



DRAFT

SUMMARY JUNE 25, 2026

DELTA STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL MEETING

For review and adoption by the Council at the July 23, 2026, meeting.

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

MEETING SUMMARY

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Lee called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM on June 25, 2026, at the California Natural Resources Agency at 715 P Street, Room 2-221, Sacramento, California 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, Eggman, Lee, Mehranian, and Patterson.
(Government Code § 11123.2)

The following member was present and remote: Councilmember Zingale, who joined the meeting during agenda item 3.

Councilmember Miller was absent for the meeting.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Lee asked for public comment.

There was no public comment.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://rebrand.ly/cu803oo>, minute 00:01:27.

4. CONSENT CALENDAR (ACTION ITEM)

4a. Adoption of May 28, 2026 Meeting

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 Mehranian, seconded by Councilmember Burgis.

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

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://rebrand.ly/cu803oo>, minute 00:02:27.

5. CHAIR'S REPORT (INFORMATION ITEM)

Chair Lee introduced Rachel Wigginton, Special Assistant for Planning and Science, to provide an update on the Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee's (DPIIC) Restoration Subcommittee Meeting and Forum.

a. Relationships and Regional Restoration – Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee (DPIIC) Restoration Subcommittee Meeting and Restoration Forum Preview

Wigginton summarized the restoration subcommittee's goals and recent activities, including upcoming meetings, Delta restoration projects, DPIIC partnerships, tribal engagement, restoration designs, DWR updates, and the forum's focus on connection and collaboration.

Wigginton, Chair Lee, Councilmember Burgis, and Councilmember Eggman discussed overall restoration progress and the significance and praise for meetings like the DPIIC Subcommittee meeting and forum.

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://rebrand.ly/cu803oo>, minute 00:03:25.

6. EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT (INFORMATION ITEM)

Executive Officer Jessica Pearson opened with a morning greeting and well wishes in recognition of Pride Month.

Pearson reported that the Council sent a comment letter to the City of Mountain House in San Joaquin County regarding the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the new General Plan. The EO report emphasized that the General Plan will be a covered action and invited early consultation with Council staff prior to filing a certification of consistency with the Delta Plan.

Pearson shared that since the last meeting, no new certifications of consistency have been filed and that Dr. Wyndham Myers is on vacation, so there was no Lead Scientist Report agenda item; however, Pearson did highlight some upcoming events, including that on Tuesday, June 30. In the morning, there will be a Traditional Knowledge Roundtable co-hosted by the Council, Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians, and California Indian Environmental Alliance. The Roundtable will explore strategies for integrating Traditional Knowledge, management, and science. Chair Lee is scheduled to deliver opening remarks. In the afternoon the same day, the first Delta Climate Adaptation Team meeting will promote collaboration on climate change adaptation, aligning with the Council's Adaptation Plan.

Pearson's report also announced Lori Martinez's appointment as the Council's Deputy Executive Officer for Administration, and the departure of Henry DeBey, the Science Deputy Executive Officer, after six years, recognizing his contributions to Delta science communication and engagement.

The report closed with an overview of the Outreach Highlights Report and the Active Projects list, available in Councilmember packets.

Pearson then invited the Legislative and Policy Advisor, Audrey Cho, to provide a legislative update.

a. Legal Update

There was no legal update.

b. Legislative Update

Audrey Cho, the Council's legislative and policy advisor, highlighted Senate confirmations of Chair Julie Lee and Ann Patterson. She provided updates on budgets and ballots, including the June 15 legislative budget bill deadline, a \$25 million one-time General Fund allocation for the Healthy Rivers and Landscapes Program, the June 30 deadline for the Governor to sign the budget, and the June 25 deadline for November ballot qualification, along with the California Chamber of Commerce CEQA ballot initiative.

Cho discussed bills of interest: SB 872 (McNerney) on Delta Levees and Canal Subsidence; AB 2216 (Aguiar-Curry) on the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy; AB 2218 (Kalra) on water policy and Native American tribes; and AB 1772 (Papan) on invasive species.

She concluded with federal updates: the proposed Office of Management and Budget (OMB) grant regulations and the NSF's halting of efforts to dismantle the Ocean Observatories Initiative.

Councilmember Zingale, Councilmember Mehranian, and Cho discussed AB1600, the Council's potential support for the bill, the bill's report back, and the National Science Foundation (NSF)'s reversal of a plan to dismantle the federally funded Ocean Observatories Initiative (OOI) (network of deep-sea sensors).

Pearson invited Amanda Bohl, Executive Director of the Delta Protection Commission, and Karen Buhr, Deputy Executive Officer of the Delta Conservancy, to provide their updates.

c. Delta Protection Commission and Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy Update

Bohl discussed the passport program for the Delta National Heritage Area, the Delta Heritage Forum (November 5), announced an upcoming logo, the Delta Leadership

Program, initiatives to support Delta farmers, levee funding, the Delta Protection Advisory Committee, and the Delta Protection Commission's newsletters, Delta Happenings and the Delta Heritage Courier, before passing the presentation to Buhr. Buhr discussed the rollout and availability of grant funds allocated through the Proposition 4 climate bond, the Conservancy's strategic plan, and her decision to leave the Conservancy for a new role.

Councilmember Burgis congratulated Buhr on her new role, and they discussed the tentative support for AB2216 (not taking away funding from the Delta) and Contra Costa's exclusion.

Councilmember Burgis also praised Bohl for her hard work.

Pearson asked Bohl for clarification on the levee white paper. Bohl explained that the Delta Protection Commission needs to examine how the subventions program has operated over the past decades, how it has evolved, its original purpose, and how it has shifted over time.

Before the agenda closed, Councilmember Eggman asked Pearson if the subventions program ever identified its water source. Pearson deferred to Deputy Director for Planning Jeff Henderson, who confirmed that identifying the water source is part of the process (in short, it is coming and part of the update).

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://rebrand.ly/cu803oo>, minute 00:10:39.

7. DESALINATION IN THE DELTA: ANTIOCH BRACKISH WATER DESALINATION PLANT (INFORMATION ITEM)

Dan Constable, Environmental Program Manager at the Delta Stewardship Council, introduced the agenda item (a plant photo, filtration infographics, and a cost-per-acre-foot table) before passing it to Scott Weddle of Carollo Engineers for discussion of the Brackish Water Desalination Project.

The presentation covered the project background, design, construction, evidence of water diversion decline, reliable drought-proof water supply, cost-effective use of existing facilities, major environmental permits, financing, project schedule, photos of the river intake facilities and river pumping station, and conclusive objectives for the city, and how they were met (Provide drought-proof water supply reliability minimizing reliance and save costs for purchased water, improving water quality for city customers, improving river intake facilities to minimize impacts to fish, and preserving pre-1914 water rights).

Councilmember Zingale, Councilmember Burgis, and Weddle discussed the potential negative impacts of the “brine” produced by the desalination plant, dilution ratios of the water, contextual information on snowpack and saltwater intrusion, how long the plant has been operating, modeling and forecasting that match actual salinity data, plant capacities, the comparable cost of using Contra Costa water versus desalinated water and selling water or partnering with other agencies to share.

Councilmember Mehranian and Weddle discussed Contra Costa water sourcing and quality, and a clarification on the potential negative impacts of the “brine” leaving the plant.

Chair Lee asked for public comment.

There was no public comment in Sacramento or Eureka.

The item is viewable on the linked agenda <https://rebrand.ly/cu803oo>, minute 00:41:49.

8. SHERMAN ISLAND WETLAND RESTORATION PROJECT PHASE III UPDATE (INFORMATION ITEM)

Chair Lee introduced Eva Bush, environmental program manager at the Council, and Kim Untermoser, environmental compliance specialist with Ducks Unlimited. Bush began with an overview of the presentation and introduced Bree Montague, analyst II at the Council, who provided an overview of the location of the restoration project and why it is referred to as the whale’s nose, and the Delta Plan performance measure restoration targets. Montague reviewed the Cutting the Green Tape Initiative and the Phase III Whale’s Nose Wetland restoration project. Untermoser

began with an overview of the project team, a review of the restoration efforts on Sherman Island, the project objectives for this restoration project, including habitat enhancements, subsidence reversal, and carbon sequestration. Untermoser reviewed the design elements of the restoration project, the outreach efforts of the project, the project timeline, and a brief review of Delta Plan considerations. Bush closed with an overview of the compliance of the restoration project as it pertains to the Council, including completing the “Good Neighbor Checklist” and compliance with the Delta Plan, and a review of Delta Plan considerations for this project. Chair Lee and Untermoser discussed recreation access of the project and Sherman Island. Councilmember Burgis and Untermoser discussed the whale shape of the island, the Delta history of Humphrey the whale, and the number of projects in the Delta that have used the Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects process, and the importance of Sherman Island for recreation and transportation.

Chair Lee asked for public comment.

Public Comment

Matt Conover with Don McCormick Company provided a comment on Zacharias Ranch being managed by Westervelt Ecological Services and the importance of the “Good Neighbor Checklist” and suggested that it become a mandatory policy.

There was no further public comment in Sacramento or Eureka.

The item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://rebrand.ly/cu803oo>, minute 01:18:10.

9. PREPARATION FOR NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

The next Council meeting will take place on July 23, 2026. Please refer to the posted meeting notice 10 days before the meeting for further information or updates.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:16 a.m.

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