

DRAFT

SUMMARY: FEBRUARY 25, 2021
DELTA STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL MEETING

For review and adoption by the Council at the March 25, 2021 meeting.

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

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Susan Tatayon called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM, February 25, 2021.

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, Don Nottoli, Christy Smith, Susan Tatayon, and Daniel Zingale.

Maria Mehranian arrived during agenda item #4.

3. CONSENT CALENDAR (ACTION ITEM)

3a. Adoption of January 28, 2021 Meeting Summary

Before the roll call vote, Chair Tatayon announced that due to the receipt of public comment on the item, the Council posted a revised meeting notice on February 24, 2021. The revised notice moves Item #3b (Approval of an Interagency Agreement with the State Water Resources Control Board) off the consent calendar. The Council took up the item immediately after the remaining consent calendar item, as Item #4.

Motion: Offered by Nottoli, second by Damrell – Approve the Consent Calendar.

Vote: 4/0 – Damrell, Nottoli, Tatayon, Zingale aye. Smith abstained. The motion was adopted.

The item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://cal-span.org/unipage/?site=cal-span&owner=DSC&date=2021-02-25> minute 01:35.

4. APPROVAL OF AN INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD (ACTION ITEM)

Executive Officer Jessica Pearson introduced Deputy Executive Officer for Science, Dr. Louise Conrad, to provide an overview of the item. Staff requested that the Council consider approval of a new \$500,000 interagency agreement with the State Water Resources Control Board (Water Board), with an end date of June 30, 2023. This agreement would allow the Council to provide the Water Board with independent scientific peer review, advice, and workshops that inform urgent and vital Bay-Delta planning efforts. Dr. Conrad also provided background on activities undertaken under previous and similar agreements.

The Council and staff discussed the concerns raised by the public comment submitted to the Council by Dr. David Fries. Staff clarified that the interagency agreement is with the Water Board, not the Department of Water Resources (DWR), and that the Water Board would be providing funding to the Council for these activities. Councilmember Nottoli requested that staff reach out to Dr. Fries to clarify the contract, and staff confirmed that would occur.

Chair Tatayon provided guidance for providing public comment for the items on the Council's agenda.

Motion: Offered by Damrell, second by Mehranian – Approve the interagency agreement.

Vote: 6/0 – Damrell, Mehranian, Nottoli, Smith, Tatayon, Zingale aye. 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=2021-02-25> minute 03:12.

5. CHAIR'S REPORT (INFORMATION ITEM)

Chair Tatayon congratulated Councilmember Zingale for his confirmation recommendation by the Senate Rules Committee and welcomed Councilmember Smith to the Council. Chair Tatayon also highlighted her participation on a panel at the Metropolitan Water District of Orange County's Water Policy Forum, focusing on the Governor's Water Resilience Portfolio.

Chair Tatayon then introduced Special Assistant for Planning and Science, Amanda Bohl, to provide an overview of the upcoming March 15, 2021 Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee meeting. Bohl highlighted the meeting's agenda, including a discussion on nature-based climate adaptation and presentations by Dr. Laurel Larsen and Dr. Jessica Rudnick on their priorities as Delta lead scientist and social science extension specialist, respectively. A progress report on the Science Needs Assessment will also occur.

The Chair's Report is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://cal-span.org/unipage/?site=cal-span&owner=DSC&date=2021-02-25> minute 10:25.

6. EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT (INFORMATION ITEM)

Pearson welcomed Councilmember Smith to the Council and expressed appreciation for Mike Gatto's time on the Council.

Pearson reminded the public that the Council's physical office is closed. However, Council staff is working remotely to support physical distancing efforts. The public should contact hello@deltacouncil.ca.gov to be directed to the appropriate staff person for assistance. Additionally, the Council has changed its public meeting format to be fully remote in the interest of public health safety standards.

Pearson reminded the public that the comment period for the Delta Adapts Public Draft Vulnerability Assessment is currently open and will close on March 16, 2021. There is also currently a Delta Adapts scavenger hunt underway through February 26, and there will be two virtual public workshops to help begin the adaptation phase of Delta Adapts on February 25 and March 1, 2021.

The Council sent two letters during the past month:

- Water Board: Framework and Strategy for Freshwater Harmful Algal Bloom Monitoring
- DWR: Draft guidelines for their Proposition 68 Flood Management, Protection, and Risk Awareness Program

There are currently four active certifications of consistency under public review:

- Central Valley Flood Protection Board - American River Common Features, Sacramento River Erosion Contract 1: River Mile 55.2 Left Bank Protection Project. The public review period ends on March 1, 2021.
- DWR - Bradmoor Island and Arnold Slough Tidal Habitat Restoration Project. The public review period ends on March 3, 2021.

- Brannan-Andrus Levee Maintenance District - Sacramento River Erosion Control and Habitat Enhancement Project. The public review period ends on March 10, 2021.
- DWR - Lookout Slough Tidal Habitat Restoration and Flood Improvement Project. The public review period ends on March 24, 2021.

Sarah Farnsworth joined the Council as a 2021 California Sea Grant Fellow in the Planning and Performance Division. Meagan Wilson joined the Council as a Senior Attorney.

Pearson noted that the Outreach Highlights Report and Active Projects List were available in the Councilmember's packets and on the Council's website.

The Executive Officer's Report is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://cal-span.org/unipage/?site=cal-span&owner=DSC&date=2021-02-25> minute 15:41.

6a. Legal Update (Information Item)

Chief Counsel Bethany Pane had nothing to report during the legal update.

6b. Legislative Update (Action Item)

The Legislative Update was provided to the Council in writing.

6c. Proposed 2021 Delta Stewardship Council Priorities (Information Item)

Pearson provided a quick overview of the Council's 2021 priorities, advancing two of the Council's priority objectives: Strengthen and Implement the Delta Plan, and Build Capacity for *One Delta, One Science*. These efforts include continued work on Delta Adapts, the amendment to the Ecosystem Chapter of the Delta Plan, the 2021-2025 Science Action Agenda, updates to the Delta Levee Investment Strategy, and the upcoming Bay-Delta Science Conference. Pearson introduced Dr. Conrad, and Deputy Executive Officer for Planning and Performance, Jeff Henderson, to provide an update on their Division's 2021 priorities.

Dr. Conrad spoke on the ongoing proposal solicitation notice and upcoming award of funding, the development of the Delta Science Tracker, the continued work on the 2022-2026 Science Action Agenda, the 11th Biennial Delta Science Conference, and the publication of the latest issue of the *State of Bay-Delta Science*. Dr. Conrad also highlighted the continued publication of research by Council scientists and support for the Delta Independent Science Board and Monitoring Enterprise Review.

Henderson highlighted the current evaluation of new data for revisions relevant to upcoming rulemaking for the Delta Levees Investment Strategy, the continued development of the Ecosystem Amendment to the Delta Plan, the finalization of the Vulnerability Assessment and start of the Adaptation Strategy for Delta Adapts, and the initiation of addressing recommendations outlined in the Delta Plan Five-Year Review such as engagement with DWR on reduced reliance, updates to the Delta Plan's administrative performance measures, and the development of an Environmental Justice Issue Paper. The Planning Division also continues to support consistency determinations of Delta Plan covered actions.

Councilmembers and staff discussed Councilmember participation at the Bay-Delta Science Conference in April.

The Proposed 2021 Delta Stewardship Council Priorities are viewable on the linked agenda at <https://cal-span.org/unipage/?site=cal-span&owner=DSC&date=2021-02-25> minute 24:37.

7. DELTA WATERMASTER REPORT (INFORMATION ITEM)

Delta Watermaster Michael George reported on the Water Board's drought preparedness initiatives in the Delta, including working to improve water use data and creating drought management partnerships that help recognize regional differences and inequities of impacts. George also discussed responses to the deteriorating conditions in the southern Delta (e.g., increased salinity and the hyper-emergence of harmful algal blooms) through comprehensive outreach and work with the Delta Channel Maintenance Group.

Councilmembers and George discussed the frequency and methodologies of drought water supply forecasting, outreach to impacted communities in the southern Delta, the locations and frequency of salinity exceedances, and the impact of harmful algal blooms on Delta disadvantaged communities. George also invited the Councilmembers on a boat tour of the Delta when safe to do so.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://cal-span.org/unipage/?site=cal-span&owner=DSC&date=2021-02-25> minute 40:55.

8. OVERVIEW OF THE DELTA LANDSCAPES SCENARIO PLANNING TOOL (INFORMATION ITEM)

Pearson introduced Environmental Program Manager Karen Kayfetz, who provided an overview of the Council's funding and role in developing the Delta Landscapes

Scenario Planning Tool (DLSPT). Kayfetz introduced Dr. Letitia Grenier and Dr. Lydia Vaughn from the San Francisco Estuary Institute to present the DLSPT.

The DLSPT provides stakeholders a tool to evaluate opportunities, impacts, tradeoffs, and project progress across multiple benefits, different management options, and variable landscape potential. The DLSPT can also assist in implementing the Delta Plan by promoting and assisting with compliance with Delta Plan policies and anticipating the impacts of actions on performance measures. Dr. Grenier walked through a demonstration of the tool's use and outputs, recapped the Council-funded updates to the tool, and reviewed the outreach undertaken to date.

Councilmembers and the panelists discussed the production and utility of a recreational and economic component of the DLSPT, the demographic and usage statistics of the DLSPT, the relationship of the DLSPT with the Delta Science Tracker and Performance Measures Dashboard, and the extent of process-based restoration executed in the Delta.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://cal-span.org/unipage/?site=cal-span&owner=DSC&date=2021-02-25> minute 1:32:35.

9. UPDATE AND PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE DELTA ADAPTS PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT (INFORMATION ITEM)

Pearson reminded the Council and public that the Council is accepting public comments on the Delta Adapts Public Review Draft Vulnerability Assessment through March 16, 2021. This agenda item serves as an opportunity for the public to provide verbal comments on the draft assessment to the Council.

Pearson introduced Assistant Planning Director Harriet Ross, who provided an overview of the public review draft and the process for its development, including the recent release of an informational video on Delta Adapts, the climate resilience scavenger hunt, and a community workshop focused on San Joaquin County that occurred on February 5, 2021. Chair Tatayon and Councilmember Zingale provided their reflections from attending the community workshop. They both expressed hope that the Council can continue to host similar workshops. Ross also announced two upcoming workshops for the Adaptation Strategy kick-off on February 25 and March 1, 2021.

Public Comment:

Chandra Chilmakuri, representing the State Water Contractors (SWC), thanked the Council for extending the public comment period on the public review draft and

believes the vulnerability assessment can help guide future investments in the Delta and inform planning. Chilmakuri also stated the SWC would be submitting written comments soon and thanked the Council for including the SWC in the Stakeholder Working Group and taking time to meet with them to discuss issues and questions.

Deirdre Des Jardins, representing California Water Research, expressed that Delta Adapts is a critical study. The science in the document is sound and captures flooding from sea-level rise well. Des Jardins also expressed concern about the effects of climate change on the City of Stockton and Delta legacy communities and encouraged that they are engaged in the effort.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://cal-span.org/unipage/?site=cal-span&owner=DSC&date=2021-02-25> minute 2:14:16.

10. LEAD SCIENTIST'S REPORT (INFORMATION ITEM)

Lead Scientist Dr. Laurel Larsen presented the findings from the article "Farm to Fish: Lessons from a Multi-year Study on Agricultural Floodplain Habitat." Dr. Larsen also recapped the recent Adaptive Management Forum and Steelhead Workshop and announced updates for the upcoming 11th Biennial Bay-Delta Science Conference and proposal solicitation notice. Dr. Larsen also provided the By the Numbers Report.

Councilmembers and Dr. Larsen discussed the Nigiri Project highlighted by the article.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://cal-span.org/unipage/?site=cal-span&owner=DSC&date=2021-02-25> minute 2:26:44.

11. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ISSUE PAPER (INFORMATION ITEM)

Pearson described how the effort to develop of the Environmental Justice Issue Paper stemmed from findings of the 2019 Five-Year Review of the Delta Plan. Pearson introduced Ross and Senior Environmental Planner Avery Livengood to provide background and next steps for this effort.

Ross provided context on the purpose and preliminary objectives of the Issue Paper. Livengood walked the Council through the Council documents that will inform the Issue Paper's development, the preliminary scope, interagency coordination, and the timeline for completion. Ross and Livengood also requested feedback from the Council regarding the preliminary objectives, environmental justice issue prioritization, and outreach strategies.

The Council and staff discussed the context of land ownership with regard to the Issue Paper, the need to include the topic of systemic racism within any environmental justice staff training, the need to consider compensation for engagement, the need for outreach to community-based organizations representing the homeless population, and the importance of research and input received from direct outreach to communities. Staff also stated that they would update the Council with a list of stakeholders participating in the process.

Public Comment:

Paul Seger, from Oakley, expressed optimism for the Issue Paper and the inclusion of Envision 2040 in the documents that will inform the Issue Paper. Seger expressed concerns with the City of Oakley's approval of a housing development within a flood-plain labeled as an "area of concern" by various agencies. The issue directly impacts low-income renters in the proposed area. Seger asked if the Council could become involved in the matter.

Council staff outlined that the Delta Plan may influence the proposed project through the Delta Plan's certification of consistency process. The Issue Paper may identify amendments to the Delta Plan with regard to environmental justice that could be relevant to future projects.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://cal-span.org/unipage/?site=cal-span&owner=DSC&date=2021-01-28> minute 2:42:21.

12. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no additional public comment.

13. PREPARATION FOR NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

The next Council meeting is on March 25, 2021, via teleconference.

The meeting adjourned at 12:03 PM.

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