



DRAFT

**SUMMARY JANUARY 23, 2025
DELTA STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL MEETING**

For review and adoption by the Council at the February 27, 2025, 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 9:34 AM on January 23, 2025, at the California Natural Resources Building at 715 P Street, Room 221, Sacramento, 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: Burgis, Damrell, Hueso, Miller, Zingale and Lee.

3. CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ADOPTION OF A DETERMINATION ON APPEALS OF DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES CERTIFICATION OF CONSISTENCY NUMBER C20242 FOR THE 2024-2026 PROPOSED GEOTECHNICAL ACTIVITIES. (RESOLUTION 2025-01) (ACTION ITEM)

Jeff Henderson, Deputy Executive Officer of Planning for the Delta Stewardship Council, and Eva Bush, Environmental Program Manager, provided an overview of procedural history of the matter and the draft determination.

Councilmember Hueso and Chair Lee discussed the process of the proceedings for this agenda item. Councilmember Burgis began a question about the determination and the record, as well as findings in the draft determination regarding the DCP, before the meeting experienced a Zoom and recording outage. The meeting was paused to address the Zoom and recording outage issue. (During the Zoom and recording outage and before the meeting was able to be paused, Chief Counsel Jorge Aguilar answered Councilmember Burgis' question and Councilmember Miller

asked a question about CEQA, which was not answered until after the Zoom outage and recording issue was fixed and the meeting resumed. This lapse was addressed during public comment after Bruce Blodgett with the Delta Protection Commission commented on the earlier loss of Zoom connection for online participants and what online participants missed. See below for detail.)

Chair Lee resumed the meeting with Chief Counsel Jorge Aguilar's response to Councilmember Miller's question regarding the CEQA process as it relates to the Determination.

Chair Lee asked for public comment.

Public Comment

Eric Buescher with the San Francisco Baykeeper commented on the scope of the determination and agreed with the Council's determination the project is not a covered action. Vice Chair Miller and Buescher discussed the question of scope and including the analysis of the CEQA issue in the determination.

Dan Nomellini, Jr. with the South Delta Water Agency commented on the inclusion of the analysis of the CEQA issue of the determination and the implications of that analysis.

Louinda Lacey with the Sacramento Area Sewer District, Sacramento County, Sacramento County Water Agency and City of Stockton agreed the appeal should be dismissed and provided comments on the staff presentation and the CEQA issue analysis.

Carrie Buckman with the California Department of Water Resources agreed with the conclusion that the proposed Geotechnical activities are not a covered action and shared additional information about the Delta Conveyance Project.

Bruce Blodgett with the Delta Protection Commission commented on the earlier loss of Zoom connection for online participants.

In order to address the concerns of loss of connection, Councilmember Burgis and Aguilar discussed what is included in the record and the contents of the draft determination including as related to the Delta Conveyance Project and other activities. Chair Lee summarized Vice Chair Miller's question about CEQA which had already been answered by Aguilar earlier after the meeting resumed and the Zoom connection had been restored.

Chair Lee asked Blodgett if he had additional comments.

Public Comment continued

Bruce Blodgett agreed with the previous comments made about the determination.

Tom Keeling with the County of San Joaquin agreed with the conclusion of the draft determination and commented on the length and legal content of the draft determination.

Ivan Senock a citizen of the Delta commented on the Council's responsibility to protect the cultural and natural resources of the Delta.

Kyle Griffith with Californians for Water Security expressed support for the draft determination.

Chris Wilson with the Los Angeles County Business Federation commented in support of the Delta Conveyance Project.

Charles Wilson commented on his support of dismissing the appeal.

Robin Durston commented on her concerns about the Delta Conveyance Project relating to water quality and availability, the local economy and the environment.

Ken Baccetti, President of the California Striped Bass Association of the Isleton Delta chapter asked for the Council to promote protection and restoration in the Delta.

Daniel Bacher, an independent journalist, agreed with the Council's decision on the Geotechnical Activities, expressed opposition to the Delta Conveyance Project, and provided comments on the Delta fish populations.

Roger Mammon, President of the West Delta Chapter of the California Striped Bass Association and Secretary of Restore the Delta, commented in support of the draft determination and provided comments on the coequal goals and fish in the Delta.

Bethi Carver commented on the transparency of the geotechnical testing and the Metropolitan Water District's activities.

There was no public comment in Eureka.

Councilmembers Zingale, Miller, Damrell and Chair Lee discussed the CEQA analysis in the determination. Councilmember Burgis commented on the contents of the determination. Councilmember Hueso commented on setting precedence, potential impacts of the decisions of the Council, and the overall process and procedure of this decision.

Chair Lee introduced Resolution 2025-01. Councilmember Burgis, Hueso and Aguilar discussed the length and content of the determination and what the Councilmembers would be voting on.

Motion (approve Resolution 2025-01): offered by Councilmember Hueso, seconded by Councilmember Miller.

Vote: 6/0 - The motion was adopted and Resolution 2025-01 was approved (Burgis: Aye, Damrell: Aye, Hueso: Aye, Mehranian: Absent, Miller: Aye, Zingale: Aye, Lee: Aye)

The hearing was transcribed by a certified electronic court reporter. The complete transcript of the hearing is also available upon request by reaching out to California Reporting LLC at (510) 313-0610.

Chair Lee explained next steps and adjourned the agenda item at 11:25 pm.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/4aLK4KC>, minute 00:01:30.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Lee asked for public comment.

There was no public comment in Sacramento or Eureka.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/4aLK4KC>, minute 01:38:27.

5. CONSENT CALENDAR (ACTION ITEM)

a. Adoption of December 19, 2024, Meeting Summary

b. Consideration and Possible Adoption of Regulations Relating to the Delta Ecosystem Restoration Management (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 23 § 5001 et seq) (Resolution 2025-02)

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

Chair Lee asked for public comment

There was no public comment in Sacramento or Eureka.

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

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

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/4aLK4KC>, minute 01:39:00.

6. CHAIR'S REPORT (INFORMATION ITEM)

Chair Lee previewed the work with elected officials scheduled for the spring and sent her thoughts to the people of Los Angeles dealing with the wildfires burning there and highlighted how important the work of the Council is to the effects of climate change going forward.

Councilmember Burgis shared that the management plan for the National Heritage area has been approved and next steps for that work.

Chair Lee asked for public comment.

There was no public comment in Sacramento or Eureka.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/4aLK4KC>, minute 01:40:25.

7. EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT (INFORMATION ITEM)

Executive Officer Jessica Pearson reported on a new Certification of Consistency filed by Reclamation District 1601 proposing to restore and enhance wetland and riparian habitat on Twitchell Island in Sacramento County.

Pearson closed with an overview of the Outreach Highlights Report.

a. Legal Update

There was no legal update.

b. Legislative Update

Brandon Chapin, Legislative and Policy Advisor, provided updates on the new Chairs in the California legislature and updates on federal bills and U.S. Army Corps policy.

Chair Lee and Chapin discussed the updates to the U.S. Army Corps policy.

Pearson next provided information on the extended Delta Adapts comment period and reported on one comment letter submitted by Council staff to the State Water Resources Control Board regarding their Draft Sacramento/Delta Bay-Delta Plan Updates. Pearson introduced Vivian Sieu (a SeaGrant Fellow) and Nick Rowlands, (a SeaGrant fellow) to the Science Communication, Synthesis and Decision Support unit.

Pearson closed with an overview of the Outreach Highlights Report.

c. 2024 Annual Report (Information Item)

Abbott Dutton, Assistant Deputy Executive Officer for External Affairs for the Council, and Brittany Young, Information Officer II, presented an overview of the 2024 Annual report to the Council.

Councilmember Burgis, and Chair Lee shared appreciation for the Communications team and their work, and the format of the annual report.

Councilmember Zingale commented on future plans for increased engagement with the Annual Report.

Chair Lee asked for public comment.

There was no public comment in Sacramento or Eureka.

The item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/4aLK4KC>, minute 01:43:28.

8. LEAD SCIENTIST'S REPORT (INFORMATION ITEM)

Dr. Lisamarie Windham Myers provided updates from the Delta Science Program and an overview of the By the Numbers Report.

Vice Chair Miller and Windham Myers discussed future updates on an open-source information hub and the collaborative role of the Delta Science Program.

Councilmember Hueso, Councilmember Burgis, Chair Lee, and Dr. Windham-Myers discussed the interconnected nature and technical definitions of the California watershed.

Chair Lee asked for public comment.

There was no public comment in Sacramento or Eureka.

The item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/4aLK4KC>, minute 02:03:41.

9. PREPARATION FOR NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

The next Council meeting will take place on February 27, 2025. Please refer to the posted meeting notice 10 days before the meeting for further information or updates.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:21 p.m.

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