



**Delta
Stewardship
Council**

A CALIFORNIA STATE AGENCY

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NEWS RELEASE

December 14, 2020

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CALIFORNIA SEA GRANT AND DELTA STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL APPOINT EXTENSION SPECIALIST

SACRAMENTO – California Sea Grant and the Delta Stewardship Council are pleased to welcome Dr. Jessica Rudnick. Rudnick will serve as an Extension Specialist with the Delta Stewardship Council in Sacramento.



Rudnick joins California Sea Grant's statewide team of [extension specialists](#) who work with coastal communities, businesses, and policymakers to provide science-based information to support the state's environment and economy. In this shared position with California Sea Grant, Rudnick will conduct social science research and outreach

focused on California's Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, a critical region for California's water resources, ecosystems, and fisheries. The Delta supplies a portion of the water to nearly two-thirds of California residents, and provides habitat for 80 percent of the state's commercial fisheries.

The Delta Stewardship Council is the state agency charged with overseeing management of the Delta, and has a mission of achieving the "coequal goals" of providing a reliable water supply while also protecting, restoring, and enhancing

the Delta ecosystem and the cultural, recreational, natural resource, and agricultural values of the Delta as an evolving place.

California Sea Grant has partnered with the Delta Stewardship Council to fund research and fellowships since 2003. The new extension position will strengthen this partnership, and add to the capacity of both programs.

Delta Stewardship Council Lead Scientist Dr. Laurel Larsen says, “We are very excited to bring Jessica Rudnick on board as an extension specialist. Dr. Rudnick brings a history of engagement with stakeholders in the Delta and expertise on science governance, agricultural decision making in the Delta in the face of climate change, and the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. She will be integral to the ongoing integration of the social sciences into the Delta science enterprise.”

California Sea Grant Director Shauna Oh says, “Jessica Rudnick’s experience in outreach and social science in the Delta will make her a valuable addition to California Sea Grant’s extension network, expanding the program both in terms of expertise and geography.”

Rudnick is an applied environmental social scientist who recently completed her PhD at UC Davis, where her research was focused on farmer behavior and agriculture-environmental governance in California. As a recipient of PhD funding from the Delta Science Fellowship, Rudnick has already worked with the Delta Stewardship Council and California Sea Grant in designing and communicating a research project with application to decision-making in the Delta. She also holds a BS in environmental science from Washington University in St. Louis, and a MS in ecology from UC Davis.

“As a social science extension specialist at the Delta Stewardship Council, I’m excited to focus on human decision-making and governance challenges related to water and natural resource management in California’s Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta,” says Rudnick.

Her work will focus on building an integrated social science community in the Delta that connects academic and non-governmental partners; compiling and synthesizing existing data on stakeholders’ uses, values, and perceptions of the Delta as a place; establishing a monitoring program to track the Delta’s social systems; and building an extension program focused on policy engagement and youth education and training.

"The Delta is a critical center point for so many water, agriculture, environment, and equity conversations on-going across the state, and in this position I will work to integrate more social science and better understandings of the many different communities and policy processes at play into science-driven decision-making about the Delta," says Rudnick.

Follow Jessica on Twitter: [@jess_rudnick](https://twitter.com/@jess_rudnick).

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ABOUT THE COUNCIL

Created by the California Legislature in 2009, the Council is composed of members who represent different parts of the state and offer diverse expertise in fields such as agriculture, science, the environment, and public service. Of the seven, four are appointed by the Governor, one each by the Senate and Assembly, and the seventh is the Chair of the Delta Protection Commission. For more information visit deltacouncil.ca.gov.

ABOUT CALIFORNIA SEA GRANT

NOAA's California Sea Grant College Program funds marine research, education and outreach throughout California. Headquartered at Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of California, San Diego, it is one of 33 Sea Grant programs in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), U.S. Department of Commerce. For more information visit caseagrants.ucsd.edu/.