



**DRAFT**

***For Review and Adoption by the Council at the July 23, 2020 Meeting***

**DELTA STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL**

**Thursday, June 25, 2020**

In accordance with the Governor's Executive Order N-25-20 issued on March 12, 2020, and the Governor's Executive Order N-29-20 issued on March 17, 2020, the meeting's proceedings were conducted entirely remotely.

All meeting materials, presentations, and comment letters are available at <https://deltacouncil.ca.gov/council-meetings>

**MEETING SUMMARY**

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**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Chair Tatayon called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM, June 25, 2020.

**2. Roll Call – Establish a Quorum (Water Code §85210.5)**

Roll call was taken, and a quorum was established. The following councilmembers were present: Frank Damrell, Randy Fiorini, Oscar Villegas, and Susan Tatayon.

Councilmembers Mike Gatto, Maria Mehranian, and Daniel Zingale joined during the closed session.

**3. Closed Executive Session: Litigation (Not Open to the Public) (Action Item)**

Chair Tatayon had nothing to report.

**4. Reconvene Open Session**

**5. Roll Call – Re-establish a Quorum (Water Code §85210.5)**

Roll call was re-taken, and a quorum was established. The following councilmembers were present: Frank Damrell, Randy Fiorini, Maria Mehranian, Oscar Villegas, Daniel Zingale, and Susan Tatayon.

Due to technical difficulties, Councilmember Gatto joined during the Executive Officer's report.

Chair Tatayon provided instructions on the remote proceedings and how the public can participate as the Council prudently conducts business in response to COVID-19 physical distancing guidance. A full description is available on the Meeting Agenda.

**6. Consent Calendar (*Action Item*)**

**6a. Adoption of April 30, 2020 Meeting Summary**

**6b. Adoption of May 1, 2020 Meeting Summary**

**Motion:** Offered by Villegas, second by Fiorini – Approve the Consent Calendar items.

**Vote:** 6/0 – Damrell, Fiorini, Mehranian, Villegas, Zingale, and Tatayon. The motion was adopted.

The motion and vote are viewable on the linked agenda at <https://cal-span.org/unipage/?site=cal-span&owner=DSC&date=2020-06-25> minute 00:06:10.

**7. Executive Officer's Report (*Information Item*)**

Before introducing Executive Officer Jessica Pearson, Chair Tatayon announced that the next Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee meeting is July 13. Executive Officer Pearson reminded the public that the Council's physical office is closed, but that staff is working remotely to support physical distancing efforts. The public should contact [hello@deltacouncil.ca.gov](mailto:hello@deltacouncil.ca.gov) to be directed to the appropriate staff person for assistance. Additionally, the Council has changed its public meeting formats to be fully remote.

Executive Officer Pearson informed the public that the Council recently celebrated its 10th anniversary and that Pearson had authored a blog on the Council's website commemorating the event. Pearson also announced the completion of the Council's Communications Strategy, as requested by the Council at past retreats. The document will serve as overarching guidance for councilmembers and staff to follow when communicating about the Council's mission, role, and activities. In addition, Pearson updated the Council on the Delta Plan Ecosystem Amendment and provided a detailed timeline for the remaining project efforts. The project is currently in a public comment period for the Notice of Preparation, which concludes July 10. Staff plans to release the draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in Spring 2021.

The Council sent five comment letters regarding active projects during the past month:

- Central Valley Flood Protection Board regarding the EIS/Final EIR for Phase II of the Sacramento River Bank Protection Project;
- Department of Water Resources (DWR) regarding the Partially Recirculated Draft EIR for the State Water Supply Contract Amendments for Water Management;
- San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission regarding the Valley Rail Sacramento Extension Project Draft EIR;
- DWR regarding the draft Water Budget Handbook; and
- Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority regarding the Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan.

The following certifications of consistency review periods closed during the past month:

- DWR submitted a certification of consistency for the Sherman Island Belly Wetland Restoration project. The public comment period closed May 7 with no appeals.
- Westlands Water District submitted a certification of consistency for the Lower Yolo Ranch Restoration Project. The project was appealed by the Solano County Water District and was set for its first hearing on July 6. However, the parties reached an agreement, and Solano County Water District withdrew its appeal. As a result, the hearing was canceled.

Lastly, Executive Officer Pearson stated that councilmembers would find the Highlights Report and Active Projects List in their meeting packet.

**7a. Legal Update (Information Item)**

There was no legal update for this meeting.

**7b. Legislative Update (Action Item)**

Legislative and Policy Advisor Ryan Stanbra provided a written legislative report, summarizing legislative bills for this meeting.

No action was taken during this agenda item.

The Executive Officer's Report is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://cal-span.org/unipage/?site=cal-span&owner=DSC&date=2020-06-25> minute 00:07:26.

**8. Lead Scientist's Report (Information Item)**

Delta Lead Scientist Dr. John Callaway provided a quick overview of an article from *Science* on anthropogenic (human-induced) contributions to the recent large-scale drought in the western United States, provided an update on the Science Needs Assessment, highlighted the new 2020 Delta Science Fellows, reviewed upcoming events such as the California water data science symposium, and provided the By the Numbers Report.

Councilmembers and staff discussed how long predicted droughts would last. Dr. Callaway stated it was not possible to predict drought length at this time, only the drought's severity. Councilmembers and staff also discussed the possibility of policy options to address anthropogenic contributions to climate change.

The Lead Scientist's Report is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://cal-span.org/unipage/?site=cal-span&owner=DSC&date=2020-06-25> minute 00:18:10.

**9. Appointment of Members to the Delta Independent Science Board (Action Item)**

Dr. Callaway made a recommendation for the Council to appoint Dr. James Cloern, Dr. Virginia Dale, Dr. Tanya Heikkila, Dr. Diane McKnight, Dr. Robert Naiman, and Dr. Lisa Wainger to the Delta Independent Science Board (Delta ISB). The terms for all six nominees would start on September 1, 2020, for five years.

Councilmembers and staff discussed the responsibilities of the Delta ISB and efforts to diversify the candidate pool during recruitment by expanding the recruitment process beyond traditional practices.

**Motion:** Offered by Damrell, second by Mehranian – Approve the appointment for all six nominees who start on September 1, 2020, for 5-year terms

**Vote:** 7/0 – Damrell, Fiorini, Gatto, Mehranian, Villegas, Zingale, and Tatayon. The motion was adopted.

The motion and vote are viewable on the linked agenda at <https://cal-span.org/unipage/?site=cal-span&owner=DSC&date=2020-06-25> minute 01:03:30.

#### **10. Delta Watermaster (Information Item)**

Delta Watermaster Michael George provided a quarterly update to the Council. The update included how the Watermaster's office has responded to the COVID-19 pandemic, recent litigation and its impact on the Delta, and present progress made on the office's 2020 workplan initiatives. These initiatives include preparations for the next drought, progress made on the Holland Tract Project, the outreach and education efforts to inform diverters, the implementation of diversion measurement regulations, addressing heritage enforcement cases, responding to the Modesto Irrigation Dist. v. Tanaka decision, and improving Term 91 Administration.

The Delta Watermaster's Update is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://cal-span.org/unipage/?site=cal-span&owner=DSC&date=2020-06-25> minute 01:04:58.

#### **11. Endorsement of the Council's Public Participation Plan (Action Item)**

Meeting Services and Special Projects Manager Brandon Chapin provided an overview of the purpose of the Public Participation Plan (Plan) and the changes made to the Plan since a draft plan was presented to the Council in February 2020 and the public comment period closed in June 2020. Changes to the Plan included details to ensure effective public participation when in-person attendance becomes unsafe and clarity regarding points of contact, advisory group membership recruitment, meeting locations, and remote participation options.

Councilmembers and staff discussed adding specific suggestions on possible ways the Council can reach out to the public in response to an emergency such as COVID-19. In particular, new ways to meet and perform outreach besides using remote tools and social media. Chapin stated that the Council's upcoming public participation webpage would be the opportunity to provide more specific details for participating with the Council in its decision-making in real-time.

**Motion:** Offered by Fiorini, second by Villegas – Approve the Staff request that the Council endorse the Public Participation Plan.

**Vote:** 7/0 – Damrell, Fiorini, Gatto, Mehranian, Villegas, Zingale, and Tatayon. The motion was adopted.

The motion and vote are viewable on the linked agenda at <https://cal-span.org/unipage/?site=cal-span&owner=DSC&date=2020-06-25> minute 01:54:00.

**12. California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Franks Tract Futures Project (Information Item)**

Carl Wilcox, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and Brett Milligan, University of California, Davis, provided an overview of the project and its public engagement process. The Franks Tract Futures Project (project) is a collaborative decision-making effort to achieve ecosystem, recreation, water quality, and other benefits at Franks Tract in the Delta. The project began with a feasibility study for achieving ecosystem and water quality benefits at the site. After community input during that initial study, however, CDFW decided to undertake a new planning process with additional components of recreational enhancement, navigational concerns, and other community concerns. Milligan walked the Council through the various options that were provided to the public to deliberate at each public workshop.

The panelists and Council discussed the anticipated funding for the project and the data that was being used.

The Frank's Tract Features Update is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://cal-span.org/unipage/?site=cal-span&owner=DSC&date=2020-06-25> minute 01:55:17.

**13. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**14. Preparation for Next Council Meeting**

The next Council meeting is July 23, 2020, and will be conducted remotely

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 PM.

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