



**DRAFT**

**SUMMARY: DECEMBER 15, 2022  
DELTA STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL MEETING**

For review and adoption by the Council at the January 26, 2022, 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 December 15, 2022.

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

Roll call was taken, and a quorum was established. The following councilmembers were present: Damrell, Lee, Zingale, and Madueño.

Councilmember Don Nottoli joined on agenda item 6 and Councilmember Christy Lee joined on agenda item 9

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

Chair Madueño presented the agenda item for adoption of the November 17, 2022, Meeting Summary.

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

**Vote:** 4/0 - The motion was adopted (Lee: Aye, Damrell: Aye, Zingale: Aye, Madueño: Aye)

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/3ZhLXso> minute 00:02:11.

#### **4. CHAIR'S REPORT (INFORMATION ITEM)**

Chair Madueño reported on attending the ACWA Fall Conference in Indian Wells, CA, with Legislative Director Brandon Chapin and Executive Officer Jessica Pearson. Chair Madueño highlighted how beneficial the conference was, and how she was encouraged to see agencies working toward a consensus regarding water issues.

The Chair also reported on DPIIC's last check-in with partnered agencies and thanked Special Assistant for Planning and Science at Delta Stewardship Council, Amanda Bohl, for her hard work in keeping coordination effective. The Chair echoed the agreement from participating agencies that DPIIC is essential and an effort that should continue moving into the future.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/3ZhLXso> minute 00:02:56.

#### **5. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

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

Executive Officer Jessica Pearson opened with an update regarding water allocations from the State Water Project for 2023. The update touched on the potential for another dry year and conservation efforts that could change, depending on future rainfall.

Pearson continued with status of covered action certifications. Both covered actions discussed in last month's meeting ( [American River Watershed Common Features and Sacramento River East Levee Contract 4 Project](#) [American River Watershed Common Features, Sacramento River Erosion Contract 2 Project](#)) may now proceed. The public Review period expired on Nov. 30<sup>th</sup> without appeal.

Pearson stated that the Council would be submitting a comment letter on the Delta Conveyance Project draft EIR. The comment letter will focus on issues related to consistency with the Delta Plan. There will be an update on the Conveyance project planning process at the January meeting.

Pearson concluded her update with a highlight on Sarah Ward's promotion to Staff Services Manager within the Business Services Unit.

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

There was no legal update.

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

Legislative Director, Brandon Chapin, and Executive Fellow, Viet-Long Nguyen updated the Council on members of the Legislature representing the Delta, the State Budget Outlook, and SB 23 (flood risk reduction projects: expedited permitting).

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/3ZhLXso> minute 00:10:41.

**6c. Environmental Justice Update (INFORMATION ITEM)**

Amanda Bohl presented on staff Environmental Justice Work, providing an update on EJ community events, EJ advocates and their tireless work at the Council, and the future for the EJ issue paper.

The Chair expressed her support of this initiative and how the EJ topic is becoming more prevalent in current discussions across various agencies.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/3ZhLXso> minute 00:21:30.

**6d. Delta Levees Investment Strategy Update (INFORMATION ITEM)**

Deputy Executive Officer for Planning & Performance, Jeff Henderson, provided an update on the Delta Levees Investment Strategy. Henderson thanked everyone who provided comment (15 comment letters prior to the comment period ending and 13 oral comments at the November hearing). Henderson noted that Council staff is reviewing the comments received and is preparing responses.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/3ZhLXso> minute 00:33:07.

Councilmember Zingale commended Pearson, Henderson, and the entire team for this year's volume and quality of work.

Public Comment:

1. Dante Nomellini Sr.- commented on fundamentals not being addressed and the problems with unsuitable prioritization of levees. He stated that

he believes that a regulation is not necessary and that he does not think there is a use to fighting for the propriety of regulation because the recommendation of the Council will weigh heavily on policy throughout the government investments.

2. Brad Baker – Delta stakeholder, commented on a statement provided by the Central Delta Water Agency’s Dante Nomellini Jr., on their behalf, at the November Council meeting regarding the Council’s authority and questioned whether it is important or necessary for the Council to be in a rulemaking process. Baker noted that the formality of the process is inhibiting engagement between stakeholders and the Council.

Don Nottoli noted the importance of communication and relationships with stakeholders as being integral to the work of the Council, and also to the people living and working in the Delta.

Chair Madueño thanked all commenters and noted the importance of the DLIS proposed regulations and the Council’s history with this initiative (8 years and three Chairs). The Chair closed with a summary on the DLIS and future next steps for the project.

## 7. LEAD SCIENTIST REPORT (INFORMATION ITEM)

Lead Scientist Dr. Laurel Larsen featured the article:

**Genus-Level Mapping of Invasive Floating Aquatic Vegetation Using Sentinel-2 Satellite Remote Sensing** *Christiana Ade, Shruti Khanna, Mui Lay, Susan L. Ustin, and Erin L. Hestir. Remote Sensing (2022) <https://doi.org/10.3390/rs14133013>*, an article about research supporting the effective management of invasive species is critical for the Bay-Delta (Delta), where invasive floating aquatic vegetation (FAV) negatively impacts the system’s biodiversity, hydrology, and recreational boating and fishing industries.

Dr. Larsen reported on Delta Science Program activities. The first being the Delta Residents Survey. This survey 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 data collected will help establish a baseline of understanding for what Delta residents think about

Delta issues, how they connect to the Delta as a unique place, and how they are experiencing and adapting to climate changes.

Dr. Larsen reported on the Advancing Interdisciplinary Research Symposium that was held in October 2022 and brought together members of the Bay-Delta Social Science Community of Practice with representatives from multiple collaborative science venues focused on the biophysical and ecological components of the estuary.

Day 1 of the Symposium focused on facilitating coordination and integration across social and natural science communities and provided context and training on why and how interdisciplinary research approaches could help advance the state of relevant and useable science in the Delta.

Day 2 of the Symposium provided opportunities for participants to work in interdisciplinary breakout rooms to brainstorm ideas on integrated approaches to researching some of the Delta's hardest challenges. Some of the topics discussed were drought and salinity management, carbon sequestration, land subsidence, shoreline vulnerability, and flood protection.

Larsen also reported on the hybrid Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) workshop to inform the development of a community monitoring strategy, hosted by the Delta Science Program on November 8-9. The workshop was opened by state Assemblymember Bill Quirk who authored AB 834, which directed the development of a Freshwater and Estuarine Harmful Algal Bloom Program for California. The next steps for this workshop are to develop a monitoring strategy that the community can use to conduct monitoring in a way that adds to a collective understanding of HABs.

Dr. Larsen shared some thoughts on science funding coordination and how Delta Science Program staff have been leading ongoing conversations about how to promote greater coordination for science funding with partners at the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, US Geological Survey, US Bureau of Reclamation, Department of Water Resources, and the State Water Contractors. As an outcome of these conversations, Council staff will be seeking input from a broader range of science funding entities to explore the type of coordination that is desired, which would be a worthwhile investment of time for science funding managers.

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

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/3ZhLXso> minute 00:54:12.

## **8. DELTA SCIENCE TRACKER (INFORMATION ITEM)**

Maggie Christman, Council environmental program manager, George Isaac, Council senior environmental scientist, and Mario Manzo, deputy manager of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's Bay-Delta Office, presented on the Delta Science Tracker. The presentation covered Delta complexity, tracker goals, project partners, a snapshot of the tracker's working pages, priorities identified in the Science Action Agenda, organizations collaborating on the Delta science, and funding.

Chair Madueño thanked the panel and acknowledged the importance of science funding and the impact of Mr. Manzo's funding brief at DPIIC.

Isaac and Councilmember Lee discussed project upload responsibilities and contracted protocol for the Delta Science Tracker.

Councilmember Nottoli and Isaac discussed the possibilities of the wider use of the tracking platform.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/3ZhLXso> minute 01:25:17.

## **9. DELTA WATERMASTER UPDATE (INFORMATION ITEM)**

Executive Officer Jessica Pearson introduced current Delta Watermaster Michael George for the Delta Watermaster Update. Pearson recognized George's expertise while being Watermaster for the California Water Resources Control Board and thanked him for his service to the Council and the Delta during his tenure.

George thanked Pearson and introduced himself and professional engineer (PE) from the Office of the Delta Watermaster, Lindsay Kammeier, before providing the Delta Watermaster Report.

George expressed his appreciation for the Council's support, and the collaborative relationship with the Office of the Delta Watermaster and the Council. George provided examples of project collaborations (SAA, One Delta/One Science, Linking Science to Action, DPIIC, CSAMP), how to progress moving forward (outreach

strategy and water rights clarification), reliable data (no more failure to file water use reports, migration to consistent monitoring, and following where the data lead), how to collaborate for furtherance of the coequal goals, and the logic of the Delta Plan and how there is a need for an overall plan to address this precious resource or face losing it (water supply, ecosystem, recreation, economy, and way of life). The Delta Plan must be there, and be used, while litigation works its course.

Chair Madueño thanked and showed her appreciation for George being a supporter and ally to the Delta. She spoke about his determination and willingness to be a champion for the Delta and a “gelling” agent for the Waterboard and the Council.

Chair Madueño echoed George’s comments on DPIIC and the importance of re-engaging with the Federal Government.

Dr. Laurel Larson thanked George for many of the science topics in the presentation and wanted to echo the Chair’s feelings on equity and inclusivity.

Councilmember Nottoli offered commendation to George’s work and expressed his belief that it leaves the Delta in a better place than before he was there.

Councilmember Zingale noted George’s highlight of inequities and thanked George for waking us up “in spirit” before he leaves state service.

Councilmember Lee noted her appreciation of George’s unwavering patience and knowledge transfer.

Councilmember Damrell recognized George’s unique and extraordinary skills and insights that he hopes are also found in the next Watermaster.

Mr. George received a standing ovation.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/3ZhLXso> minute 01:43:41.

### **Councilmember Don Nottoli’s Retirement**

Chair Madueño transitioned into an address to Don Nottoli. The chair spoke on Nottoli’s departure from public service and his impeccable vast career in public service (including a lifetime achievement award from Sacramento State University).

Councilmembers each individually commended fellow Councilmember Nottoli. He was presented with a memento before addressing the Council and staff to offer his parting words.

The Chair transitioned into adjournment.

**10. PREPARATION FOR NEXT COUNCIL MEETING**

The next Council meeting is scheduled for January 26-27, 2023; at the California Natural Resources Agency Headquarters Building at 715 P St, Sacramento, CA, 95814.

Please refer to the meeting notice posted ten days before the meeting for further information or updates.

The meeting adjourned at 11:59PM

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