



**DRAFT**

**SUMMARY: January 26, 2023  
DELTA STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL MEETING**

For review and adoption by the Council at the February 23, 2023, meeting.

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

**MEETING SUMMARY**

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**1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Chair Virginia Madueño called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM on January 26, 2023.

**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, Lee, Smith, Zingale, and Madueño.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**4. CONSENT CALENDAR (ACTION ITEM)**

Chair Madueño presented the agenda item for adopting the December 15, 2022, Meeting Summary.

**Motion:** (approve the consent calendar) offered by Councilmember Smith, seconded by Councilmember Lee.

**Vote:** 6/0 - The motion was adopted (Burgis: Aye, Damrell: Aye, Lee: Aye, Smith: Aye, Zingale: Aye, Madueño: Aye)

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/3kZoDQK>, minute 03:51:08.

**5. CHAIR'S REPORT (INFORMATION ITEM)**

Chair Madueño opened with a welcome of the new year and recognition of new councilmember Diane Burgis, who joins the Council as the new Chair of the Delta Protection Commission.

The Chair provided an overview of her recent and upcoming legislative meetings and her tour with key stakeholders in the Delta. She talked about the damage from the atmospheric river storms and the importance of experiences and opportunities for one-on-one interaction with stakeholders.

The Chair also reported on attending a Carbon Sequestration and Equity presentation in Modesto and introductions she made at various events with Congressman John Duarte and California Energy Commission's Abigail Solis.

The Chair also described her presentation to the Delta Independent Science Board (ISB) and the questions the ISB had regarding Delta conveyance and atmospheric rivers.

Councilmember Burgis took the opportunity to introduce herself before the agenda item was closed.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/3kZoDQK>, minute 03:50:07.

## **6. EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT (INFORMATION ITEM)**

Executive Officer Jessica Pearson opened with an update regarding atmospheric rivers and the state's historic deluge of atmospheric rivers hitting over the past couple of weeks. She extended her thanks to first responders, utility workers, and the flood fighters levee patrol in and around the Delta, who worked non-stop over the past weeks to ensure safety. She also took an opportunity to highlight a point to remember that the state is still in a state of drought emergency. Staff will continue to monitor and update the Council on the water year.

Pearson continued with an update on the upcoming Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee (DPIIC) Restoration Subcommittee hosting a Restoration Forum on February 8 from 3-6 pm, in person at the Delta Conservancy's office in West Sacramento and also virtually. The Forum seeks to gather input, encourage collaboration, and learn about the challenges and opportunities involved in

implementing ecosystem restoration in the Delta and Suisun Marsh. Registration just recently opened and can be accessed on the Council's website. Remote participation is available, and registration is free.

Pearson invited Jeff Henderson, Deputy Executive Officer for Planning and Performance, to provide a short synopsis of the letter (sent on December 16, 2022) that Council staff submitted to the Department of Water Resources as part of the public comment period for the draft EIR for the Delta Conveyance Project. Henderson provided an update on the contents of the letter sent to the Department of Water Resources.

Pearson welcomed new Councilmember Diane Burgis. She also announced that the Council's Aaron Angel, a Sea Grant Fellow with the Planning Division, had been hired as an Environmental Scientist in the Delta Science Program's Collaborative Science and Peer Review Unit and that Cindy Whitlock was recently promoted to oversee and coordinate the Council's Public Records Act requests as a Staff Services Manager.

#### **6a. Legal Update (INFORMATION ITEM)**

There was no legal update.

#### **6b. Legislative Update (ACTION ITEM)**

Legislative and Policy Advisor Brandon Chapin and Executive Fellow Viet-Long Nguyen provided an overview of Delta's Representation in the US House of Representatives and an update on bills (AB 225 and SB 66) to the Council.

Chair Madueño expressed her appreciation for Executive Fellow Viet-Long Nguyen's ability to present well on the Delta in a short time with the Fellowship.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/3kZoDQK>, minute 03:29:50.

#### **6c. Contract Update (INFORMATION ITEM)**

There was no contract update.

#### **6d. Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy and Delta Protection Commission Update (INFORMATION ITEM)**

Campbell Ingram, Executive Officer for the Delta Conservancy, provided an update on the Conservancy's mission, role, and grant programs.

Chair Madueño and Campbell discussed Proposition 68 funding allocations and pushback from stakeholders on these projects.

Councilmember Burgis commented on "Delta as a place" concepts for residents and a lack of trust from the public and how this work is helping bring the trust back.

Bruce Blodgett, Executive Director for the Delta Protection Commission, provided an update on the Commission's conveyance project letters and requests, visit the Delta website, upcoming personnel hires, and the Delta Heritage Site,

Councilmember Burgis commented on the National Heritage Area and the uniqueness of the Delta.

Chair Madueño spoke with Blodgett on the National Heritage Area's management plan and shared her excitement about the designation, its branding, and future promotion.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/3kZoDQK>, minute 03:19:35.

#### **6e. Delta Stewardship Council 2022 Annual Report (INFORMATION ITEM)**

Executive Officer Jessica Pearson introduced the agenda item. She pointed out that the Council has made significant progress in major initiatives and shared that she was proud of the work of all Council staff in achieving those accomplishments.

Information Officer Brittany Young presented the 2022 Annual Report and highlighted its new interactive story map design.

Councilmembers Zingale and Burgis commented on the importance of this work and offered praise for the report.

Chair Madueño and Executive Officer Pearson were excited and proud of Young, and the team, on the project and wanted to promote it everywhere.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/3kZoDQK>, minute 02:51:40.

Public Comment

**1. Osha Meserve**, representing local agencies of the North Delta, welcomed Councilmember Burgis and spoke on the Delta Levee Investment Strategy regulations. She shared that she submitted three letters to Council regarding the need to work on the regulations, address the need for rehabilitation to be included in the definition of maintenance, recognize the levee as a system, and the importance of the freshwater pathway in meeting the water supply needs of the state. She also provided an update on a court decision related to the Lookout Slough project and expressed concern with the Council's Public Records Act process.

**2. Melinda Terry**, Manager of the North Delta Water Agency, commented on Campbell Ingram's drought response plan and their involvement via the Delta Watermaster and clarified that crop rotations are temporary but repeatable if needed.

## **7. LEAD SCIENTIST REPORT (INFORMATION ITEM)**

Lead Scientist Dr. Laurel Larsen featured the article:

### **Operationalizing equity for integrated water resources management**

*Cydney K. Seigerman, S. Kyle McKay, Raul Basilio, Shelly A. Biesel, Jon Hallemeier, Andressa V. Mansur, Candice Piercy, Sebastian Rowan, Bruno Ubiali, Elissa Yeates, and Donald R. Nelson. Journal of the American Water Resources Association (2022)*

<https://doi.org/10.1111/1752-1688.13086>, an article by Siegerman and colleagues seeking to provide a set of practical pathways for entities to approach water resource planning and management equitably.

Importantly, the team noted that operationalizing equity requires systematic, collaborative, and adaptable change across local, state, and federal levels. These findings, emerging from a national-scale conversation, have direct applicability as the Council considers the next steps resulting from the Environmental Justice issue paper.

Dr. Larsen reported that the Delta Residents Survey research project the Delta Science Program is funding is now live and should be arriving in Delta residents' mailboxes over the coming weeks. The surveyor aims to reach a demographically and geographically representative sample of Delta residents and is focused on assessing residents' well-being, sense of place, and climate change experiences.

The research is being conducted by a collaborative team across CA Sea Grant, Sacramento State University Institute for Social Research, UC Davis, UC Berkeley, and Oregon State University, with leadership from Dr. Jessica Rudnick, Social Science Extension Specialist at the Council. Any questions can be directed to Dr. Rudnick, and more information about the survey can be found on the Delta Science Program's social science webpage. Dr. Rudnick will present an update on social science integration efforts at the Council's February meeting, where she will provide a status update on the survey.

Dr. Larsen welcomed five new team members from the 2023 cohort of California Sea Grant Policy Fellows. This year the Council will be joined by Samantha Pyros, Pooja Balaji, Eduardo Martinez, Kiara Wallace, and Charnelle Wickliff.

Dr. Larsen updated the Council on the Delta Science Program, hosting a two-day workshop titled "One Delta, One Science, One Modeling Framework," starting on February 28. The workshop will seek to address pervasive and persistent challenges in models that are used for planning and anticipating the future: 1) natural resource management models are difficult to access, understand, and use, and 2) differences in modeling approaches and assumptions (e.g., use of different climate projections) across agencies hinder the achievement of the vision of "One Delta, One Science."

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Dr. Larsen closed with a summary of the "By the Numbers" report.

Dr. Larsen and the Chair discussed atmospheric rivers, the consensus in modeling, and the final determining factor for the "right science."

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/3kZoDQK>, minute 02:30:21.

## **8. DELTA SCIENCE PROGRAM SCIENTIFIC SYNTHESIS EFFORTS (INFORMATION ITEM) (Previous Item 9)**

Henry DeBey, Deputy Executive Officer for Science, Maggie Christman, Program Manager, and Pascale Goertler, Senior Environmental Scientist, presented on the Delta Science Program's Scientific synthesis efforts like the State of the Bay-Delta Science efforts, ecosystem services and disservices (carbon and sediment), Harmful algal blooms, invasive aquatic vegetation control, and the DSP-NCEAS synthesis working group.

Chair Madueño, Christman, Pascale, and Dr. Larson discussed vegetation and the impacts of spraying harmful vegetation in the Delta.

Chair Madueño and Councilmembers Smith and Burgis thanked the science team for their work and ability to make it accessible and expressed excitement for the future and the work ahead.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/3kZoDQK>, minute 02:07:06.

**9. DELTA PLAN PERFORMANCE MEASURES: 2022 YEAR IN REVIEW TRACKER (INFORMATION ITEM) (Previous Item 8)**

Executive Officer Jessica Pearson introduced the agenda item. She reflected on the progress made in implementing the Delta Plan and how measuring progress through performance measures allows the Council to see improvements and setbacks in the Delta and informs the Council's implementation of the Delta Plan.

Jeff Henderson, Deputy Executive Officer for Planning and Performance; Martina Koller, Program Manager; Christopher Kwan, Senior Environmental Scientist; Cory Copeland, Senior Environmental Scientist; and Scott Navarro, Environmental Scientist, presented the performance measures.

Councilmember Smith and Burgis discussed upcoming positive/negative trends and water quality (wildfires) with the panelists and Dr. Larsen.

Chair Madueño expanded on the water quality and supply questions and discussed with panelists the 30 percent increase in toxins and pollutants in the Delta and their relationship with, or correlation to, harmful algal blooms and conservation tactics statewide for conserving water resources.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/3kZoDQK>, minute 01:31:07.

**10. DELTA CONVEYANCE UPDATE (INFORMATION ITEM)**

Carrie Buckman, Environmental Program Manager for Delta Conveyance, Department of Water Resources (DWR), provided an update on Delta Conveyance.

Councilmember Smith, Burgis, Lee, and Buckman conversed regarding the public comments received on the draft EIR, new water realities concerning climate change,

water diversions, biological restraints on pumping for diversions, and groundwater replenishment,

Chair Madueño and Buckman discussed the EIR process and how DWR will address disadvantaged communities with limited access moving forward.

Councilmember Zingale, Buckman, and Chair Madueño closed with a discussion on opposition to the project and how to address opponents' concerns in the future.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/3kZoDQK>, minute 00:50:50.

## **11. DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES RESTORATION HABITAT UPDATE (INFORMATION ITEM)**

Executive Officer Jessica Pearson introduced Steve Rothert, Manager of the Division of Multi-Benefit Initiatives of Integrated Watershed Management for DWR, and Charlotte Biggs, DWR's Program Manager for Habitat Restoration and Multi-Benefit Flood Improvement Projects, to provide an update on the Department's habitat restoration activities in the Delta.

Steve Rothert and Charlotte Biggs presented on restoration habitat work/projects.

Councilmember Burgis and Rothert discussed project timelines and appreciation for the current project work.

Chair Madueño and the panelists discussed the DPIIC Restoration Subcommittee's forum, whether DWR was involved and coordinated with its work, and how DPIIC can increase involvement in work like theirs.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/3kZoDQK>, minute 00:28:35.

## **12. PREPARATION FOR THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING**

The next Council meeting is scheduled for February 23-24, 2023, at the CNRA headquarters. Please refer to the posted meeting notice ten days before the meeting for further information or updates.

The meeting adjourned at 1:54 PM.

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