the preliminary drawings for discussion purposes (that is in 2 of the 3 locations of previous intakes 2, 3, and 5 of California WaterFix). Extensive evidentiary showings in the prior State Water Resources Control Board hearings and Delta Stewardship Council hearings show that neither of these agencies can approve intakes in these locations because it would not be consistent with the Public Trust Doctrine (Water Board) or the Delta Reform Act (Delta Stewardship Council). It is unacceptable to locate the intakes in close proximity to Delta Legacy communities. We understand that DWR wants to put the intakes in these locations only because they claim they have an existing water right at

these locations. DWR will just have to accept the reality that they are going to have to put the intakes somewhere else and initiate a new water right in order to do so.

“The question is: When will begin a realistic consideration of intake locations? That is, locations other than currently being considered. Talking about intakes at the current locations is a waste of time because it cannot happen.”

Step one needs to be to find a new location and start applying for a new water right in a more acceptable location.

Longer-Term Water Quality Issues

The longer-term issues raised at the SWRCB Permit Hearings and DSC Consistency Hearings need to be addressed with a single tunnel. The DSC staff accepted one of STCDA’s main arguments: that WaterFix is not consistent with D-1641 water quality requirements (meaning acceptable salinity in the Delta, particularly that it violates the Export to Inflow ratios). I do not see how a single tunnel will significantly reduce that issue since the goal is to maintain current export levels.

Route Alternative Summary

For the EIR, four alternatives deserve consideration:

1. Central Corridor
2. Eastern Corridor
3. Far Eastern I-5 Route
4. No Tunnel

A “No Tunnel” alternative should not be the alternative that was in the BDCP/WaterFix EIR, a do nothing alternative. It should be analyzed as combined with Governor Newsom’s portfolio approach, to reduce reliance on the Delta and to provide alternative sources of water.

Central Corridor

It would see obvious that the Central Corridor is an unacceptable alternative for all of the reasons outlined in this document. Yet the Central Corridor remains in the plan and seems to continue to be preferred alternative by DWR. It was not preferred by Phil Ryan, who said he prefers the Eastern Corridor given the two choices, or by the ITR Committee, who prefers the far east I-5 route. [Pessimists must wonder if the reason for DWR’s continued focus mainly on the Central Corridor is that Metropolitan Water District unwisely purchased Bacon Island and Bouldin thinking they were on the tunnel route and so to reduce some of the eminent domain issues.]

The Central Corridor Issue Summary:

1. More infrastructure upgrades: Requires more significant upgrades to Highway 4, longer new haul roads, and multiple bridge replacements because construction will be occurring on Delta islands.
2. Has more risk:
 - a. Shaft sites are on islands that are severely subsided and digging borrow pits on them to get fill dirt to build up the shaft site would further increase the potential of a levee failure.
 - b. In case of a levee break, the new haul roads would be under water and shaft sites inaccessible. Since the risk of earthquakes and levees being breached is a significant part of the cost/benefits analysis of a tunnel, ignoring that risk seems imprudent. That is why people in the Delta have always been surprised that the tunnel wouldn't follow the I-5 corridor and be far away from the fragile Delta islands.
 - c. Soils are the worst for tunneling through. They are soft, alluvial soil. Tunnel experts witness testimony during the SWRCB and DSC Hearings raised many issues that could occur tunneling under the railroad where it is on a trestle, under EBMUD's water and gas line, exacerbated by soft soils. The new plan shown in the "Byron Tract Maintenance Shaft" illustration shows the tunnel route dangerously close to Discovery Bay homes.
3. Wetlands Impacts: Besides reasons already stated, the destruction of wetlands for the construction and operation of project facilities appears to be a significant impact. A shaft on Staten Island, which is a large bird preserve seems unimaginable. In fact, the entire route with its noise and air pollution is the antithesis of preserving wetlands.
4. Safety: The central corridor does not have adequate infrastructure (Fire Stations) to respond to any emergency issues during construction
5. Muck ponds on Delta islands threatens in-Delta water quality.
6. Boating Issues: It has the most negative impact on boating and recreation and the economy of communities and small business supporting boating.

Eastern Corridor

This route is not as far east as the BDCP/WaterFix "Eastern Alternative." This route has shaft sites on islands. One wonders if the reason the Eastern Corridor isn't further east and further out of the Delta is to leverage MWD's purchase of Bouldin Island. I hope not – those aren't good reasons.

1. Less infrastructure upgrades than the Central Corridor but still requires improved roads (including Highway 4), longer haul roads since it is far away from highway infrastructure, and bridges (replacement of Hwy 4 Old and Middle River Bridges and other new bridges because construction will be occurring on Delta islands.)
2. Still has risk:
 - a. Here the islands that are not as subsided as the Central Corridor, but it still means in the case of a levee break, the new haul roads and shaft sites would be under water. In 2004, Jones Tract suffered the largest recent levee failure. It was expensive and took months to reclaim the land. Building further east seems more prudent to get the construction out of the Delta island area.

- b. Soils are better than the Central Corridor for tunneling through, but still worse than the I-5 area.
 - c. Note: At least this route would mean the tunnel wouldn't go under the railroad trestle and near Discovery Bay homes.
3. Wetlands Impacts: Since it goes through Delta islands, there is still destruction of wetlands.
4. Safety: The southern part of the corridor does not have adequate infrastructure (Fire Stations) to respond to any emergency issues during construction, but further north may have more access via I-5.
5. Muck ponds on Delta islands threatens in-Delta water quality.
6. Boating Issues: It may still have impacts I am not aware of (I do not boat in that area). But that area is less used for boating and recreation.

ITR's I-5 Far Eastern Route

In February 2010, the Independent Technical Review Panel for the twin tunnels project made the same recommendation, because further east would “yield better conditions both for constructing tunnel shafts (portals) and for boring the tunnels.” Obviously, DWR has chosen to ignore those recommendations, but a real analysis is warranted.

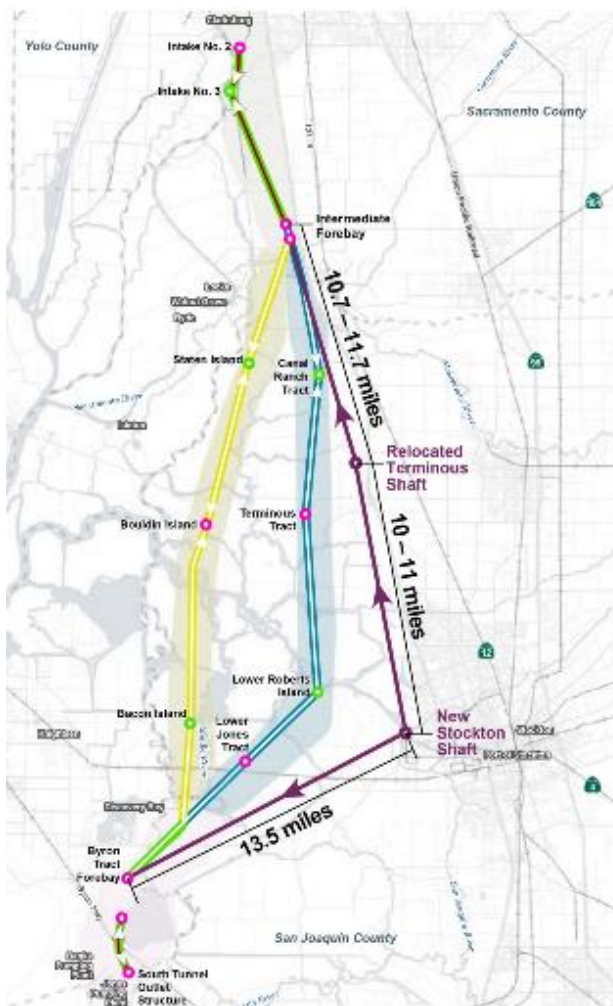


Figure 4. Recommended Far East Alignment Corridor

First, the State already owns land on both sides of I-5 with future plans to widen that road. Adding construction lanes and intersections would cause no additional traffic impacts and has the advantage the separate lanes could be used after the construction period as separate carpool lanes, per the State's long-term plan.

Emergency services can be better provided for this far eastern route. There are many fire stations and better emergency support in Stockton than ECCFPD. In addition, the town of Lodi (population 66,000) is not far from the I-5 corridor, but has more fire stations than all of ECCFPD (population 128,000).

It seems to me that the impact of air pollution or noise would be insignificant for a corridor where there already is a six-lane freeway. Locating the construction near the busy I-5 corridor seems much better than either the Central or Eastern Corridor which

go through the wetlands and Delta islands and where necessary infrastructure and emergency services do not exist.

The project could leverage the Port of Stockton. Tunnel segments could easily be delivered there.

That route would significantly reduce the impact of traffic on Highway 4, hence that roadway may not need to be upgraded (depending on traffic to/from the Southern Forebay.) In addition, new replacement bridges may not be needed.



I have heard that there is an impact on Stockton's environmental justice and disadvantaged communities with that route, but am unaware of the details. The closest it comes to Stockton is the upscale Brookside Golf and Country Club and the Stockton Country Club homes. The new Byron Tract shaft is closer to Discovery Bay than the Stockton Shaft is to Stockton. It appears the Stockton Shaft could be moved quite a bit further north to lesson impacts on Stockton. Obviously, impacts on any community need to be studied and minimized.

Stockton nearest the Stockton Shaft

Far East I-5 Summary

1. Much less infrastructure upgrades because it is close to I-5, shorter haul routes, no new bridges.
2. Lowest risk:
 - a. Not building on islands prone to levee breaks.
 - b. Soils are best for tunneling through.
3. Wetlands Impacts: Lower.
4. Safety: Lodi and Stockton are near and have many more fire stations.
5. Muck ponds – Nearness to I-5 supports hauling the muck to a more appropriate location.
6. No boating issues.

I'm not recommending it. I oppose any tunnel and instead believe the State needs to reduce reliance on the Delta as stated by the Delta Reform Act and Delta Plan. **But if a tunnel is built, this route should be analyzed as it appears to have significantly less issues than the Central or Eastern Corridors.**

No Tunnel

This is the best alternative; the only acceptable choice.

Conclusion

First, the Central Corridor (previously named the “Through-Delta Alternative”) is, and always has been, the worst alternative route proposed for the tunnel(s). I strongly doubt the boating and recreation issues from noise and pollution can be mitigated sufficiently to not significantly impact Delta community economy and South Delta small businesses that are mainly boating-related.

The Central Corridor plan was recently made worse by a new maintenance shaft planned right next to Discovery Bay, bringing air and noise pollution to our community. Personally, I will hear the construction at the Byron Shaft in Discovery Bay for years, since it is right across the slough from my waterfront home!

Second, I am not as familiar with the Eastern Corridor, but from an access standpoint, impact on wetlands, impact on boating and recreation, and the Delta economy and communities, the Eastern Corridor seems to have less issues. That being said, it also has enough issues that I could not support it either except as the lesser of two evils.

The ITR Committee’s recommended Far Eastern I-5 route has the least impacts and deserves an analysis. It is interesting that both independent technology groups – in 2010 and again in 2020 – recommended that route due to accessibility, better emergency services, better soil for tunneling through, and less air and noise pollution impacts because it would be located in an existing super-freeway beltway rather than through rural wetlands.

Last, with any route, the North Intake locations are appalling.

The longer-term issues raised at the SWRCB Permit Hearings and DSC Consistency Hearings need to be addressed with a single tunnel.