

# Adaptive Management Forum 2023

## Day 1

### Summary Sheet



Delta  
Science  
Program

DELTA STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

### Background

The Delta Science Program hosts the Adaptive Management Forum every two years to promote dialogue and information exchange related to adaptive management in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Day 1 of the 2023 Forum was held on May 4, 2023, and **focused on governance for adaptive management**, with the aim of fostering learning and discussion around governance needs to support effective, equitable, and inclusive processes in the Delta. More than 150 people attended in person and virtually.

### Summary of Day 1

The forum opened with a **tribal welcome** from Raquel Gonzales of the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians and a traditional blessing song, followed by a **land acknowledgment** from Delta Stewardship Council Chair **Virginia Madueño**. In the sessions that followed, over **20 presenters** from a variety of backgrounds shared their experiences and insights on adaptive governance.

Some **key themes** from the day are listed below.

- Authentic personal engagement, relationship building with coalitions intentionality, respecting lived experiences and perspectives of those historically excluded from decision-making processes, improving alignment across scales, and increasing collaboration and connectivity are all important for successful adaptive governance.
- Tribes and environmental justice communities should be integrated into adaptive management processes as early as possible.
- Governance systems can constrain adaptive management activities, but strategic planning can help alleviate these constraints.
- More funding and improved data collection can facilitate coordination amongst groups.

## Summary of Storytelling Session

The storytelling session was focused on the human dimension of adaptation and governance. **Dr. Don Hankins** of California State University, Chico, spoke about his cultural connection with the land, and the need for better respect of tribal law and eco-cultural connections under current governance structures. **Tama Brisbane** of With Our Words, Inc. spoke about including young people in adaptive management and environmental justice efforts, and better connecting communities of color and marginalized communities to work in the Delta.

## Summary of Keynote Presentation

The keynote presentation featured Supervisor **Diane Burgis** of the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors, and focused on governance needs for equitable adaptation in a dramatically changing Delta watershed. Burgis emphasized the need to embrace the unknown with enthusiasm and an open mind, and that we should think proactively about how to engage with a wide variety of different groups.

## Summary of Panel 1: Governance Needs for Adaptation

The first discussion panel explored governance needs for effective adaptation across organizational scales related to equity, inclusiveness, and collaboration. **Barriers to adaptive governance were identified**, which included bureaucratic limitations, aversion to risk-taking, uncertainty, and the exclusion of marginalized groups.

## Summary of Panel 2: Adaptation Case Studies Across Scales

Panelists gave brief presentations on their case studies and shared **insights and lessons learned**. Case studies covered topics such as traditional environmental management, restoration of peat soils through agriculture, levee improvement, climate resilience, and subsidence reversal.

## Summary of Panel 3: How can the Governance System Change to Enable More Effective and Inclusive Adaptation?

**Key themes** included decolonizing ways of thinking, building collaboration and community involvement, and thinking outside of current boundaries.