







Chair Tatayon asked for public comment.

*Public Comment*

Diedre Des Jardins, California Water Research, commented on SB821. Des Jardins noted that the Delta ISB contracts can't start until 2022. Board members were promised a part-time salary and are currently being compensated instead with a \$100 per diem rate. Des Jardins also noted that she is not able to find the Council budget for 2021. She noted that the Council needs a better channel of communication as the legislation is resolved. Des Jardins also expressed concern that the Delta ISB members are slated to be compensated at a Research Specialist V rate but are not given the benefits and retirement that would come with that salary range. She advocated that there should be an increased rate of \$100 an hour. She also commented that there should be an agenda item dedicated to this bill in a future Council meeting.

6a. *Legal Update (Information Item)*

There was no Legal Update.

6b. *Legislative Update (Information Item)*

Ryan Stanbra, chief deputy executive officer, gave an overview of the current bill SB 821, which was recently amended on June 8, 2021. This bill would provide that members of the Delta Independent Science Board (Delta ISB) are not employees of the Delta Stewardship Council and would require the members of the board to exercise their scientific judgment and perform their functions independently from the council. Further, this bill would direct the Council to contract with the members of the ISB at an hourly rate equivalent to that of a Research Specialist V.

The Executive Officer's Report is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://cal-span.org/unipage/?site=cal-span&owner=DSC&date=2021-06-24> minute 15:44.

**7. LEAD SCIENTIST'S REPORT (INFORMATION ITEM)**

Delta Lead Scientist Dr. Laurel Larsen presented a study by Cloern et al. (2021) regarding net primary productivity (NPP). This study used historical records with modern measurements and observations to reconstruct a historical baseline of the Delta-Bay landscape's NPP before major land developments and compares that NPP estimates. Additionally, projections of NPP using habitat restoration goals from the Delta Plan are created to measure possible NPP remediation through restoration efforts. Dr. Larsen also provided updates to the Science Action Agenda, including the release of the Draft Management Needs document and the upcoming Science Actions Workshop, both part of the update to the Science Action Agenda. Dr. Larsen also gave an overview of the By The Numbers Report.

*Public Comment*

Deirdre Des Jardins, California Water Research, commented that the Delta ISB wrote a letter to the Council in 2019-2020 about science in a time of rapid climate change, recommending the Council convene a panel of leading scientists. She noted that the Science Needs Assessment is being completed while the Delta ISB doesn't have adequate funding. Des Jardins commented that the Delta Science Program is a continuation of the CALFED Science Program and is designed to have independent peer review and oversight. She noted that a balance is needed, and the Council should find a way to fund it.

Osha Meserve, Local Agencies of the North Delta, noted the potential for loss of prolific agriculture in the Delta through ecological wetland restoration efforts. If eminent domain is used for these restoration projects, it could erode support for future projects. Meserve asks the Council to commit to not using eminent domain to move forward with restoration projects in the future.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://cal-span.org/unipage/?site=cal-span&owner=DSC&date=2021-06-24> minute 56:57.

**8. CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF THE DELTA SCIENCE PROGRAM RESEARCH AWARDS PURSUANT TO THE 2021 JOINT DELTA SCIENCE PROPOSAL SOLICITATION NOTICE (ACTION ITEM)**

The Delta Science Program has selected 35 contract agreements for 16 research projects, totaling up to just over \$9.6 million, as part of the 2021 Joint Delta Science Proposal Solicitation Notice (PSN). This PSN is part of a collaborative science effort between the Delta Science Program and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), facilitated by California Sea Grant.

Dr. Laurel Larsen gave an overview of the history, present, and future of the funding and reach of the Delta Science Proposal Solicitation. Larsen also gave an overview of the Science Action Agenda areas.

Dr. Josh Israel, Reclamation, gave a presentation on the funding partnership and highlighted one of the grant recipients Dr. Alex Forest with the University of California, Davis.

Dylan Stern, program manager for science funding at the Council, gave a presentation on the timeline of the Delta Science Proposal Solicitation and the proposal review process.

Emily Ryznar, 2021 Sea Grant fellow, gave a presentation on the topic areas for the projects nominated for PSN funding.

Councilmembers commented on the importance and impressiveness of the presentations and proposals. Councilmember Mehranian inquired about how the research topics were chosen. Dr. Larsen elaborated that the applicants are responsible for coming up with topics that are in alignment with the Science Action Agenda items. Councilmember Madueño thanked Reclamation for their collaboration with the Council on this project.

*Public Comment*

Deirdre Des Jardins, California Water Research, commented that there should be transparency around the members of the review panels for the PSN process.

**Motion:** Offered by Mehranian, second by Nottoli

**Vote:** 7/0 - The vote was unanimous. The motion was adopted.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://cal-span.org/unipage/?site=cal-span&owner=DSC&date=2021-06-24> minute 1:20:15.

**9. CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF THE DELTA ADAPTS VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT AND CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT EXPEMPTION  
(ACTION ITEM)**

Assistant Planning Director, Harriet Ross, gave a presentation on the Delta Adapts Vulnerability Assessment and California Environmental Quality Act Exemption. Ross reviewed stakeholder comments around the Delta Adapts in balancing land use and adaptation. Several requests were outside of the scope of the study but comments that could be incorporated were given additional discussion.

Councilmember Nottoli identified some gaps in the available information and offered his assistance in retrieving it in the future. Nottoli inquired if there was any evaluation on how private companies whose infrastructure is protected might fiscally contribute to the project. Councilmembers congratulated the team that worked on the Delta Adapts Vulnerability Assessment and noted their diligence for community involvement.

*Public Comment*

Osha Meserve, Local Agencies of the North Delta, commented that there is a clear track record of investments in Delta levees since the 1980s. Meserve is concerned that the baseline of the report doesn't reflect the investments already in place.

**Motion:** Offered by Damrell, second by Mehranian

**Vote:** 7/0 - The vote was unanimous. The motion was adopted.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://cal-span.org/unipage/?site=cal-span&owner=DSC&date=2021-06-24> minute 1:55:40.

**10. UPDATE ON THE DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES' 2021 EMERGENCY DROUGHT SALINITY BARRIER IN THE DELTA (INFORMATION ITEM)**

Jacob McQuirk, operations and maintenance south Delta chief with the Department of Water Resources (DWR), provided a briefing on the Emergency Drought Salinity Barrier (Barrier) within the Delta. McQuirk reviewed the California drought conditions as well as the need for and expected benefits of the Barrier. McQuirk also gave an overview of the Temporary Urgency Change Petition along with the permits and authorizations that were given to implement the Barrier. The monitoring plan for biological changes during the placement of the drought barriers was also discussed. McQuirk outlined DWR's efforts for long-term planning through a 10-year standard permit to implement the West False River barrier twice within the permitted timeframe.

Councilmembers discussed the possible negative impacts from the Barrier's placement regarding aquatic weeds and the funding to address it. Lenny Grimaldo, assistant environmental director with DWR, discussed future plans to monitor the growth of aquatic weeds and supplementing the Department of Boating and Waterways budget if needed. The rock that is being used for the Barrier comes from the DWR Division of Flood Management Emergency Rock Storage Facility and will be returned before October 30, 2021 to prevent conflicting with any flood needs this winter. Councilmembers also discussed improving collaboration with the Council staff, incorporating landowners in the process, alternative barrier materials, and the possibility of keeping some of the rock in the channel if drought conditions persist.

*Public Comment*

Deirdre Des Jardins, California Water Research, commented that DWR is currently using historic runoff data to create a baseline that has proved inaccurate for previous models. She also noted that the Delta Smelt populations were driven almost to extinction by the salinity barrier during the 2013-2016 years and that implementing this barrier will lead to their extinction. She suggested an alternate reservoir strategy to address the climate change fluctuations and recommended consulting the Delta ISB in developing those changes.

Gilbert Cosio, MBK Engineers, commented that there was a lack of a united Delta voice during the 2015 salinity barrier implementation and that more collaborative communications are in place this year thanks to Delta Watermaster Michael George and his creation of an informal committee that included a variety of stakeholders.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://cal-span.org/unipage/?site=cal-span&owner=DSC&date=2021-06-24> minute 2:27:00.

**11. PREPARATION FOR NEXT COUNCIL MEETING**

The next Council meeting is on July 15 and 16, 2021, via webinar.

The meeting adjourned at 12:20PM.

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