



Developing Strong Partnerships for a Reliable Water Future: Potential Jersey Island Purchase and Restoration

Why This Project Matters

Diablo Water District currently has an opportunity to purchase Jersey Island from Ironhouse Sanitary District. Jersey Island is one of eight western delta islands that are critical to preventing saltwater intrusion into our water intakes and preserving fresh water in the Delta.

Acquiring Jersey Island is a rare opportunity to protect and restore 3,570 acres of habitat critical to the health of the Delta and our water supply while expanding local control of our precious water resources, maximizing ecological benefits, and providing public access.

Our mission as a community-focused water provider dedicated to protecting water resources has guided the decision to enter into a contractual agreement for a potential purchase. The agreement does not commit the District to purchasing the island; instead, it provides the opportunity to conduct a comprehensive assessment of its soil and environmental conditions. Working in partnership, the District is also evaluating opportunities to address legacy contamination on the island, helping protect the health of the Delta while safeguarding our future water supply.



The Great Egret has special conservation status in the Delta. Jersey Island is critical to the Pacific Flyway.

Project Benefits at a Glance

- Reduces risk to Contra Costa County's water delivery system while preserving local water resources
- Reduces significant carbon emissions
- Supports public access near a large population center, including potential campgrounds and trails
- Creates habitat connectivity to six other restoration projects in the western Delta and bird refuge on a critical part of the Pacific Flyway

Project Funding

The District has actively pursued grant funding to contribute to the purchase of the island and has secured funding commitments from several philanthropic organizations. If a purchase moves forward, our goal is to acquire the island without funding from ratepayers; we are focused on partnership funding to support the purchase and future improvements.

Community partners have already expressed interest in exploring future restoration opportunities that could include wetlands, trails, camping, and other recreational uses. If the island is purchased, we are committed to engaging the community in shaping a space that balances public access with the protection and preservation of local wildlife habitat.

Delta Concerns & Project Benefits

Vulnerability to Our Water Delivery System

Parts of Jersey Island, one of eight islands critical to preserving fresh water in the Delta, sit 18 feet below sea level, placing serious strain on its levees. If the island's levees fail, saltwater could enter the Delta and reach the intakes that deliver drinking water to Contra Costa County.

- ✓ *Restoring most of Jersey Island to wetlands will reverse land subsidence, reduce the risk of levee failure, protect the Delta as well as state and local water delivery systems.*

Carbon Emissions

Jersey Island emits an estimated 41,000 tons of carbon annually from soil oxidation—more than 9,000 cars' worth of emissions.

- ✓ *This project will cut 27,000 tons of carbon emissions 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.*

Jersey Island Is Closer Than You Think

Where is Jersey Island? Just outside of Oakley, Jersey Island sits in the middle of waterways and communities we know, including Franks Tract, Bethel Island, Big Break, Dutch Slough, and False River. Its condition directly affects Delta water quality, protection of fresh water from salinity, habitat, and long-term water reliability. Ensuring Jersey Island remains under local control is critical to advancing the next phases of the project while protecting these important benefits.



Join us for a Study Session where the Board of Directors will receive more information about Jersey Island, including recent expert findings on known contamination, and potential restoration and mitigation opportunities.

