Resolution
Yazoo Backwater Project
Consensus Preferred Alternative

On July 6, 2023, the *Federal Register* published a Notice of Intent for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the Consensus Preferred Alternative for the Yazoo Backwater Area Water Management Project. The Consensus Preferred Alternative was developed in a joint federal agency collaboration between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and other federal agencies, following public engagement sessions and roundtable discussions with community leaders, local elected officials, agricultural leaders, and environmental organizations.

The Consensus Preferred Alternative includes a 25,000 cfs pumping plant turned on at 90' during the crop season (March 16-October 15) and 93' during the non-crop season (October 16-March 15). The Preferred Alternative will not convert any wetlands to non-wetlands during operation. The non-structural portion includes modification of the Steele Bayou Structure operation to maintain water levels in the Yazoo Backwater Area at 75' to allow for more exchange of water between the riverside and the landside of the Yazoo Backwater Levee. Other non-structural features also include acquisition or floodproofing of properties including ring levees, elevating homes, septic and sewer protection, and raising road elevations.

The Corps will also consider 4 alternatives:
(1) No action;
(2) Variations of the Preferred Alternative providing variations on the crop season dates;
(3) Pump-on elevation of 90' year-round; and
(4) A fully non-structural solution.

Delta Council fully supports the Consensus Preferred Alternative but will support Alternatives 2 and 3. Numbers 1 and 4 are not alternatives that the affected community can support. Delta Council believes that any alternative must offer adequate flood protection for the people, homes, infrastructure, crop land, wildlife, trees, and the environment of the South Delta. The Draft EIS is expected to be completed in December 2023, and we urge officials to stay on schedule and alleviate this decades long manmade disaster on the South Delta.

Delta Council thanks the federal agencies for truly studying the science on this issue, as well as the impacts it has caused the people, the economy, the wildlife, and natural resources of the South Delta by refusing to act in the past. Delta Council is grateful to Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith, Senator Roger Wicker, Congressman Bennie Thompson, EPA, the Corps, and other federal and state entities for delivering a plan that meets the challenges of the Yazoo Backwater Area.

Adopted by: Delta Council Board of Directors
May 8, 2026