

# Restoration Subcommittee

Meeting Summary

March 29, 2023



**Delta Plan Interagency  
Implementation  
Committee**

DELTA STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

## Welcome and Introductions

Campbell Ingram welcomed attendees to the meeting and gave an overview of the subcommittee and the agenda for the meeting. Amanda Bohl announced the April DPIIC Gathering to be held on April 24, and Dylan Chapple announced the Adaptive Management Forum to be held on May 4-5.

Attendees representing DPIIC member agencies:

<b>Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy</b>	Campbell Ingram, Rachel Wigginton
<b>Delta Stewardship Council</b>	Dylan Chapple, Annie Merritt, Amanda Bohl, Viet-Long Nguyen
<b>California Department of Fish &amp; Wildlife (CDFW)</b>	Brad Henderson, Pete McHugh, April Hennessy
<b>California Department of Water Resources</b>	Bryan Barnhart
<b>Central Valley Flood Protection Board</b>	Jamie Silva
<b>Delta Protection Commission</b>	Virginia Gardiner
<b>NOAA Fisheries</b>	Cathy Marcinkevage, Amanda Cranford
<b>State Water Resources Control Board</b>	Laura Twardochleb, Lindsay Kammeier
<b>U.S. Army Corps of Engineers</b>	Kevin Harper, Andrea Meier
<b>U.S. Environmental Protection Agency</b>	Sahrye Cohen, Fadwa Bouhedda

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

Donnie Ratcliff

**U.S. Geological Survey**

Mike Chotkowski

## Restoration Forum Recap and Next Steps

Rachel Wigginton provided an overview of the Delta Restoration Forum held on February 8, 2023, at the Delta Conservancy's office in West Sacramento. This hybrid event was attended by over 140 people with 49 in-person participants. Following presentations on the recent amendment to Chapter 4 of the Delta Plan and progress towards meeting Delta Plan restoration targets to date, attendees participated in breakout groups to discuss challenges and opportunities for restoration implementation.

Viet-Long Nguyen provided an overview of takeaways from the breakout group conversations. Key themes emerged around the need for more targeted outreach, engagement, and public education. Commonly discussed issues include regulations, funding, subsidence, and multi-benefit projects. Balancing short-term implementation and long-term planning was identified as a key challenge in restoration efforts.

### Ideas for Future Forum

The subcommittee then discussed and brainstormed ideas for future Restoration Forum efforts using a [Jamboard](#).

- How can we engage stakeholders outside of government and consulting at future Forum events?
  - Highlight specific projects.
  - Focus on topics of particular interest to landowners.
    - E.g. Permitting and how to navigate it. Information on how to apply for funding and implement projects.
- What projects could we highlight at a future event?
  - Tule Red.
  - Lower Yolo Ranch.
  - Dutch Slough.
  - Yolo Bypass.
  - DWR's restoration projects on Sherman and Twitchell, include a lessons learned session.
  - Accelerated restoration permitting initiatives.

- USFWS Statewide Restoration Programmatic Biological Opinion (PBO) / Consultation.
  - SWRCB Statewide Restoration General Order (SRGO) and Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR).
- What other types of engagement and/or outreach should we consider?
  - Site visits.
  - Focused topical discussions.
  - For restoration projects that involve in-water aquatic restoration, DWR projects for example, encourage non-motorized vessel interest groups.
    - Specifically, on the in-water projects for tidal restoration, the non-motorized vessel interest groups would really benefit from engagement on this front.
  - Bring in Environmental Justice/Tribal communities to discuss how these projects affect them and how we could engage them better.
  - Engage the permitting agencies to discuss what they are looking for in a project before permit applications are submitted to streamline the permit processing and engagement.
  - In-person discussion, go out into the community in smaller venues, work with local conservation groups, take the conversation to them.

## Cutting the Green Tape Initiative

Brad Henderson and Peter McHugh from CDFW presented an overview of the Cutting the Green Tape Program (CGT) and how it could streamline permitting for restoration projects in the Delta. Covered permitting tools include the CEQA Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects (SERP), the Restoration Management Permit (RMP), and Restoration Consistency Determinations.

More information on the CGT program and its tools can be found on the [program website](#) and in this [case study](#) on the program's impacts on environmental restoration.

### Questions and Answers

- How does adaptive management fit into the Restoration Management Permit (RMP)?
  - The permit is designed to include ongoing repair and management, and to cover take on an ongoing basis. It can cover monitoring too.
- What is the duration of the RMP?

- The longest one approved is for 15 years. It should be easy to renew.
- A few large firms do most of the permitting work in the Delta. How aware are they of this program?
  - Presenters know of one firm that is working outside the Delta. The word is out but targeted outreach would be helpful.
- How far into the design process should a project be before getting in touch with the CGT team?
  - It is never too early to reach out. It is possible to start setting a foundation for a permitting strategy.
- How does this process ensure opportunities for public engagement such as those in the CEQA process?
  - Every project goes through consultation and CDFW requests that lead agencies do outreach and engagement. CDFW may put the permit on hold if it finds that the lead agency doesn't do enough outreach.

## Restoration Subcommittee Work Plan Prioritization

Dylan Chapple reviewed progress made on the Subcommittee's work plan. Subcommittee members used [Mural](#) to provide feedback on what goals, objectives, and actions to prioritize moving forward.

## Public Comments

None received.