



DRAFT

**SUMMARY NOVEMBER 21, 2024
DELTA STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL MEETING**

For review and adoption by the Council at the December 19, 2024, meeting.

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

MEETING SUMMARY

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Julie Lee called the meeting to order at 9:32 AM on November 21, 2024, at the California Natural Resources Building at 715 P Street, CA 95814.

2. ROLL CALL – ESTABLISH A QUORUM (WATER CODE §85210.5)

Roll call was taken, and a quorum was established. The following councilmembers were present in person: Burgis, Damrell, Hueso, Mehranian, and Lee.

The following councilmembers were present and remote: Miller and Zingale

Chair Lee recessed the open session to reconvene after closed session (Item 3).

3. CLOSED SESSION: LITIGATION (WATER CODE §85210.5) (ACTION ITEM)

The Council will discuss pending litigation pursuant to Government Code §11126(e)(1), with respect to *Takahashi v. Delta Stewardship Council*, Sacramento County Superior Ct. Nos. 34-2018-00232084 and 34-2020-00289632.

4. RECONVENE OPEN SESSION (ESTIMATED START TIME: 10:00 A.M.)

Chair Lee reported there was nothing to report out from closed session.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Lee asked for public comment.

There was no public comment.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR (ACTION ITEM)

a. Adoption of October 24, Meeting Summary

b. Consideration and Possible Adoption of Contract Amendment with AECOM to Extend the Performance Period to the Master Contract (Resolution 2024-09)

Chair Lee presented the agenda item for adopting the consent calendar.

Chair Lee asked for public comment

There was no public comment.

Motion (approve the consent calendar): offered by Councilmember Hueso, seconded by Councilmember Mehranian.

Vote: 6/0 - The motion was adopted (Burgis: Aye, Damrell: Aye, Hueso: Aye, Mehranian: Aye, Miller: Aye, Zingale: Absent, Lee: Aye)

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/3DerjTw>, minute 00:03:07.

7. CHAIR'S REPORT (INFORMATION ITEM)

Chair Lee mentioned her attendance at the Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee (DPIIC) Autumn gathering, the National Heritage Area Advisory Committee meeting, the Delta Independent Science Board meeting, and the DPIIC Restoration Subcommittee meeting.

**a. Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee Autumn
Gathering Debrief (Information Item)**

Amanda Bohl, Special Assistant for Planning and Science, began with an overview of the DPIIC Autumn gathering and announced the release of the 2022-2023 Delta Crosscut Budget Report. Bohl closed with a summary of the DPIIC Restoration subcommittee meeting held in Stockton earlier this month and an overview of the upcoming year for DPIIC.

Chair Lee commended Bohl for a great year of DPIIC meetings.

Chair Lee asked for public comment.

There was no public comment.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/3DerjTw>, minute 00:04:59.

8. EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT (INFORMATION ITEM)

Executive Officer Jessica Pearson shared there have been no new covered actions filed since the last Delta Stewardship Council meeting, but that four appeals of the Department of Water Resources Certification of Consistency for the 2024-2026 Proposed Geotechnical Activities had been filed.

Chief Counsel Jorge Aguilar reviewed the restrictions on ex parte communications for the Councilmembers.

Pearson next reviewed comment letters sent by the Council since the last Council meeting. A letter was sent to the state Wildlife Conservation Board in support of a grant proposal to support the Development of a Regional Conservation Investment Strategy for the Delta, submitted by the California Department of Water Resources. A second letter was sent to the Ironhouse Sanitary District with comments on the Notice of Intent to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for a mitigation bank project.

Pearson introduced new staff Jamari Robinson-Cunha as the Justice Equity Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator and Audrey Cho as the newest Executive Fellow to the Council.

Pearson closed with an overview of the Outreach Highlights Report.

b. Legal Update

A reminder of the restrictions on ex parte communications was provided earlier during the Executive Officer's Report.

c. Legislative Update

Legislative and Policy Advisor, Brandon Chapin, began with an overview of the Delta tour last month with members of the Assembly, and an overview of other outreach he and other staff have done with legislative staff and future outreach events planned. Chapin next reviewed the results of the 2024 General Election in Delta counties.

Chair Lee asked for public comment.

There was no public comment.

The item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/3DerjTw>, minute 00:15:21.

9. LEAD SCIENTIST REPORT (INFORMATION ITEM)

Dr. Windham Myers provided an overview of the highlighted article for this month.

Power, ME, S Chandra, P Gleick, WE Dietrich. 2024. Anticipating responses to climate change and planning for resilience in California's freshwater ecosystems.

Proceedings of the National Academy of Science 121(32): e2310075121.

<https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2310075121>.

California's freshwater systems face unprecedented challenges as climate change reduces snowpack and shifts precipitation patterns, especially in the Sierra Nevada. These changes include earlier snowmelt, increased winter runoff, and decreased spring and summer flows, leading to elevated flood risks and additional strain on water management systems. These seasonal changes disrupt ecosystem processes, impacting river temperatures and the migratory cues critical for species like salmon. Extreme events, including droughts, mega-floods, and intensifying wildfires, add

further stress by damaging water quality and ecosystem health. These combined pressures not only threaten local biodiversity but also have significant cultural and economic repercussions for nearby communities. Accurately predicting these changes, and planning effective responses, is increasingly essential for long-term conservation efforts.

Powers et al. describes the need to improve the accuracy of predictive models to better anticipate how ecosystems will respond to environmental stressors. Currently, California's agencies are beginning to adopt ecosystem-based management approaches that consider species interactions within broader ecological contexts. This multi-layered strategy includes models that connect changes in hydrology and climate to ecological processes, with a particular focus on the "critical zone"—from soil to bedrock—which plays a vital role in water storage and release. To help address future climate change impacts comprehensively, Powers et al. describes a four-part strategy that includes expanding predictive modeling capabilities, enhancing field studies, fostering ecosystem stewardship through education, and developing policies to support ecosystem resilience. Councilmember Mehranian and Dr. Windham-Myers discussed changes in precipitation, endangered native fish species and collaboratories, and co-produced data and modeling. Councilmember Burgis discussed anticipatory modeling, and changes to the environment. Councilmember Damrell, Dr. Windham-Myers, Councilmember Burgis, Vice Chair Miller, Councilmember Burgis, and Pearson discussed the effect and scope of the Council's work on the Delta.

Dr. Windham-Myers next reported on recent Delta Science Program Activities including a review of the current and future California Sea Grant State Policy Fellowship Program, and the now open California Sea Grant Social Science Extension Specialist position. Dr. Windham-Myers shared upcoming events including a Microplastics Symposium.

Dr. Windham-Myers closed with a review of By the Numbers, which included Cyanobacterial Harmful Algal Blooms data.

Chair Lee asked for public comment.

There was no public comment.

The item is viewable on the linked agenda <https://bit.ly/3DerjTw>, minute 00:31:51.

10. DELTA CYANOBACTERIAL HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS (CHABS) MONITORING STRATEGY PRESENTATION (INFORMATION ITEM)

Tricia Lee, Senior Environmental Scientist for the Delta Science Program, and Ellen Preece, Water Quality Scientist for the Department of Water Resources, presented the recently finalized Delta Cyanobacterial Harmful Algal Blooms (CHABS) Monitoring Strategy aimed at enhancing collaboration and CHABS-related decision-making in the Delta. The presentation included an overview of CHABS, the timeline and outreach of the process, the goals and objectives of the strategy, and implementation of the strategy.

Councilmember Burgis, Lee, and Preece discussed the harm CHABS cause in communities, the scope and prevalence of CHABS, and the Interagency Ecological Program outreach efforts, and other CHABS monitoring efforts.

Chair Lee and Preece discussed the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration CHABS project, satellite monitoring, and the scope of the monitoring strategy.

Chair Lee asked for public comment.

There was no public comment.

The item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/3DerjTw>, minute 01:08:10.

11. PROPOSED 2025 DELTA SCIENCE PLAN UPDATE (INFORMATION ITEM)

Tricia Lee, Senior Environmental Scientist for the Delta Science Program Delta Science Program (DSP) provided an update on the proposed 2025 Delta Science Plan. The presentation discussed: the Collaborative Science and Peer Review Unit, the Delta Science Strategy, the 2019 Delta Science Plan Successes, the Grand Challenges Essay, the Grand Challenges, and project outreach.

Chair Lee, Councilmember Mehranian, Councilmember Burgis, and Tricia Lee discussed emerging tools/technology, traditional science pacing, the incorporation of novel tools to science planning, adapting to change in uncertainty, when creating science policy—access to the data is integral to foster trust, science equity (all people have access to the science), traditional knowledge, and climate change vs. environmental change demarcation.

Dr. Windham-Myers closed with a reminder to attend the Delta Science Plan meeting in the spring (February 20-21, 2025).

Chair Lee asked for public comment.

There was no public comment.

The item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/3DerjTw>, minute 01:37:52.

12. DELTA ADAPTS DRAFT ADAPTATION PLAN UPDATE (INFORMATION ITEM)

Morgan Chow, Program Manager of the Climate Change and Environmental Justice Unit, and Jeff Henderson, Deputy Executive Officer of Planning and Performance presented on the Delta Adapts Draft Adaptation Plan. The presentation discussed plan development to date, and the proposed adaptation strategies according to four focus areas: flood risk reduction, ecosystem, agriculture, and water supply reliability.

Councilmember Zingale, Councilmember Burgis, Henderson, and Chow discussed the term “fast action,” the Delta Stewardship Council’s role in the adaptation plan (active leadership role vs. supporting), how the Council can leverage the Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee (DPIIC) and DPIIC Restoration Subcommittee to move action(s) forward, establishing commitments from lead agencies (for instances where the Council does not have control), climate risk/equity introduction into the Delta Levee Investment Strategy (DLIS), lead agency involvement, and funding.

Chair Lee, Councilmember Mehranian, and Executive Officer Pearson closed with comments on budget change proposals, the budget cycle, bond funding, procuring funding for agencies doing the work in this plan, and the inclusion of equity work.

Chair Lee asked for public comment.

There was no public comment.

The item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/3DerjTw>, minute 01:57:37.

13. DELTA INDEPENDENT SCIENCE BOARD (ISB) CHAIR UPDATE (INFORMATION ITEM)

Recently elected Delta ISB Chair, Dr. Inge Werner, provided an update on the Delta ISB's current activities and ongoing reviews.

The presentation provided a snapshot of the current review process for the Delta ISB, recent/upcoming Delta ISB products, the emerging climate science symposium, and a highlight on the upcoming review of *Contaminant Monitoring and Ecological Risk Assessment in the Delta*.

Councilmember Burgis, ISB Chair Werner, and Lead Scientist Dr. Windham-Myers discussed contaminants from wildfires, toxicological harm/identification, ecological risk, and historical contaminants.

Chair Lee provided comments on the emerging climate science symposium and recommended attending the Delta ISB meetings to learn something new before closing the agenda item.

Chair Lee asked for public comment.

There was no public comment.

The item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/3DerjTw>, minute 02:22:13.

14. PREPARATION FOR NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

The next Council meeting will take place on December 19. Please refer to the posted meeting notice 10 days before the meeting for further information or updates.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:46 p.m.

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