



DRAFT SUMMARY MINUTES
Delta Protection Commission Meeting
Thursday, November 18, 2021

Meeting conducted via Zoom and telephone
as authorized by Government Code section 11133

1. Call to order

Chair Nottoli called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. and asked Executive Director Vink to lead the meeting participants in a flag salute. Chair Nottoli reminded meeting participants that the meeting is being held on Zoom as authorized by Government Code section 11133 during the COVID-19 emergency.

2. Welcome and roll call

Interim Commission Clerk Stacy Hayden called the roll. Present at roll call: Chair Nottoli, Vice Chair Winn, Commissioners Villegas, Vasquez, Fuller, Steele, Paroli, Slater, Agar (for Kim), Vogel (for Crowfoot), Birdsong (for Ross), Bugsch, and ex-officio designee Udang (for Sen. Talamantes Eggman). Commissioners Burgis, Nakanishi and Mussi were absent with no alternate present.

3. Public comment - Opportunity for the public to address the Commission regarding items not on the agenda

Dr. Tom Williams of Los Angeles provided background on his previous Delta work and commented on the Delta Conveyance project.

4. Report on Delta Stewardship Council activities

Chair Nottoli reported on Council meetings held on October 28 and November 18, when the Council conducted a public hearing on the draft environmental impact report for proposed changes to Delta Plan Chapter 4 (Ecosystem Restoration) and heard a presentation on carbon capture and storage in the Delta.

Chair Nottoli asked for public comment and there was none.

5. Commissioner comments/announcements

Commissioner Agar commented on the Caltrans Delta projects map provided to Commission members, mentioned the Clean California grant program for highway beautification (including a joint effort between Caltrans District 10 and the Commission to support the installation of wayfinding and interpretive signs throughout the Delta region), described the broadband “middle-mile” efforts that might provide support to the Delta broadband effort, and mentioned jobs available in District 10.

Chair Nottoli thanked Commissioner Agar and mentioned the Clean California grant programs that could support local highway beautification efforts; Commissioner Agar described the stipends available for Adopt-A-Highway cleanup work.

Chair Nottoli announced that Christine Birdsong, California Department of Food and Agriculture Undersecretary, is the new Commissioner designee for Secretary Ross. Commissioner Birdsong was administered the oath of office by Deputy Attorney General Mejia and was seated as a new Commission member prior to consideration of agenda items 6 and 7.

CONSENT AGENDA

6. Consider approval of September 16, 2021 meeting minutes

7. Consider approval of 2022 Commission meeting dates

Executive Director Vink described the authorization for teleconference and web-based meetings that ends on January 30, and the possibility that it could be extended by legislative or administrative action. He also reviewed the proposed 2022 Commission meeting dates, including an additional meeting proposed for April 21 to conduct Executive Director interviews.

MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Villegas and seconded by Commissioner Vasquez to approve the September 16, 2021 meeting minutes and approve the 2022 Commission meeting dates; in a roll call vote, the motion passed 11-0-0 with all Commissioners present at roll call (except Commissioner Steele, who was not present for the vote) voting “aye”.

REGULAR AGENDA

8. Receive Executive Director report

Executive Director Vink provided an update on the Delta Conveyance Project, including an upcoming (and anticipated final) Stakeholder Engagement Committee meeting on December 8 and a Section 106 kickoff meeting held with local officials, community members and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers staff; reported on a successful Delta Heritage Forum on November 3 and the upcoming NHA Advisory Committee meeting scheduled for December 2; mentioned the November 19 deadline for nominations to the Delta Leadership Program and that Chair Nottoli and Vice-Chair Winn would be reviewing the nominations; mentioned that the broadband grant is still under review by federal officials and an awards announcement is expected by November 30; mentioned the successful Delta Waterway Cleanup event on September 18, with Commission staff organizing three cleanup location (West Sacramento, Sacramento, and Bethel Island) and over 90 volunteers, and with special thanks to Commissioner Villegas for participating in the West Sacramento cleanup; described the three Commission staff vacancies and progress on filling the vacancies; and mentioned that a more extensive projects update, list of upcoming events, and website/social media metrics are included in the written report.

Chair Nottoli asked for public comment and there was none.

9. Receive Delta Protection Advisory Committee (DPAC) report

In the absence of DPAC Chair Mark Pruner and Vice-Chair Barbara Daly, Executive Director Vink reported on the November 2 meeting, where the Committee received a report on recent activities of the DCA Stakeholder Engagement Committee (SEC), received an update and discussed final draft recommendations for the Great California Delta Trail Master Plan, received an update on Delta flood preparedness (including the website www.deltafloodready.com), and received an update on Commission staff activities.

Chair Nottoli asked for public comment and there was none.

10. Consider actions necessary for recruitment and hiring of the Executive Director

Executive Director Vink stated his intention to leave his position by summer 2022, providing for an orderly transition to his successor. He indicated that Chair Nottoli had asked Commissioner Bugsch to assist him in reviewing a proposed duty statement and plan for advertising the position, with a Commission Executive Director screening subcommittee formed at a later meeting. Mr. Vink asked for Commission approval to appoint Chair Nottoli and Commissioner Bugsch to approve the initial plan.

Chair Nottoli asked for public comment and there was none.

MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Vasquez and seconded by Commissioner Villegas to authorize Chair Nottoli and Commissioner Bugsch to approve an initial plan for posting the job announcement, including making any revisions to the Executive Director duty statement; in a roll call vote, the motion passed 12-0-0 with all Commissioners present at roll call voting “aye”.

11. Receive report and consider release of Great California Delta Trail Master Plan for public review and comment

Commission Program Manager Virginia Gardiner provided background on the development of the Great California Delta Trail Master Plan and introduced Commission consultant Sofia Zander of TrailPeople. Ms. Zander provided an overview of the master plan and the steps taken to obtain public input on the plan, including a survey and listening session with levee managers. She also described trail types, the regional maps indicating trail opportunities, and guidance on trail design elements. She concluded by describing the upcoming public comment opportunities leading to an anticipated request for the Commission to consider approval of the draft master plan at the January 20, 2022 Commission meeting.

Chair Nottoli asked for public comment. Amy Hopperstad from Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge asked about how comments have been incorporated into the plan, and the specific comment about potential impacts to Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge from any trail use of the abandoned rail corridor running from Freeport to Hood. Commissioner Villegas commented on the challenges of establishing rail-to-trail corridors and his particular interest in the comments received.

12. Receive report on www.deltafloodready.com and Delta flood preparedness activities

Commission Public Information Officer Stacy Hayden described efforts related to Delta Flood Preparedness Week (October 23 to 30), including the new flood preparedness website www.DeltaFloodReady.com to function as a central hub for flood preparedness information. She walked through the features of the website and concluded by describing the outreach plan for promoting it.

Commissioners Vogel, Slater and Chair Nottoli complimented Ms. Hayden on the website, as did Executive Director Vink.

Chair Nottoli asked for public comment. Russ Ryan of Metropolitan Water District spoke as a reclamation district trustee and heartily commended the website effort. Dr. Tom Williams asked about any involvement from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

13. Adjourn

Chair Nottoli adjourned the meeting at 5:33 p.m. The next Commission meeting will be January 20, 2022.