

Stockton Mayor Says Stay Out of the Delta, As She Dips In

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Realizing that it was depleting its groundwater aquifers at an unsustainable rate, a Central Valley city recently made a move to increase its reliance on Delta water diversions to satisfy its needs.

Yet, the usual Delta voices that clamor at any talk of new water diversions were conspicuously quiet about this announcement. That is because the city increasing its dependence on Delta water was Stockton, located in the heart of the Delta.

In her state of the city speech on May 21, Mayor Ann Johnston announced that Stockton would reduce its over reliance on groundwater through the city's Delta Water Supply Project, which will soon supply Stockton residents with water pumped directly from the Delta.

"Many communities would be envious of the water we have and the supplies that we have," Johnston said.

She couldn't be more correct. And 23 million Californians who depend on the Delta for at least part of their drinking water supply would love to have a reliable water supply that they could count on year after year.

But in March, [Mayor Johnston wrote](#), "The Delta has no 'surplus' water, and our fish and

farms are already suffering. Our urban water districts are working hard to conserve water, and take just a small percentage of the Delta water."

Which is it? We realize some politicians struggle with consistency, but can someone who has regularly criticized communities across the state for relying on water from the Delta really have such a double standard? Now, the Delta suddenly has surplus water, but only for her city?



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Through the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP), the state is currently working with a wide array of partners to develop a project that would deliver a more reliable water supply to all of the communities and businesses dependent on the Delta. Mayor Johnston, meanwhile, has made herself the face of a

coalition intent on stalling the BDCP and any other plan that would change the status quo in the Delta.

Just like Stockton, other communities are looking for solutions to their water needs. While Stockton has the ability to simply throw a syphon over a levee to solve its water supply problems, others are focused on a more complicated and comprehensive Delta solution, including the BDCP, that will address the collective needs of all Californians and the Delta ecosystem.



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