

# Forum on Delta braces residents for battle against state water tunnel plan

**Paul Burgarino, Bay Area News Group, 2-14-13**

DISCOVERY BAY -- The future of the Delta hangs in the balance, and it will take an extensive grassroots effort to stop state plans that would negatively alter its ecosystem.

That was the message relayed often Wednesday night to a capacity crowd of over 200 concerned East Contra Costa residents that packed the Discovery Bay Elementary school gymnasium.

The town hall forum, presented by environmental organization Save the California Delta Alliance, featured updates on pressing Delta issues from group president Jan McCleery and attorney Michael Brodsky, county Supervisor Mary Nejedly Piepho of Discovery Bay and Assemblyman Jim Frazier, D-Oakley.

The night concluded with a viewing of the film "Over Troubled Waters," which documents how the estuary is threatened.

The main concern is Gov. Jerry Brown's proposal to build a pair of 37-mile long tunnels that would divert water from the Sacramento River south of Sacramento to Clifton Court Forebay near Byron, bypassing the Delta.

The price tag is unknown, but estimates range from \$14 to \$20 billion.

A draft of Brown's plan, formally called the Bay Delta Conservancy Plan, is supposed to be released later this month. Residents opposed to the plan should weigh in early and often, Brodsky said.

"This group really has a lot of power. Collectively, we can make a difference," Piepho said.

Discovery Bay resident Dana Matthews said this was the first time he had really started paying attention to the issue.

"It sounds like we are going to be hosed," he said. "It's being disguised so it sounds like it makes environmental sense."

Bethel Island resident and former harbor owner Richard Robertson said the only way to fight the idea is to air TV commercials in Southern California showing what environmental damage it would do.