



DRAFT

SUMMARY OCTOBER 23, 2025

DELTA STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL MEETING

For review and adoption by the Council at the November 20, 2025, meeting.

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

MEETING SUMMARY

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Lee called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM on October 23, 2025, at the California Natural Resources Agency at 715 P Street, Room 2-221, Sacramento, California 95814.

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, Hueso, Mehranian, Patterson, Zingale, and Lee. (Government Code § 11123)

Vice Chair Miller was absent from the meeting.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Lee asked for public comment.

Emma Askea, Clerk of the Board, noted that public comments had been received via email the previous week and were available in the room and online.

There was no public comment.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/4qZIUTs>, minute 00:01:18.

4. CONSENT CALENDAR (ACTION ITEM)

4a. Adoption of September 26, Meeting Summary

Chair Lee presented the agenda item for adopting the consent calendar.

Chair Lee asked for public comment.

There was no public comment.

Motion (approve the consent calendar): offered by Councilmember Mehranian, seconded by Councilmember Burgis.

Vote: 4/0 - The motion was adopted (Burgis: Aye, Hueso: Aye, Lee: Aye, Mehranian: Aye, Miller: Absent Patterson: Aye, Zingale: Aye)

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/4qZIUTs>, minute 00:01:55.

5. CHAIR'S REPORT (INFORMATION ITEM)

Chair Lee thanked Vice-Chair Miller for covering her responsibilities as Chair at the previous month's meeting and welcomed new Councilmember Ann Patterson to the Council.

Chair Lee provided reflections from the Lookout Slough tour on the second day of the Adaptive Management Forum, highlighted the upcoming State of the San Francisco Estuary Conference, and the National Heritage Forum Advisory Committee meeting.

A.) DELTA PLAN INTERAGENCY IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE (DPIIC)
MEETING PREVIEW (INFORMATION ITEM)

Chair Lee announced that the fall DPIIC meeting will be postponed in light of Special Assistant to Planning and Science, Amanda Bohl's departure from the Council, and in light of the ongoing Federal shutdown.

Councilmember Burgis announced that the Delta Protection Commission has appointed a new Executive Director, Amanda Bohl.

Chair Lee asked for public comment.

There was no public comment.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/4qZIUTs>, minute 00:02:46.

6. EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT (INFORMATION ITEM)

Executive Officer Jessica Pearson began her report announcing the start of the California water year, gave an overview of the Adaptive Management Forum, and highlighted the upcoming California Natural Resources Agency Secretary Speaker Series that will focus on the State of Bay Delta Science.

Pearson reported that there have been two new Certifications of Consistency filed since last month's meeting. On October 8, The Brannan-Andrus Levee Maintenance District filed a Certification of Consistency for the Georgiana Slough Erosion Control and Habitat Enhancement Project. The public review period is open through November 7. On October 17, the Department of Water Resources filed a Certification of Consistency for the Delta Conveyance Project. The public review period is open through November 17. Pearson highlighted the Active Project List and the Quarterly Contract Report.

Pearson summarized two letters that were sent. The Council sent an updated comment letter to the Delta Protection Commission on October 2, based on feedback received from Councilmember Zingale at the September Council meeting, to incorporate more inclusive language surrounding the Good Neighborhood

Checklist. Chair Lee also sent a letter on October 16 in response to comment letters received from Delta public entities on October 13 regarding the appeal process.

Pearson announced Amanda Bohl's departure and welcomed Michelle Stern to the Science Communication and Synthesis team, and Liz Bird, an IT specialist.

Pearson shared a review of the Outreach Highlights Report, highlighting the upcoming Adaptive Management Forum. Pearson provided an update on Senate Bill 650 and closed with a preview of the meeting ahead.

Councilmember Zingale, Councilmember Burgis, Vice-Chair Miller, Pearson, and Deputy Executive Officer for Planning and Performance, Jeff Henderson, discussed the "Good Neighbor Checklist" and the inclusion of farmworkers and other parties potentially affected by the conversion of agricultural land, as it appears in the letter to the DPC.

a. Legal Update

There was no legal update.

b. Legislative Update

Audrey Cho, Legislative and Policy Advisor, provided an update on SB 650, signed by the Governor on October 3, and other signed bills of interest from the legislative session. Cho provided an overview of the state budget and Proposition 4. Cho provided an update on Federal appointments, and the Federal government shutdown, including the National Flood Insurance Program.

Councilmember Burgis commented on the timing of the lapse in funding for the National Flood Insurance Program.

c. Delta Conservancy and Delta Protection Commission Update

Amanda Bohl, Executive Director for the Delta Protection Commission, thanked Councilmember Burgis, Dan Ray, and staff of the Delta Protection Commission for their work. Bohl provided an update on the Delta Protection Commission Farmland Conversion Study and highlighted upcoming meetings.

Campbell Ingram, Executive Officer for the Delta Conservancy, provided an update on Proposition 4 funds, the need for additional Delta funding and investments, and

ongoing efforts to address funding gaps. Ingram closed with an update on the possibility of expanding the boundaries and coverage of the Conservancy, and welcomed a new staff member, Meredith Howard.

Ingram and Pearson discussed the total funds allocated to the Delta from Proposition 4 as compared to other agencies. Chair Lee and Ingram discussed the total amount of money needed to address all the current needs in the Delta.

Chair Lee asked for public comment.

There was no public comment.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/4qZIUTs>, minute 00:24:35.

7. FLOOD PREPAREDNESS, MANAGEMENT, AND INSURANCE: UPDATE ON RECENT EVENTS (INFORMATION ITEM)

Executive Officer Pearson introduced the agenda item, and Lead Engineer Erin Mullin and Executive Fellow Alec Cruz.

Mullin and Cruz presented on flooding risk, including flood-prone areas and flooding impacts; California Water Code 85305-85307; Delta flood exposure from today to 2085; and increasing flood awareness through the Floodplain Management Association, Delta representation, California Flood Preparedness Week, and the National Flood Insurance Program.

Councilmember Burgis discussed FEMA, climate change, vulnerability, hardship, and government aid for natural disasters. She emphasized personal responsibility for vulnerable properties, sea-level rise, and shared an anecdotal scenario from Alaska regarding coverage questions. She also highlighted the importance of the Delta, which supplies two-thirds of California's water.

Councilmember Patterson, Councilmember Burgis, Cruz, and Pearson discussed "low uptake on flood insurance," federally backed mortgage requirements, how this affects property transactions for people unable to buy flood insurance, why renters don't need to purchase insurance, and issues faced by older owners who may not be able to afford insurance.

Councilmember Hueso and Mullin discussed the risks of tributary versus sea-level rise. Modeling shows that snow turning to rain can cause flooding from rivers, and warmer weather will lead to larger storms that carry more water. They also discussed changing water goals due to the rapidly evolving system, future planning and modeling to address these changes, effective communication of the risks, and breaking down silos to improve communication and planning.

Councilmember Mehranian, Councilmember Hueso, Chair Lee, and Mullin discussed social awareness and current planning efforts, including how the Delta Adapts project addresses near-, mid-, and long-term solutions for the Delta, distributing this information to those who need it, community inclusion and communication, securing funding, gaining support from collaborators, and linking science with policy.

Chair Lee invited Mullin to conclude the agenda item with a focus on the Delta Levees Investment Strategy (DLIS) project, including state-interest and risks, tracking funding and risks, and highlighting DLIS as a “mega” performance measure. The discussion also covered risk mitigation and the role of partners, such as the Delta Stewardship Council, as a communication bridge.

Chair Lee asked for public comment.

There was no public comment in Sacramento or Eureka.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/4qZIUTs>, minute 00:39:04.

8. LEAD SCIENTIST REPORT (INFORMATION ITEM)

Chair Lee introduced the agenda item, and the Deputy Executive Officer for Science, Henry DeBey (filling in due to the absence of Lead Scientist Lisa-Marie Windham-Meyers).

DeBey discussed Delta Science Program activities, including Science Day hosted by CCST, the State of the Estuary Conference, the CNRA Secretary Speaker Series on Extreme Events, and the release of the Draft Delta Science Plan. He also covered Water Year 2025 (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025), the average precipitation for California, and highlighted how precipitation is unevenly distributed geographically and over time.

The presentation concluded with an overview of the “By the Numbers.”

Chair Lee, Councilmember Zingale, Pearson, and Debey discussed how predicting winter weather patterns for 2025 is a complex task, how atmospheric rivers are expected to become more extreme, how precipitation will affect California's water health, including storage, conservation, and strategies, and how the California water system is prepared to manage north-to-south water movement.

Chair Lee closed the agenda item with a point about the interconnectivity of California's water systems.

Chair Lee asked for public comment.

There was no public comment in Sacramento or Eureka.

The item is viewable on the linked agenda <https://bit.ly/4qZIUTs>, minute 01:24:41.

9. DELTA INDEPENDENT SCIENCE BOARD (ISB) UPDATE (INFORMATION ITEM)

Chair Lee introduced the agenda item, and Delta ISB, Chair Dr. Inge Werner, and Delta ISB Member, Dr. Jayantha Obeysekera.

Dr. Werner and Dr. Obeysekera discussed the functions of the Delta ISB and its role, highlights from the emerging Climate Symposium, the State of Science with key insights (such as warming trends, snowpack and runoff regime shifts, intensifying hydro-climate variability, and accelerating sea level rise), scientific advances from the last 5-10 years, additional concerns (including Pacific decadal oscillation and ENSO changes under warming, dynamic versus thermodynamic precipitation changes, the recurrence potential of Medieval droughts, infrastructure vulnerability assessments, ecosystem tipping points, and forest transitions), and adaptation strategies like nature-based solutions, technology integration, multi-benefit approaches, and adaptive management.

Councilmember Burgis, Dr. Werner, and Dr. Obeysekera discussed data storage, the reliance on monitoring (if not done properly), AI tampering, record-keeping (preserving old data while sharing copies for monitoring and analysis), consolidating

all climate models into a single database (one dataset used by all agencies), and initiating the process for contaminant monitoring review (interview questions have been designed and the interview process has started). Dr. Werner also echoed Councilmember Burgis' point on the significance of data integrity.

Councilmember Patterson and Dr. Obeysekera discussed the rapid temperature increase since the 80s, how much we can trust modeling to estimate how quickly tributary risks will start affecting communities, the uncertainty of risk (which may occur faster than expected), different types of modeling (long-term and event-based), the need for sufficient research (short-duration rainfall events), and how to determine what research to pursue to answer risk questions (such as future conditions that are more intense), along with reaching the codes and standards (focused on future data rather than past data).

Chair Lee concluded by asking about the prioritization of needs and to address any gaps he may have identified in the Symposium's topics. Dr. Obeysekera discussed focusing on "low-hanging fruit," improving our data toolset with a long-term view, and the ongoing gap between scientists and practitioners—moving from uncertainty to action. Councilmember Mehranian thanked Dr. Obeysekera for his work.

Chair Lee asked for public comment.

There was no public comment.

The agenda item is viewable on the linked agenda at <https://bit.ly/4qZIUTs>, minute 01:37:12.

10. PREPARATION FOR NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

The next Council meeting will take place on November 20, 2025. Please refer to the posted meeting notice 10 days before the meeting for further information or updates.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:49 p.m.

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