



DRAFT

**SUMMARY: OCTOBER 28, 2021
DELTA STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL MEETING**

For review and adoption by the Council at the November 18, 2021, meeting.

In accordance with Assembly Bill 361 (Government Code §11133), the meeting's proceedings were conducted entirely remotely.

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

MEETING SUMMARY

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Susan Tatayon called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM, October 28, 2021.

2. ROLL CALL – ESTABLISH A QUORUM (WATER CODE §85210.5)

Roll call was taken, and a quorum was established. The following Councilmembers were present: Frank Damrell, Virginia Madueño, Maria Mehranian, Don Nottoli, Christy Smith, Susan Tatayon, and Daniel Zingale.

3. CONSENT CALENDAR

Motion: Offered by Mehranian, second by Smith – Approve the Consent Calendar.

Vote: 7/0 - The motion was adopted.

The motion and vote are viewable on the linked agenda at <https://cal-span.org/unipage/?site=cal-span&owner=DSC&date=2021-10-28> minute 1:47

4. CHAIR'S REPORT (INFORMATION ITEM)

Chair Tatayon gave an overview of the Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee (DPIIC) meeting held on October 18, 2021. Councilmembers discussed the importance of shifting towards preventative planning in the Delta instead of a reactive response to emergency situations. The chair also announced that DPIIC endorsed the Restoration Subcommittee as recommended by the Ecosystem Amendment. Council staff also gave an overview of the Science Action Agenda during this meeting. In closing, future topics for the DPIIC meetings were discussed.

In other announcements, Councilmember Madueño thanked Erik Vink, Executive Director at the Delta Protection Commission, for the educational Delta tour she took part in on October 25. Councilmembers discussed the importance of being physically present in the Delta and expressed a desire to resume in-person Delta trips as soon as safety allows. Madueño remarked that she was invigorated by her experience, and it emphasized how important the Council's efforts are.

The item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://cal-span.org/unipage/?site=cal-span&owner=DSC&date=2021-09-23> minute 02:21.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Deirdre Des Jardins, California Water Research, commented on the framework of power regarding California water.

The item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://cal-span.org/unipage/?site=cal-span&owner=DSC&date=2021-10-28> minute 17:00.

6. EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT (INFORMATION ITEM)

Executive Officer Jessica Pearson touched on the effects of the Category 5 atmospheric river that passed through northern California the previous weekend. Pearson noted that the Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for the Ecosystem Amendment (Chapter 4 of the Delta Plan) is still open for public comment. In addition, the Draft PEIR will be the subject of a public workshop scheduled for the November Council Meeting. Interested members of the public can visit <https://deltacouncil.ca.gov/delta-plan/amendments> for more information and can direct comments and questions regarding the Ecosystem Amendment or PEIR to ecosystemamendment@deltacouncil.ca.gov.

Pearson announced that the Delta Protection Commission launched a new "Delta Flood Ready" website (www.deltafloodready.com). Visitors to the site can check their flood risk in the Delta, learn how to be prepared for flooding, and find resources ranging from preparing emergency kits and evacuation plans to information about flood insurance and current river conditions.

Pearson welcomed Tricia Lee, a 2017 Sea Grant Fellow, into the Delta Science Program's Collaborative Science and Peer Review Unit as a senior environmental scientist.

The Outreach Highlights Report, Active Projects List, and the Quarterly Contract Report were provided to the Council in writing.

6a. *Legal Update (Information Item)*

There was no Legal Update.

6b. *Legislative Update (Information Item)*

Pearson noted that the Governor signed Senate Bill (SB) 821 earlier this month. This bill addressed compensation for the Delta Independent Science Board (ISB) and affirmed the Council's authority to contract with the Board. The Council has executed nine new contracts with ISB members in alignment with the new law.

Councilmember Nottoli thanked Pearson for her presentation and noted the efforts made by the Delta Protection Commission staff in putting together the Delta Flood Ready website.

Public comment

Deirdre Des Jardins, California Water Research, commended the Council on their efforts to get SB 821 passed. Des Jardins noted that she is seeking more clarification on the length of the Delta Independent Science Board contracts. Pearson responded that she would follow up with her offline and that the information would be publicly available in the next Quarterly Contract Report.

The Executive Officer's Report is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://cal-span.org/unipage/?site=cal-span&owner=DSC&date=2021-10-28> minute 22:18.

7. LEAD SCIENTIST'S REPORT (INFORMATION ITEM)

Delta Lead Scientist Dr. Laurel Larsen discussed a recently published paper by Cravens et al. that introduces a drought management typology. This typology, an in-depth framework derived from a synthesis of 10 different case studies, lists four key facets to guide collaborative drought decision-making.

Dr. Larsen introduced Luis Lechuga, one of the data science interns placed within the Council through a partnership with Jewish Vocational Services. Mr. Lechuga presented interactive visualizations of a long-term record of zooplankton data collected across the Delta.

Councilmember Madueño and Dr. Larsen discussed the origins of the overall decline of zooplankton in the Delta and the need for long-term monitoring to build an accurate baseline.

Councilmembers discussed the importance of easily consumable, synthesized data provided by these artistic visualizations for public education. With access to more

accessible educational tools like this, a broader understanding of the Delta's challenges could assist in greater support for the Council's efforts.

Dr. Larsen gave an update on the ongoing social science integration efforts at the Council through the environmental justice Brown Bag Series. All the series' discussions are open to the public, feature a question-and-answer segment, and are now available for registration. For more information on the rest of the series: <https://caseagrant.ucsd.edu/events/webinar-environmental-justice-reforms-in-government>.

The Delta Science Program will be hosting a workshop on Salinity Management Actions in early 2022. The workshop aims to better understand the range of management solutions that can address saltwater intrusion, which is more likely to occur when Delta freshwater outflow is low, as in a drought.

The Delta Science Program is also hosting the Adapting Restoration for a Changing Climate two-day symposium on February 2-3, 2022. The symposium was inspired by Delta Adapts and the need to support Delta Plan covered actions with the requirement of taking climate change into consideration in project planning.

Dr. Larsen reviewed the By The Numbers report. She outlined the impacts of the recent atmospheric river on the Central Valley river and reservoir levels as well as the fall run of juvenile salmon.

Councilmembers discussed the impacts and benefits of the heavy rainfall, despite much of the stormwater not being captured. Dr. Larsen also suggested that the way California captures water for long-term storage will also have to evolve as we see more flash-flood style rainfall.

Public Comment

Dierdre Des Jardins, California Water Research, thanked Dr. Larsen for her presentation and encouraged sharing the information with the Delta Independent Science Board. Des Jardins stressed the need for early water demand management to prevent the need for allocation increases in the future.

Matthew Trujillo submitted a written comment which was read aloud by Council staff. Trujillo congratulated the team for their analysis and presentation but expressed disappointment that there wasn't more focus on the causation and ramifications of the overall decrease in zooplankton.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://cal-span.org/unipage/?site=cal-span&owner=DSC&date=2021-10-28> minute 30:20.

8. DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES' 2021 EMERGENCY DROUGHT SALINITY BARRIER IN THE DELTA (INFORMATION ITEM)

Department of Water Resources (DWR) Operation and Maintenance South Delta Chief Jacob McQuirk, gave an update on the emergency salinity barrier placed in the West False River in July 2021. In response to the evolving drought emergency that California faces, DWR reports it is taking action to delay the removal of the West False River Emergency Drought Barrier. DWR plans to leave the barrier in place through December 2021. In January 2022, the barrier would be notched to allow fish and vessel passage. The notch would subsequently be filled in April 2022. DWR now plans to have the barrier fully removed by the end of November 2022, rather than November 30, 2021, as previously planned.

Councilmembers discussed the removal of the salinity barrier if the hydrological triggers are met, but that California would need above-average rainfall this winter to reach those goals. There are no flood risks to the local communities with leaving the barrier in place through the winter. DWR also stated that, if the drought continues and the proposed additional barriers were put into place, the hydrological triggers needed to remove the barrier at False River would change. There are ongoing efforts to educate the public on alternative boating travel routes and increase awareness for boaters and residents' safety around the barriers.

Dr. Larsen and McQuirk discussed the impact of the additional salinity barriers proposed at Sutter and Steamboat Slough on salmonid movement. McQuirk recognized the importance of Steamboat Slough for juvenile salmon and plans to install the barrier after the peak migration and place culverts to assist with escapement.

Public Comment

Dierdre Des Jardins, California Water Research, commented that the state's management style towards the drought is too incremental and does not respond to rapid change from climate change. Des Jardins also expressed concerns with changes to the Coordinated Operating Agreements and the ability to meet Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan water quality standards.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://cal-span.org/unipage/?site=cal-span&owner=DSC&date=2021-10-28> minute 1:21:30.

9. 2021 VAN SICKLE FLOODING EVENT (INFORMATION ITEM)

Mike Moncrief, Reclamation District 1607, presented on the June 2021 flooding event on Van Sickle Island in the Suisun Marsh. Van Sickle Island has seen frequent overtopping events over the last 20 years. The presentation gave an overview of the coordinated emergency response to this flood event by state and local flood officials, the lessons learned, and the perspectives gained over the last 15 years through multiple flood events and the flood adaptation strategies required on Van Sickle Island.

Gil Cosio, MBK Engineers, elaborated on the linkages between flooding, water quality, and habitats. DWR Flood Operations Section Manager, Elizabeth Bryson, added that the Delta Levees Program would have a grant opportunity that could apply to Van Sickle Island. The proposal solicitation and guidelines will be available by June 30, 2022.

Councilmembers discussed how the levees work as an intricate system and the importance of creating a process that addresses it appropriately. Other key elements are the prioritization of the funding and expanding efforts for public education on flood risks. Cosio and Moncrief stressed that being proactive with levee maintenance is extremely important but addressing emergency events requires interagency collaboration.

Public Comment

Deirdre Des Jardins, California Water Research, thanked the presenters for their hard work. Des Jardins commented that she is concerned that there isn't enough funding for maintenance of the Delta levee system on a timeline that might be needed due to climate change adjustments. Des Jardins also noted that the evacuation process for the cities that will be affected needs to be well planned to prepare for the ramifications of the potential levee failure.

Chair Tatayon elaborated that DWR has the flexibility to deviate from the Delta Investment Strategy (DLIS) if there is a need. Cosio also elaborated that the Delta Adapts effort will support community involvement and allow for conversation around any changes that need to be made.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://cal-span.org/unipage/?site=cal-span&owner=DSC&date=2021-10-28#> minute 1:57:00.

10. DRAFT 2022 CENTRAL VALLEY FLOOD PROTECTION PLAN (INFORMATION ITEM)

Mary Jimenez, Chief of Systemwide Multibenefit Initiatives Branch, Department of Water Resources, presented the continued progress in developing the Central Valley Flood Protection Plan (Flood Plan) Update. Jimenez gave a high-level overview of the recently released working draft, upcoming engagements, and ongoing coordination among DWR, the Flood Board, and the Council to update and implement the Flood Plan.

The chair discussed the performance measures in place for the Flood Plan with Jimenez.

Public Comment

Deirdre Des Jardins, California Water Research, commented that climate change projections for the latter half of the century seem to be happening now. Des Jardins is concerned that the modeling is inaccurate and that it's critical to update Stockton's levees to prepare and protect this large population. Des Jardins noted that she would like to see lives and property be the highest priority of the Flood Plan.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://cal-span.org/unipage/?site=cal-span&owner=DSC&date=2021-10-28#> minute 2:51:40.

11. PREPARATION FOR THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

The next Council meeting is on November 18, 2021, via webinar.

The meeting adjourned at 12:18 PM.

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