

**Delta Protection Commission Meeting**  
**July 16, 2020**

**AGENDA ITEM 10: ESP-Recreation Update - Focus Groups Report**

Prepared by: Virginia Gardiner

Presented by: Virginia Gardiner

Requested Action: **Receive report**

Type of Action: Information

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**Background:** Public Resources Code section 29759 requires the Commission to prepare and adopt an Economic Sustainability Plan (ESP), and Public Resources Code section 29761.5(a) requires the Commission to review the Plan (and update it if necessary) every five years. The Commission adopted the ESP in January 2012. The Commission initiated an update of the ESP beginning with the agricultural section in July 2017, and in July 2019 initiated the update of the recreation and tourism sections, principally Chapter 8.

Broadly, the update activities are comprised of three tasks: a comprehensive review and synthesis of relevant recreation and tourism studies completed after 2012; a series of focus groups representing Delta marina owners, tourism providers, recreational activity participants, and underserved/disadvantaged community members; and finally, development of the chapter update as informed by the first two tasks, with additional public outreach. The purpose of this presentation is to provide highlights of the focus groups findings.

**Key Findings:** Recreation and tourism industries in the Delta are still recovering from the 2008 recession.

- Existing businesses need support. Businesses had planned to expand, but very cautiously – this was mostly before the full impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was known.
- Nature and access to water are the most appealing aspects of the Delta.
- Homelessness, litter, dilapidated boats and debris deter visitors and negatively impact businesses.
- Attracting younger visitors and those that mirror the ethnic diversity of the greater Delta region is important, as well as providing increased family-friendly affordable options that will benefit both visitors and residents.
- The Commission can play a crucial role in the sustainability of the Delta by engaging community members and local businesses.

- Most residents and visitors remain unaware of the Commission’s and other state agencies’ programs.

**How Used:** The Commission’s consultant will incorporate the findings and recommendations derived from the focus groups, data obtained from the comprehensive recreation study review, and economic and visitation modeling data into the draft chapter update. Release of the draft chapter for stakeholder and community input is anticipated in Fall 2020.

**Requested Action:** Receive report

**Relationship to Vision 2030 (Commission strategic plan):**

*Regional Economy (Strategic Theme)*

*E.1 Lead the implementation and required updating of the Economic Sustainability Plan (ESP).*