



INFORMATION ITEM

Announcing the 2022 Delta Science Fellows

Summary: Delta Science Fellowships fund the research of early-career scientists on high-priority issues in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The fellowships have been awarded to eight graduate students and post-doctoral researchers to conduct research relevant to management needs identified in the 2022-2026 Science Action Agenda. Today's agenda item will include presentations from some of the new fellows.

BACKGROUND

As identified in the Delta Reform Act, the mission of the Delta Science Program is “to provide the best possible scientific information for water and environmental decision-making in the Bay-Delta system ... through funding research, synthesizing, and communicating scientific information to policymakers and decision-makers, promoting independent scientific peer review, and coordinating with Delta agencies to promote science-based adaptive management,” (Water Code Section 85280(b)(4)). The Delta Science Program fulfills this mission, in part, by funding research to fill critical gaps in our understanding of the current and changing Bay-Delta system, and one of the flagship programs for research funding is the Delta Science Fellowship.

The Delta Science Fellowship fosters the growth and diversity of the region's scientific community. Fellows are paired with mentors from academia and the broader community, thereby strengthening the link between science and management. For example, 2018 Delta Science Fellow Katherine Smith studied the habitat use of the endangered Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse. Her results directly informed the development of new California Department of Fish and Wildlife guidelines for tidal marsh restoration, including refuges for this endangered species. Smith and many other past fellows continue to work in the Delta, building their careers upon the research conducted and relationships formed as part of their fellowships. Thus, the Council's Fellowship program is a critical investment in the next generation of Delta scientists.

Since 2003, the Delta Science Program has partnered with California Sea Grant to administer the [Delta Science Fellowship](#), a program that funds early-career scientists to conduct research on high-priority issues in the Sacramento-San

Joaquin Delta. Since its inception, 107 graduate and post-graduate scientists have been supported by this program. This year, funding is primarily provided by the Delta Stewardship Council under an existing agreement with California Sea Grant, with additional support provided by the State Water Contractors.

THE 2022 DELTA SCIENCE FELLOWS

The research of the 2022 Delta Science Fellows is guided by management needs identified in the 2022-26 [Science Action Agenda](#). This cohort was selected following a rigorous review process administered by California Sea Grant in coordination with the Delta Science Program, with separate review panels for natural science and social science proposals. Fellows were selected based on their research proposals' scientific quality, relevance to the 2022-26 Science Action Agenda, and the degree to which their research will benefit the broader Delta community consistent with the Delta Plan, including advancing the coequal goals and protecting and enhancing the Delta as an evolving place. The 2022 Fellows comprise Master's students, Ph.D. students, and post-doctoral scientists from academic institutions in the University of California and California State University systems. Their natural and social sciences research covers a broad range of topics, including adaptive governance of the Delta, wetland restoration, water quality, fish and predator ecology, pesticides, and harmful algal blooms. Community mentors are affiliated with state and federal agencies, including the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Department of Water Resources, the Department of Pesticide Regulation, and the US Geological Survey.

To learn more about each Delta Science Fellow and their research, please see the attached 2022 Delta Science Fellows Information sheet.

FISCAL INFORMATION

Not applicable.

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: 2022 Delta Science Fellows Information Sheet

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