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Project to place fish-saving gates in delta stalls

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FRESNO, Calif.—A plan to place two removable gates in California's freshwater estuary to keep threatened fish from getting killed by water pumps has been put off for this year.

San Joaquin Valley farmers favored the "Two Gates" proposal as a temporary solution to the water crisis hitting the state and slowing deliveries from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

A three-year drought, coupled with environmental restrictions on pumping, have forced farmers to idle thousands of acres and contributed to the collapse of the commercial salmon fishing industry.

Metropolitan Water District officials hope contractors can get the gates installed and permitted by next summer, a critical time for a native fish called the delta smelt.

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