



INFORMATION ITEM

Report on the 2026 Interweaving Traditional Knowledge Roundtable Series

Summary

The Council has engaged in multiple efforts to bring tribal perspectives into the management of the Delta. At its April 24, 2025, meeting, the Delta Stewardship Council (Council) approved the Tribal and Environmental Justice Issue paper, which underscores the importance of co-producing events with Tribes to support the interweaving of traditional knowledge with science-based adaptive management and decision-making. In June and July of 2026, Council staff collaborated with the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians and the California Indian Environmental Alliance to host the Interweaving Traditional Knowledge Roundtable Series.

Background

Tribal governments and communities in California have experienced many years of marginalization, exclusion, and forced assimilation. Incorporating tribal perspectives into the Council's work requires understanding, acknowledging, and working in partnerships to help ensure that Tribes and indigenous perspectives are represented in environmental decision-making in the Delta. The Council held its first Tribal Listening Session in 2023, featuring presentations from tribes and tribal-serving organizations. Council staff completed the Tribal and Environmental Justice Issue Paper in 2025 as an important step in acknowledging and responding to the concerns of Tribes. The paper helps build foundational knowledge of tribal justice issues past and present. It specifically underscores the importance of relationship and trust building, working through trusted community partners, and enhancing coordination and connections between and within state agencies and local governments. The Delta Plan also identifies traditional knowledge as one of the sources of best available science in the Delta.

Interweaving Traditional Knowledge Roundtable Series

Consistent with the TEJ issue paper and building on the Council's Tribal Listening Session, the Interweaving Traditional Knowledge Roundtable Series was co-led by staff from the Delta Stewardship Council, the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians, and the California Indian Environmental Alliance. The series brought together Tribal leaders and Elders, agencies, and scientists to share experiences, discuss challenges, and explore practical approaches for interweaving Traditional Knowledge, science, and management. The series provided speakers the opportunity to share their perspectives in an open format, and participants the opportunity to learn from experts in the Delta, its watershed, and beyond.

Day one featured a welcome from Vice Chair Malissa Tayaba, a keynote presentation from Chairman Brian Wallace from the Indigenous Futures Society, and a panel on how to effectively interweave traditional knowledge in agency work and beyond, a recording of the day can be found here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tE-zwdsRP5o>. Day two focused on Tribal Beneficial Uses as defined by the State Water Resources Control Board, a recording of the conversation can be found here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H6zSeo1PBUe>, and day three focused on successful examples of interweaving traditional knowledge, available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xlkekUmfgFQ>. There were 130 in-person attendees over the first two days and 270 virtual attendees over all three days, with over 60 people attending the entire series.

Fiscal Information

DSC funded contracts with the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians and California Indian Environmental Alliance to support their contributions to the series.

List of Attachments

None

Contact

Dylan Chapple

Environmental Program Manager, Adaptive Management Unit

Phone: (916) 870-9036

A recording of the presentation will be available on the Delta Council's YouTube page at <https://www.youtube.com/@DeltaCouncil>.