

The Importance of Jersey Island to California

Dan Muelrath, General Manager
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Opportunity

JERSEY ISLAND IS A RARE OPPORTUNITY FOR CALIFORNIA BECAUSE IT:

- Is essential to protecting State and local water supplies, given the island's position in the western Delta and its role in keeping the Delta fresh;
- Is emitting significant carbon emissions, which can be reversed through habitat restoration;
- Lies within 50 miles of a major population center, and a local parks district is motivated to develop public access opportunities;
- Is in a highly degraded region but is surrounded by a cluster of restored habitats that sit in a bottleneck on the Pacific flyway; and
- Is under a Purchase and Sale Agreement (dependent on available funding) with Diablo Water District to restore the island to a natural habitat, support sustainable agriculture and create a community resource.

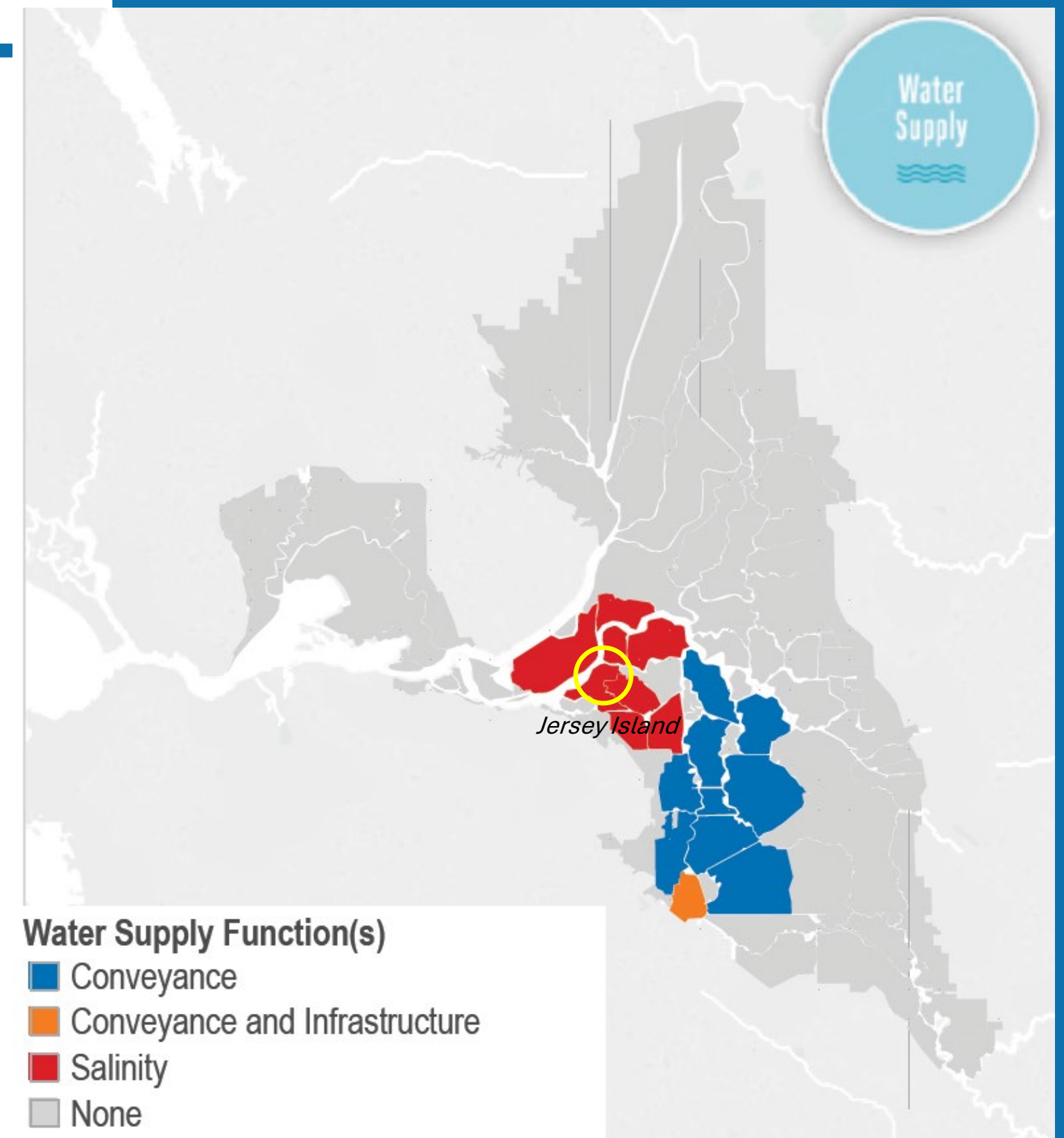
If Diablo Water District cannot find sufficient funding, Jersey Island could be sold to a traditional developer, which would negatively impact State and local water supply.

This project requires additional funding in the coming fiscal year to allow for the permanent protection of Jersey Island.

Vulnerability to California's Water Delivery System

- The Delta Stewardship Council conducted a risk assessment of Delta levees.
- Jersey Island is one of eight islands critical to preventing salinity from entering the State Water Project aqueducts (red islands).
- Four of those islands are already publicly owned.
- Acquiring Jersey Island will ensure its levees are maintained to the highest standard.

This island is part of your community.
Protecting it is our shared responsibility.



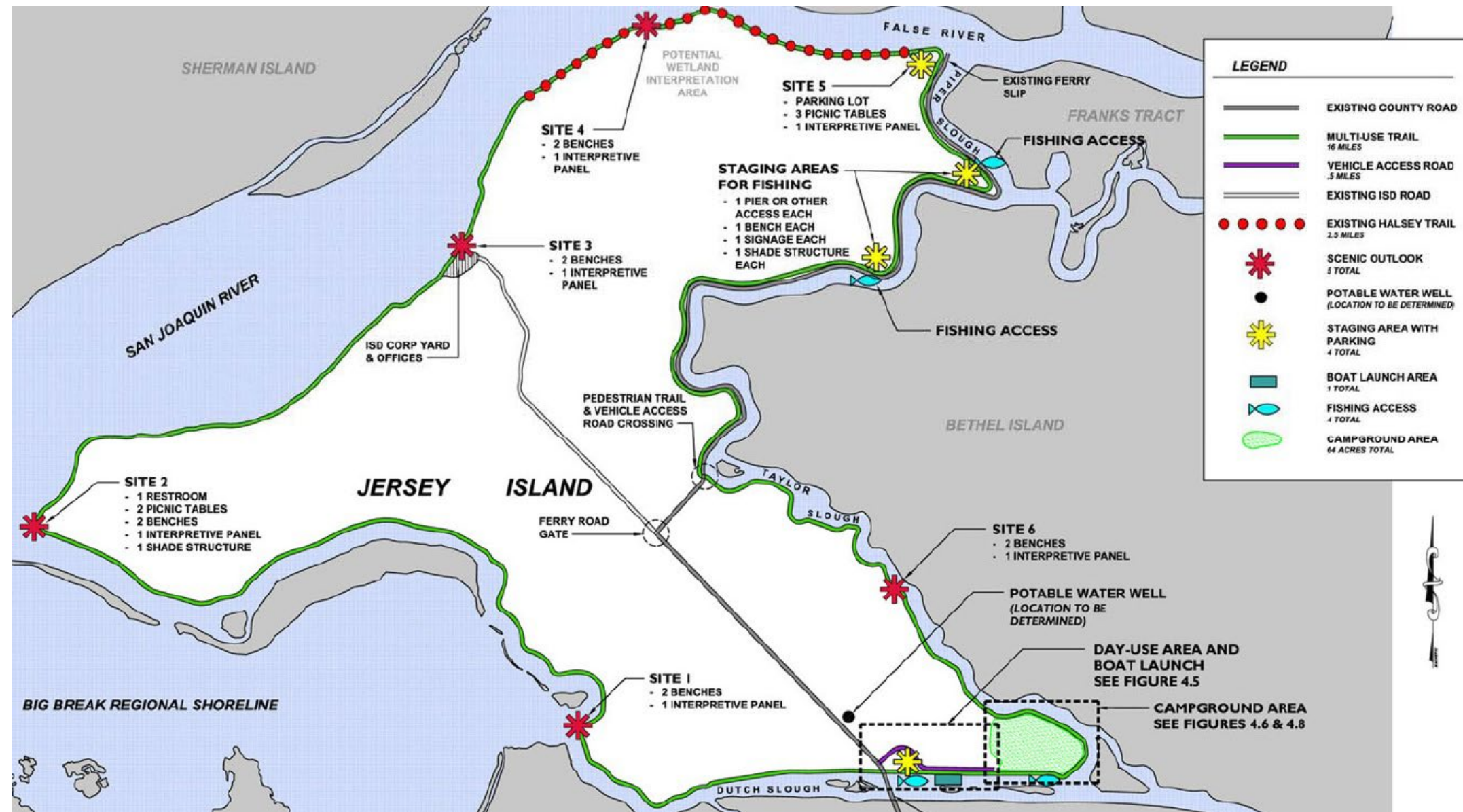
Carbon Emissions

- Land-based carbon projects generally prevent 0.25–0.5 tons of CO₂ per acre per year from entering the atmosphere.
- Most of Jersey Island is emitting 6 to 12 tons of CO₂ per acre per year through the oxidation of its highly organic peat soil.
- Restoring Jersey Island is a highly efficient way to prevent carbon emissions while also protecting habitat and moving California toward our 30x30 goal.

Building wetlands on Jersey Island will sequester carbon and reverse subsidence, which provides a co-benefit of reducing the long-term risk of levee failure for your community.



Community Access



Diablo Water District wants to turn Jersey Island into a community resource.

This project will improve and enhance outdoor recreational activities and opportunities through local partnerships.

Habitat Restoration and Connectivity



- 98% of the Delta's historic wetlands have been destroyed, leading to a dramatic decline in biodiversity and population sizes.
- 121 Delta species now have some level of special conservation status.
- 3,570-acre Jersey Island is a rare large property with a willing seller where ecological benefit can be fully realized.
- Jersey Island sits between several restoration projects – Dutch Slough to its south and four restored DWR wetlands to its north and west – creating habitat connectivity on a critical part of the Pacific Flyway.

**This project will build on existing restoration projects
to amplify their impact.**

Critical Funding Needed

Less than 0.3% of Proposition 4 is allocated to the Delta, which supplies 70% of California's drinking water.

This once-in-a-generation project requires action now.

Diablo Water District already has soft commitments for 67% of the acquisition costs and has funding for design and permitting. The remaining gap can be filled with additional Prop 4 funding.

To acquire and permanently protect Jersey Island requires \$4.5M in additional funding. The best pathway for this is a higher FY26/27 Prop 4 allocation to the Delta Conservancy.

A lack of funding could jeopardize the acquisition of Jersey Island and result in an ongoing threat to California's water supply.

Thank You

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