

# DELTA BYWAYS "Where Life Abandons the Straight and Narrow"

## Defining the Space: Wetlands and Recreation

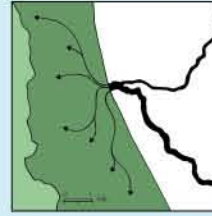
### Wetlands as Physical & Conceptual Edge

Wetlands are restorative landscapes in which both people and water can



- Boundary Rationale**
- Areas with existing wetlands, seasonally flooded crops, sub-sea-level elevation and/or non-prime farmland that lie along Delta Primary Zone borders
  - Average 1 mile buffer between urban edge and quiet Delta core
  - Communicates Delta's ecological function and uniquely restorative atmosphere to outsiders
  - Enhances ecological and hydrological function in flood-prone area
  - Compatible with existing agricultural land uses
  - Lessen state flood liability

Slow Down, Absorb, Disperse:

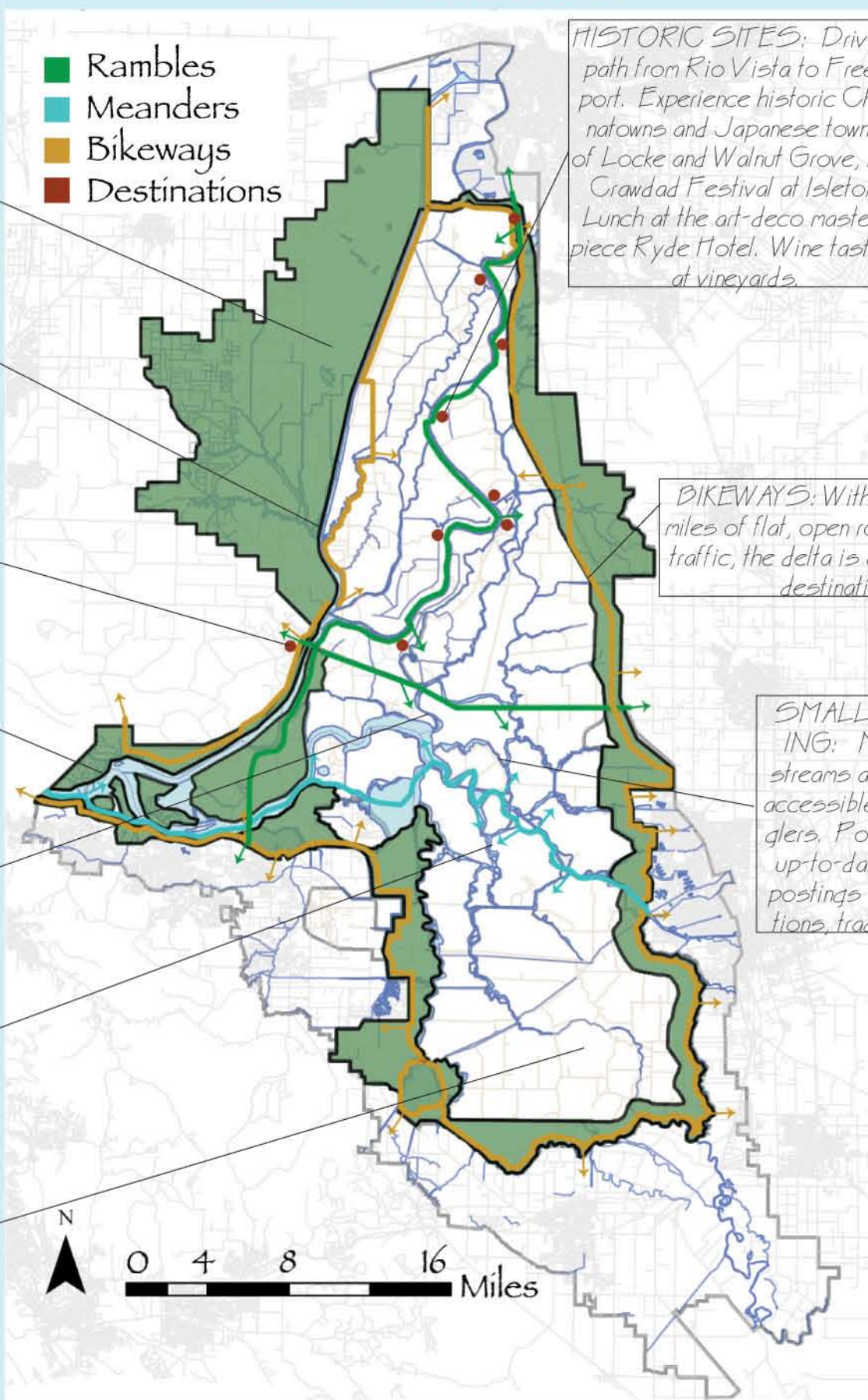


Within this edge, Delta Byways represents a rich confluence of watersheds, cultures, land uses, and jurisdictions



### New Concepts

### Delta Recreation



**DUCK HUNTING:** Duck clubs provide numerous opportunities for duck hunting in the northwestern delta.

**PADDLEBOAT CRUISES:** No longer for forty-niners headed to Gold Country but an elegant backdrop for dinners or parties.

**"DISCOVER THE DELTA" GATEWAY:** Visitors centers located at three gateways to the delta, providing information and concierge-style services. Locations: Hwy 12/160 junction, Freeport, Stockton.

**BREEZEWAY:** A steady breeze makes ideal conditions for windsurfing or kite-flying.

**DELTA LOOP:** The delta's center for big boats and RV camp sites. If you need to launch a boat and head out to Frank's Tract, here's where it happens.

**EDUCATIONAL BOATING EXCURSIONS:** Floating classrooms provide history of the delta and how this resource-rich environment has been utilized over the years. Naturalists teach about the local flora and fauna.

**AGRO-TOURISM:** Farm stays to participate in and learn sustainable farming. Success requires delta to cultivate image as center for sustainable agriculture.

**HISTORIC SITES:** Driving path from Rio Vista to Freeport. Experience historic Chinatown and Japanese towns of Locke and Walnut Grove, the Crowdad Festival at Isleton. Lunch at the art-deco masterpiece Ryde Hotel. Wine tasting at vineyards.

**BIKEWAYS:** With hundreds of miles of flat, open roads with little traffic, the delta is an ideal biking destination.

**SMALL BOAT FISHING:** Make the delta's streams and sloughs more accessible to non-local anglers. Possible solutions: up-to-date maps, Internet postings of fishing conditions, trade magazine ads.

### PRESERVING HISTORY

Chinese laborers built the first delta levees by laboring waist-deep in water, piling up parallel walls of sun-dried peat bricks and filling in the space with mud for about a dollar a day. The city of Locke was founded in 1915 by these laborers. Today it remains the most complete example of a rural, agricultural Chinese-American community in the United States. Rising in the levee's shadow, the town supported as many as 3,000 Chinese residents in 10 acres of one- and two-story wood-framed buildings.

Locke restored as redevelopment area with use of CDBG funds and grants from the Federal Home Loan Bank. Fund additional restoration in Locke and other delta communities through U.S. historic preservation tax credits, historic preservation easements, Cal. Mills Act. Tourist facilities financed with tax-increment financing. Low- and moderate-income housing provided with LIHTC credits.

### WETLANDS FOR ECOLOGICAL AND ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

Recreate wetlands lost to land reclamation. Delta wetlands provide habitat for birds, mammals, and spawning and rearing habitats and food supply for fish and shellfish.

Delta smelt population, an indicator species, plummeted two-thirds last year. The fishing industry, which provides \$336 million annually to the delta economy, is at risk.

Conservancy and partners create tidal marshes, riparian corridors, and foraging and migratory bird habitat. Establish hedgerows, vegetated ditches using native and wildlife friendly plants. Levee and bankside revegetation.

Funding through U.S. Wetlands Reserve Program and Cal. Working Landscapes funds. Cal. infrastructure bonds utilize wetlands as part of flood control.

### SHOWPLACE FOR AGRICULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY

The delta as the epicenter of economically viable environmentally sustainable agriculture.

Uniquely qualified: rich farmland; access to UC Davis; complicated water supply, pesticide run-off, and air pollution problems.

Coordinated by non-profit research centrally located in Isleton, joined with retreat for bringing together agricultural leaders.

Linked to a university, partnering with non-profits owning farmland in the delta. Land trusts make participation a condition of acquiring agricultural easements. Private farmers not forced to participate, but provided incentives.

Funded in part by university, USDA grants, corporate sponsorship, workshop fees for corporate retreats, agro-tourism workshops, partial ownership of patents generated through the research.

### SECTION 1: LEVEE TO FARMLAND Habitat Restoration

