



Jersey Island Acquisition: Critical for Protecting California's Water Supply

FEBRUARY 2026

Why This Project Matters

Diablo Water District (District) is a community-focused water provider dedicated to protecting water resources, the environment, and the quality of life for our community.

To achieve its ambitious goal of 100% carbon neutrality by 2027, the District recognizes that pumping and treating drinking water requires a significant amount of energy.

A key step towards this goal is investing in a project on neighboring Jersey Island to reduce carbon emissions by restoring native habitat. This project will dramatically reduce oxidation of the island's highly organic peat soil, lowering emissions and helping the District to achieve carbon neutrality.

Acquiring Jersey Island is a rare opportunity to restore 3,570 acres of habitat critical to Delta health while maximizing ecological benefits and public access

Project Benefits at a Glance

- Reduces risk to the State's water delivery system while preserving local water resources
- Reduces significant carbon emissions
- Provides public access near a large population center, including a campground
- Restores a key part of the Pacific Flyway



The Great Egret has special conservation status in the Delta.

Delta Concerns & Project Benefits

Vulnerability to California's Water Delivery System

Parts of Jersey Island, one of eight islands critical to preserving fresh water in the Delta, sit 20 feet below sea level, placing serious strain on its levees. Failure of the island's levees would allow saltwater to enter the aqueducts that bring water to Southern California.

- ✓ *Restoring most of Jersey Island to wetlands will reverse subsidence and the risk of levee failure.*

Carbon Emissions

Jersey Island emits an estimated 24,000 tons of carbon annually from soil oxidation—more than 5,000 cars' worth of emissions.

- ✓ *This project will cut emissions by 75%, preventing 18,000 tons of carbon from entering the atmosphere each year.*

Loss of Wetlands and Natural Habitat

Over 98% of the Delta's historic wetlands have been lost, leading to a dramatic decline in regional species diversity and population sizes. Jersey Island sits on a key part of the Pacific Flyway.

- ✓ *Restoring the island to its native habitat supports California's wildlife and protects water availability in a changing climate.*

Project Funding

- Less than 0.3% of Proposition 4 is allocated to the Delta, which supplies 70% of California's drinking water.
- Diablo Water District already has soft commitments for 60% of the acquisition costs for Jersey Island and has funding for its design and permitting.
- To acquire and permanently protect Jersey Island requires \$5.5M more from the State, for example, through a higher FY26/27 Prop 4 allocation to the Delta Conservancy.



This innovative project will establish an environmental market for wetland restoration, expediting essential wetland projects in the Delta.

For project status and funding information, please contact Dan Muelrath at (925) 625-3798 or dmuelrath@diablowater.gov.