

Panelist & Speaker Profiles

Nature-Based Solutions Panel #2



**Delta
Independent
Science Board**

DELTA STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

The Delta Independent Science Board (ISB) is scoping a review of how nature-based solutions (NBS) are being implemented in the region (see [draft prospectus](#)). To inform this effort, the ISB launched a panel series to explore the opportunities, challenges, and science needs associated with NBS.

The second panel at the Bay-Delta Science Conference will bring together practitioners and researchers from the Bay and Delta, as well as experts from outside the region, including Chesapeake Bay, Coastal Louisiana, and Puget Sound. Discussions will focus on how co-benefits such as carbon sequestration, habitat enhancement, and flood risk reduction are being generated, measured, and communicated through NBS projects. These cross-regional insights help advance NBS and accelerate learning about what works, under which conditions, and at what scale.

Panelist Questions

Each panelist will provide opening remarks based around the following questions.

- 1) How do you or your organization define NBS?
- 2) What is the primary goal of your NBS initiative(s), and which co-benefits have been identified?
 - To what extent are co-benefits measured or quantified, either in project planning or following implementation?
 - What examples illustrate successful quantification?
- 3) What are some of the barriers you face?
 - What happens when projects do not perform as planned, and how do you adapt or manage uncertainty?
- 4) How did you overcome barriers for implementing projects, especially at scale?

Panelists

Dr. Louise Conrad joined the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), as its Lead Scientist in July 2022. The Lead Scientist position provides science leadership for the agency by ensuring and advancing best practices and capacity for conducting science, by tracking and prioritizing scientific initiatives and direction, and by providing science-related policy guidance to the DWR Directorate. Prior to serving as the Lead Scientist, Dr. Conrad was the Deputy Executive Officer for Science at the Delta Stewardship Council, where she focused on science funding processes, science communication, and coordination of scientific initiatives to inform decision-making for Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.



She worked for DWR from 2010 to 2019 within the Division of Integrated Science and Engineering where she conducted research in floodplain ecology, impacts of drought on the Delta ecosystem, control of invasive aquatic weeds, and worked closely with the Interagency Ecological Program to advance synthesis of long-term environmental monitoring datasets. Prior to working in the Delta system, Conrad worked for the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission in the Russian River watershed of California, co-managing a captive broodstock and reintroduction program for endangered coho salmon.



Evyan Borgnis Sloane is the Deputy Executive Officer at the State Coastal Conservancy. She has been working at the Conservancy for over 10 years, focused on multi-benefit wetland restoration and living shoreline projects. At the Conservancy, she has managed coastal restoration and sea level rise adaptation projects across Southern California and San Francisco Bay.

She is known for her love of sediment, for wetland restoration and shoreline resilience. Prior to coming to the Conservancy, she participated in research studies focused on sediment accretion, carbon sequestration, and the impacts of sea level rise on tidal wetland habitats.

Dr. Cindy Palinkas is an Associate Professor at the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science in the United States. Her research primarily focuses on sediment-vegetation interactions and their implications for fluvial sediment dynamics in estuarine environments. Additionally, she explores the broader implications of geoethics within the geoscience profession through her recent publications. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Washington in Geological Oceanography.



Dr. Denise Reed is presently a Research Professor Gratis at the LSU New Orleans. Dr. Reed was a Distinguished Research Professor at the University of New Orleans and spent five years as Chief Scientist at The Water Institute of the Gulf. She has been involved in restoration and resilience planning in coastal Louisiana for over 3 decades, as well as in the California Bay-Delta, San Francisco Bay and Puget Sound.

Shas published extensively on the effects of sea-level rise on coastal marshes. She has served on numerous boards and panels addressing the effects of human alterations on coastal environments and the role of science in guiding restoration including the NOAA Science Advisory Board, the Chief of Engineers Environmental Advisory Board, and a number of National Academies' committees. Dr. Reed received her B.S. degree in Geography from Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge and her M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from University of Cambridge, UK.

Dr. Tracy Collier has worked for over 45 years as a toxicologist, with more than 35 of those years spent at NOAA's Northwest Fisheries Science Center. Since 'retiring' from NOAA, he has also served on and chaired the Delta Independent Science Board for a decade. In addition, he served as the Science Director for the Puget Sound Partnership, the Science Advisor to NOAA's Oceans and Human Health Initiative, a consultant for First Nations opposed to pipeline construction or expansion through their land, and a consultant to NOAA, including for the Deepwater Horizon oil spills.

