



PUBLIC NOTICE AND MEETING AGENDA

Delta Protection Commission

Thursday, Jan. 18, 2024, 5-7 p.m. (end time is approximate)
University Plaza Waterfront Hotel
110 West Fremont Street
Stockton, CA 95202

Agenda

1. Call to order and Flag Salute
2. Welcome & Roll Call
3. Public Comment – an opportunity for members of the public to address the Commission regarding items not on the agenda

Consent Agenda

4. Approval of Nov. 16, 2023, Meeting Minutes (*page 3*)

Regular Agenda

5. Report on Delta Stewardship Council Activities – Chair Diane Burgis
6. Elect Chair and Vice Chair for 2024 – The Commission
7. Delta as Place Presentation – Dante Nomellini
8. Report on Delta Protection Advisory Committee (DPAC) Activities – Anna Swenson (DPAC Chair)
9. Executive Director’s Report – Bruce Blodgett, Executive Director (*page 8*)
10. Appointments to Delta Protection Advisory Committee – Bruce Blodgett, Executive Director (*page 13*)
11. Approve 2023 Annual Report – Bruce Blodgett, Executive Director (*page 18*)

12. Delta Socioeconomic Indicators Update – Virginia Gardiner, Program Manager (*page 32*)
13. National Heritage Area Management Plan Update – Blake Roberts, Program Manager (*page 34*)
14. Commissioner Comments/Announcements
15. Adjourn

The agenda items listed above may be considered in a different order at the Commission meeting, subject to the discretion of the Chair. At the discretion of the Commission, all items appearing on this agenda, whether expressly listed for action, may be deliberated upon and may be subject to action. The Commission welcomes and encourages participation in its meetings. The Commission limits testimony to not more than three minutes per person, or more time at the discretion of the Chair.

Questions, Comments, and Requests

If you have any questions or have a request for reasonable modification or accommodation due to a disability, please contact the Delta Protection Commission at dpc@delta.ca.gov or (916) 375-4800. Attachments and additional information can be found on the Delta Protection Commission website: delta.ca.gov.

Comments submitted to submit@delta.ca.gov by noon on Wednesday, January 17 2024, will be shared with Commissioners prior to the meeting to the extent possible. Public comments on each agenda item will follow the order of: 1) emailed comments, 2) those verbally requesting to make comments after notice offered by Chair during meeting.

Delta Protection Commission Members

Diane Burgis, Chair, Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors | **John Vasquez, Vice Chair**, Solano County Board of Supervisors | **Oscar Villegas**, Yolo County Board of Supervisors | **Patrick Hume**, Sacramento County Board of Supervisors | **Steve Ding**, San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors | **Ron Kott**, Cities of Contra Costa and Solano counties | **Paul Steele**, Cities of Sacramento and Yolo Counties | **Alan Nakanishi**, Cities of San Joaquin County | **Jim Paroli**, Central Delta Reclamation Districts | **Tom Slater**, North Delta Reclamation Districts | **Nick Mussi**, South Delta Reclamation Districts | **Toks Omishakin**, CA State Transportation Agency | **Karen Ross**, CA Department of Food and Agriculture | **Wade Crowfoot**, CA Natural Resources Agency | **Jennifer Lucchesi**, CA State Lands Commission

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS: **Carlos Villapudua**, California State Assembly | **Susan Talamantes Eggman**, California State Senate

DRAFT Summary Meeting Minutes

Delta Protection Commission

Thursday, November 16, 2023, 5 p.m.
Sacramento Yacht Club
3365 Chicory Loop,
West Sacramento, CA 95691

Administrative Agenda

1. Call to Order and Flag Salute – DPC Chair Diane Burgis

Diane Burgis called the meeting to order at 5:11 p.m. and Congressman Garamendi led the meeting participants in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Welcome and Roll Call

Assistant Executive Director Debra Waltman called the roll. Present at roll call: Chair Burgis; Commissioners Hume, Kott, Steele, Slater, and Agar. Vice Chair Vasquez and Commissioners Villegas, Bugsch, Ding, Nakanishi, Paroli, Mussi, Birdsong, and Vogel, as well as ex-officio designees McCann for Assemblymember Villapudua and ex-officio designees Udang for Senator Talamantes Eggman were absent with no alternate present. At this time, we did not have a quorum present.

Commissioner Bugsch arrived at 5:18 p.m.

Gurneel Singh Boparai, ex-officio designee for Assemblymember Villapudua, arrived at 6:07 p.m.

Commissioner Villegas arrived at 6:58 p.m. and Chair Burgis asked Assistant Executive Director Debra Waltman to conduct a second roll call at 6:59 p.m. Present at second roll call: Chair Burgis; Commissioners Villegas, Hume, Kott, Steele, Slater, Bugsch, and Agar, as well as ex-officio designee Boparai for Assemblymember Villapudua. Vice Chair Vasquez and Commissioners Ding, Nakanishi, Paroli, Mussi, Birdsong, and Vogel, and ex-officio designee Udang for Senator Talamantes Eggman were absent with no alternate present. At this time, a quorum was present.

3. Public Comment

Chair Burgis asked for public comment for items not on the agenda and there was none.

4. Report on Delta Stewardship Council Activities – DPC Chair Diane Burgis

Chair Burgis announced that the Delta Stewardship Council met the same day and discussed climate resiliency in the South Delta; state funding for habitat restoration; and an update to the Bay Delta Water Quality Control Plan.

Chair Burgis asked for public comment and there was none.

5. Commissioner Comments/Announcements

Commissioner Agar drew attention to the updated map of Caltrans construction projects in the Delta region that had been distributed to Commissioners prior to the meeting. The District 10 contact sheet has been updated and includes phone numbers, which are good for emergencies. Caltrans is prepared for this winter. He recommends the Quick Maps App for closed highways and stated that District 10 is ready to help with installing NHA signs in the seven-county area and assist with the Clean CA sign project. He also announced his retirement in December.

Commissioner Slater announced that the Bay-Delta Plan public comment period was extended to January 2024.

Commission Hume announced that the Delta Conservancy met at Big Break. They took a tour of Webb Tract and talked about rice farming, wetlands, recreation, and aquaculture. He asked for Commissioner Agar's assistance with signs in Sacramento County. He had a meeting on Sherman Island last week on levee roads and spoke about how roads are maintained based on a formulaic calculation that takes population into account. The Delta is at a disadvantage because of the low population.

Commissioner Steele announced that the City of Isleton is seeking a sustainability coordinator. Last winter, because of flooding, the pipes around manholes overflowed. They have reached out to FEMA several times to let them know that Isleton will likely pollute the Delta without federal assistance.

Chair Burgis asked for public comment and there was none.

6. Approval of September 21, 2023, meeting minutes

Motion: It was moved by Commissioner Steele and seconded by Commissioner Kott to approve the September 21, 2023, meeting minutes; in a voice vote; the motion passed 8-0-0 with all Commissioners present voting aye.

7. Consider approval of 2024 meeting schedule

During discussion, it was noted the March date will likely be March 7, 2024, but the Commission has the alternative to meet on March 21, 2024, if there is an unavoidable issue.

Motion: It was moved by Commissioner Hume and seconded by Commissioner Steele to approve the 2024 meeting schedule; in a voice vote, the motion passed 8-0-0 with all Commissioners present voting aye.

8. Public comment on the National Heritage Area (NHA) Management Plan Update

Program Manager Blake Roberts provided a progress update on the National Heritage Area Management Plan, including:

- A summary of important considerations and required components of the Plan.
- Outreach efforts undertaken by Commission staff and the formation of focused committees and task groups, tribal consultation, public workshops, the Delta Heritage Forum, and online surveys and interviews.

He spoke about the chapter topics and the established goals of the Plan. He also outlined a schedule of production for the Plan, which aims to make a draft of the Plan available for Commission review and public release by the end of 2023, and a final version of the Plan available for review by the National Park Service and Department of Interior by March 12, 2024.

Mr. Roberts also presented a summary of other projects underway related to the development of the NHA including sign production and placement, a marketing plan update, a passport program, a Junior Ranger program, Operation Pollination, and America 250.

Commissioner Kott asked if there are there any concerns about reviewing the summary prior to reviewing the chapters. Commissioner Hume also expressed concern about reviewing the conclusion of the document prior to reviewing other chapters. Chair Burgis commented that Mr. Roberts has been doing an amazing job and that there are items in the chapters that will likely be moved around.

Chair Burgis asked for public comment, and Congressman John Garamendi stepped forward. Congressman Garamendi reiterated that the Commission is the governing body of the National Heritage Area and suggested that they create a mechanism to create a governing board. He also spoke to the timing of the release of the document stating that releasing it in late summer 2024 will put the Delta Protection Commission

into the 2026 federal appropriation cycle. He reminded the Commission that this document will never be final.

Once a quorum was established, Chair Burgis recalled Item 8 and presented it again at the end of the meeting. Executive Director Bruce Blodgett recommended that the Commission approve the NHA Subcommittee be allowed to release the NHA management plan for public comment.

Motion: It was moved by Commissioner Bugsch and seconded by Commissioner Slater to allow the National Heritage Area Subcommittee to move the National Heritage Area Management Plan forward to the public comment stage; in a voice vote, the motion passed 8-0-0 with all Commissioners present voting aye.

9. Discuss proposed GreenWaste facility at Interstate 5 and Twin Cities Road

Executive Director Blodgett referred the Commission to the planning document and a letter from Congressman Garamendi in the agenda packet. He stated that the Commission will not take a position at this meeting, however he wanted the Department of Justice Attorney, Carlos Mejia, to talk about the role of the Commission and define ex-parte communications. Executive Director Blodgett stated that there are a lot of challenges with this project, and it could come before the Commission for action.

Commissioner Bugsch asked what action the Commission would be taking. Executive Director Blodgett answered that one other project has come before the Commission. It was the Sugar Mill project, which was not the Sugar Mill you see today. It was originally proposed as a major housing development. It came before the Commission and was turned back by the Delta Protection Commission. Attorney Mejia stated that the Commission has appellate authority over land use. If Sacramento County approves the GreenWaste project, it could be appealed to the Commission.

Chair Burgis asked for public comment and there were two public comments:

1. Diane Kinderman, a land-use and real estate attorney for Zanker GreenWaste, stated that she has spoken with Congressman Garamendi and understands his position on the project. She requested to present the project to the Commission at a future meeting.
2. Congressman Garamendi spoke at length about the importance of the Delta and Delta heritage and ecosystem. He stated that the project was a large urban industrial garbage operation and that the Commission should vote categorically No on the project. He stated that there are other locations in Sacramento County that already have the infrastructure for this project such as the Sacramento landfill.

10. Receive Executive Director Report

Executive Director Blodgett announced that Commission staff would send a survey to Commissioners to ensure that the date and time of the Commission meetings is still convenient for Commissioners so the Commission can ensure there is a quorum at every meeting.

He thanked Commissioner Agar for his service. He thanked Morris Lum for coordinating the meeting with the Sacramento Yacht Club. He said hiring efforts to fill the Commission's vacant Senior Environmental Planner position are ongoing, and that efforts to replace departed Commission Clerk Morgan Matz are finalized. He stated that the City of Pittsburgh will be helping install the NHA signs and gave an update on the Socioeconomic Indicators Report.

Chair Burgis asked for public comment and there was none.

11. Receive Delta as Place Report

Executive Director Blodgett introduced Morris Lum, a member of the Delta Protection Advisory Committee. Mr. Lum spoke to the variety of yacht clubs in the Delta and their challenges. He gave a presentation on different types of boats and their uses and other boat club types. He presented that boating has become diversified as more women and people of color are attending boating events.

Chair Burgis asked for public comment and there was none.

12. Receive Delta Protection Advisory Committee Report

Delta Protection Advisory Committee Chair Anna Swenson was on vacation, thus unable to deliver a report. Executive Director Blodgett stated that the next Delta Protection Advisory Committee meeting is December 12, 2023, and that meetings are held in Delta-focused businesses.

Chair Burgis asked for public comment and there was none.

13. Adjourn

Motion: It was moved by Commissioner Steele and seconded by Commissioner Kott to adjourn the meeting. In the discussion, the next meeting is January 18. In a voice vote, the motion passed 8-0-0 with all Commissioners present voting aye. Chair Burgis adjourned the meeting at 7:17 p.m.

Delta Protection Commission Meeting

Jan. 18, 2024

AGENDA ITEM 9: Executive Director's Report

Prepared by: Bruce Blodgett, Executive Director

Presented by: Bruce Blodgett, Executive Director

Recommended Action: Receive the Executive Director's Report

Type of Action: Receive

Commissioner Survey

DPC staff sent out a survey to all Commissioners, Alternates, and their staff on 12/20/2023 and were given 14 days to respond. There was a 50% response rate. Of the 15 responses that were received, the date and time that received the highest score was the current date and time of the meeting - the third Thursday of the month from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Contra Costa County

Diane Burgis: Third Thursday; 5 p.m.-7 p.m.

Alternate Ken Carlson: No Response

Solano County

John M. Vasquez: Third Thursday; 5 p.m.-7 p.m.

Alternate Mitch Mashburn: No Response

Yolo County

Oscar Villegas: Preferred 4 p.m.-6 p.m. or 5 p.m.-7 p.m.

Alternate Jim Provenza: No Response

Sacramento County

Pat Hume: Preferred 4 p.m.-6 p.m. or 5 p.m.-7 p.m.

Alternate Patrick Kennedy: No Response

San Joaquin County

Steven Ding: No Response

Alternate Tom Patti: Preferred Monday

Cities in Solano, Contra Costa counties

Ronald Kott: Third Thursday; 5 p.m.-7 p.m.

Cities in San Joaquin County

Alan Nakanishi: Tuesday; 5 p.m.-7 p.m.

Alternate Michael Blower: No Response

Cities in Yolo, Sacramento counties

Paul Steele: No Response

South Reclamation District

Nicholas Mussi: Preferred Tuesday - Thursday afternoons

Alternate Stephen Dean Ruiz: No Response

Central Reclamation District

Jim Paroli: Preferred Tuesday

Alternate Dante Nomellini: No Response

North Reclamation District

Tom Slater: Third Thursday; 5 p.m.-7 p.m.

Secretary of Transportation

Toks Omishakin: No Response

(Alternate vacant)

Secretary of Food and Agriculture

Karen Ross: No Response

Alternate Christine Birdsong: Third Thursday; 5 p.m.-7 p.m.

Secretary of Natural Resources

Wade Crowfoot: No Response

Alternate Nancy Vogel: Preferred Friday

State Lands Commission

Brian Bugsch: Preferred Wednesday; daytime meeting

Alternate Alexandra Borack: Preferred Thursday; daytime meeting

Ex Officio – Senate

Susan Talamantes Eggman: No Response

Alternate Lilliana Udang: No Response

Ex Officio – Assembly

Carlos Villapudua: No Response

Alternate Kristina Calderon: Preferred Wednesday; 5 p.m.-7 p.m.

Other comments that were included in the survey results are: A request for a later start time, A request for a shorter meeting time and a request to consider what works best for the public because evening meetings in various places haven't drawn much public attendance.

Delta Conveyance Project

The Department of Water Resources has published the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the Conveyance Project, and certified it as complete on December 21, 2023. Staff are analyzing the responses to comments the Commission submitted on the Draft EIR. The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) is anticipated to be published by the Corps of Engineers in the first quarter of 2024. The status of the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement is unknown.

Commission Staffing Update

Heather McClure, the new Administrative Analyst whose responsibilities include being the Commission Clerk, started on 12/26/2023.

Mike Avina, the new Senior Environmental Planner, started on 1/16/2024.

Commission Budget Update

Budget and Spending for Delta Protection Commission - FY 23/24
Budget to Actuals as of 11/30/2023

FY 23-24 Categories	Budget Amount	Total Expenses and Projections	Difference
Salaries and Wages	\$1,515,000	\$1,149,996	\$365,004
Operating Expenses	\$821,000	\$936,459	\$(115,459)
Total	\$2,336,000	\$2,086,455	\$249,545

National Heritage Area

In early December, Commission staff released the Administrative Draft NHA Management Plan for review by the NHA Management Plan Advisory Committee and Commission. The Advisory Committee met on December 12 to discuss review of the Administrative Draft Management Plan, letters of commitment and support, and images for the plan. The Commission subcommittee, which consists of Chair Burgis and Commissioner Villegas, charged with in-depth review of the Management Plan met on January 5 to discuss Chapters 2, 6, and 7.

“Welcome to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area” Signs

Staff are working with new partners in Yolo, Sacramento and San Joaquin counties helping to facilitate the installation of these signs. Yolo County Public Works successfully replaced the sign at the Jefferson Blvd/State Route 84 Delta entry point in December, for a total of three signs currently installed. Caltrans Districts 3 and 10 are working to install the

remaining signs in Sacramento and San Joaquin Counties. One sign is also currently proposed for Contra Costa County.

Commission Land Use Comments

Commission staff land use activities consisted of project reviews, as well as meetings with Sacramento County planning staff. Comment letters prepared by Commission staff from November 9, 2023, to January 11, 2024, include:

Sacramento County

Twitchell Island Wetland Enhancement and Restoration Project Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND)

Authority: Non jurisdictional project that may affect Delta resources

Zone: Primary

Comments: Support habitat restoration projects within the Delta. Urge applicant to review project for compliance with Land Use and Resource Management Plan policies. Concerned about project's conversion of existing farmland and pastureland on Twitchell Island to a non-agricultural use. The IS/MND should provide mitigation measures that adequately address these impacts.

Project Size: 185 acres

Farmland Conversion: 120 acres

Commission Communications

Since the last Commission meeting, the bi-weekly *Delta Happenings* newsletter had two of its ten most successful issues in the past year (as of Dec. 5) in terms of the number of links readers clicked on: the [Dec. 5 issue](#) highlighting the lighting of the beacon on Mt. Diablo for Pearl Harbor Day, and the [Nov. 21 issue](#) highlighting a legislative staff tour of the Delta hosted by the three Delta agencies.

Posts promoting those issues were also popular on Facebook and Instagram, as was a [video on Instagram](#) highlighting the re-installation of the damaged Delta National Heritage Area sign on Jefferson Boulevard on Dec. 7.

The most popular social media posts of 2023 were, in order of popularity: 1) Crawdad Festival photo album, 2) sharing a Sacramento County bridge operator job fair, 3) Pear Fair photo album, 4) Pacific Flyway Center groundbreaking, 5) Information Officer job posting, Flood Preparedness Week, 6) Delta Legislative staff tour, 7) NBC Bay Area in-depth segments about Isleton and Locke, 8) destruction of the NHA sign on Jefferson Boulevard, 9) a news segment on a Rio Vista strawberry farmer's tractor being stolen, and 10) a post promoting an article on our website about NHA sign installations.

Upcoming Delta Events

Jan. 24: Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy Board meets

Jan. 25: Delta Stewardship Council meets

Feb. 3: Courtland Volunteer Firemen's Association Annual Pasta Feed 2024

Feb. 10: Chinese New Year

Feb. 18: Locke Foundation celebrates Chinese New Year

Mar. 9: Stockton Chinese New Year celebration

Commission Outreach

- Toured Calaveras River parkway in Stockton.
- Participated in Selection of the 2024 Delta Leadership Program participants.
- DPAC held its meeting at Steamboat Landing Bar and Grill.
- Attended Board of Supervisors holiday party in San Joaquin County.
- Met with Representative Josh Harder's staff.
- Participated in meetings with North, Central and South Delta water agencies.
- The first class for the Delta Leadership Program on 2024 took place on January 12th in Sacramento.

Delta Protection Commission Meeting

Jan. 18, 2024

AGENDA ITEM 10: Appointments to DPAC

Prepared by: Bruce Blodgett, Executive Director

Presented by: Bruce Blodgett, Executive Director

Recommended Action: Appoint Gerry Goodie to DPAC effective immediately.

Type of Action: Vote

Background

The Delta Protection Advisory Committee (DPAC) was created by the Delta Protection Act, Public Resources Code Section 29753(a).

The Committee provides recommendations to the Delta Protection Commission on diverse interests within the Delta, including the Delta's ecosystem, water supply, socioeconomic sustainability, recreation, agriculture, flood control, environment, water resources, utility infrastructure, and other Delta issues. This fifteen-member committee is appointed by the Commission and meets regularly; members serve three-year terms and may be re-appointed. Meetings are open to the public.

The Commission voted on Sept. 21, 2023, to amend the charter of the Delta Protection Advisory Committee to add one tribal representative and one additional public member (total of 17 members).

Applications for these positions opened Oct. 24, 2023, and two people applied – no applicants for the tribal position and two for the general public position.

At this time the staff reviewed the two applicants for the public position. One of those applicants is a recent graduate of our Delta Leadership Program and a frequent attendee to our DPAC meetings, Gerry Goodie. Mr. Goodie is also the owner of Wimpy's Marina near Walnut Grove.

Recommended Action

Appoint Gerry Goodie to DPAC effective immediately. This position would be recirculated in May 2027.

Relationship to Vision 2030 (Commission strategic plan)

Education and Outreach

O.1 Ensure consistent, proactive communication between and among Delta interests and decision-makers.

1.3 Foster two-way communication throughout the Delta.

1.3.1 Actively seek input and opinions from the diverse populations of the Delta to inform decisions impacting the region.

1.3.2 Provide a forum for residents, businesses, and Delta interests to participate in decisions affecting the Delta.

1.4 Support an active and engaged Delta Protection Advisory Committee structure, including utilizing expert workgroups, to provide recommendations to the Commission.

DPAC Application: Gerry Goodie

Email and physical addresses and telephone numbers redacted for applicant privacy.

Submission Date: Oct 26, 2023, 5:10 PM

Please select the opening you're applying for: General public representative

If you do not live in the Delta, please describe the property or business you own or operate in the Delta: Wimpy's Marina Restaurant & Bar

1. Briefly describe why you wish to serve on the Delta Protection Advisory Committee.

To assist in the planning for changes as the Delta evolves.

2. Describe your qualifications and/or skills that would benefit this committee.

Deep Delta Roots and Commitment.

Always engaged and actively participating

3. Describe your background, employment, volunteer work or other efforts, as they relate to the Delta.

My wife and I have owned Wimpy's for close to six years. Active member of Walnut Grove Rotary Club

Lifelong Volunteer in the community.

4. List any committees, commissions, councils, etc. that you currently belong to.

Board Member APAPA Delta Chapter

DPAC Application: Cayle Little

Email and physical addresses and telephone numbers redacted for applicant privacy.

Submission Date: Dec 15, 2023 4:56 PM

Name: Cayle Little

Please select the opening you're applying for: General public representative

If you do not live in the Delta, please describe the property or business you own or operate in the Delta: I have lived in the Delta near Walnut Grove for the past 11 years. My children attend school here in this community at DECS in Clarksburg. I have lived almost all my life along the Sacramento River. This is my home.

1. Briefly describe why you wish to serve on the Delta Protection Advisory Committee.

Life is moving faster than ever, the way of life in the delta is also changing. There are many outside forces demanding change and alteration of this treasured region of the state. Being on the DPAC would allow a voice in this process and allow input into changes happening to my home communities. I believe my extensive background in agriculture, water, and as a scientist provides me a unique view on issues here in the Delta. Change is inevitable, however it needs to be managed, guided, and impacts considered before it moves forward.

2. Describe your qualifications and/or skills that would benefit this committee.

I have spent my entire life along the Sacramento River Ecosystem. I have also spent my entire life involved in Agriculture in Northern California. My education as a scientist is a masters degree in Horticulture and Agronomy from UC Davis specializing in plant water relations. For the past 15 years I have have been working with crop water demand (Evapotranspiration) throughout the state. My dedication to the nexus of agriculture, water, the environment and the prosperity of the local communities is strong and unique. I would like to work within the community and local framework to have a voice in the challenges the local communities within the Delta face.

3. Describe your background, employment, volunteer work or other efforts, as they relate to the Delta.

In addition to my education and agricultural experience that I have mentioned above, I worked as a restoration field manager for a company that restored extensive tracts of disturbed land within the Sacramento river and its tributaries back to native species. I currently work statewide with extensive focuses in the Delta on water use, consumption, and sustainable use of natural resources. The work I do in water demand is heavily dependent on building partnerships and teams within both public sector and private parties. This work is one of the few places that show significant benefits to urban interests,

Agriculture, and the environment. Getting all three of these interests to agree and work together for a mutual goal is no small feat.

4. List any committees, commissions, councils, etc. that you currently belong to.

Financial council for St Anthony's parish in Walnut Grove.

Active in Cub Scout Pack 83 with my son.

Active in DECS school events

Multiple positions on the board of directors of Dolphin Divers of Sacramento including multiple years as President.

Many professional working groups and teams involving water demand, consumption and measurement within my state employment.

My family and I actively recreate and choose to spend our dollars where possible within the local Delta community.

Delta Protection Commission Meeting

Jan. 18, 2024

AGENDA ITEM 11: Approve 2023 Annual Report

Prepared by: Commission Staff

Presented by: Bruce Blodgett

Recommended Action: Approve the 2023 Annual Report

Type of Action: Vote

Background

Public Resources Code section 29780 requires the Commission to report to the Governor and Legislature annually on the progress made in achieving the statutory objectives of the Delta Protection Commission. Once the content is approved, the report will be published and forwarded to the Governor and Legislature.

Recommended Action

Approve the 2023 Annual Report.

Relationship to Vision 2030 (Commission strategic plan)

Education and Outreach (Strategic Theme)

O.1 Ensure consistent, proactive communication between and among Delta interests and decision makers.

1.3 Foster two-way communication throughout the Delta.

1.3.3 Foster communication between Delta interests for improved, coordinated action.



ACTION 2023

Delta Protection Commission

Annual Report



Letter from the Chair



January 18, 2024

Honorable Gavin Newsom, Governor of California
Honorable Members, California State Legislature
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: 2023 Annual Report of the Delta Protection
Commission**

Dear Governor Newsom,

Pursuant to the provisions of Public Resources Code Section 29780, I am proud to submit the 2023 Delta Protection Commission Annual Report for your review.

It is our mission to support agriculture, recreation, cultural heritage, and natural resources in the Delta. We advance that mission by implementing our Strategic Plan (Vision 2030) while adapting to challenges and opportunities.

The Commission made great strides in 2023: It developed a management plan for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area, emphasizing protection and promotion of the Delta's vibrant culture and history; advanced the Great California Delta Trail, expanding recreational opportunities for all in the Delta; reviewed hundreds of land-use projects, ensuring growth does not come at the expense of agriculture and historic communities; and added a tribal position to the Delta Protection Advisory Committee, bringing the perspective of those who have lived in the Delta since time immemorial.

With the support of all the Commission members, it is an honor to offer you the Delta Protection Commission 2023 Annual Report.

Sincerely,
Diane Burgis
Chair

Background

The [Delta Protection Act](#) was adopted by the Legislature in 1992 and last amended in 2009. The Delta Protection Act declares that the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta is “a natural resource of statewide, national, and international significance, containing irreplaceable resources, and that it is the policy of the State to recognize, preserve, and protect those resources of the Delta for the use and enjoyment of current and future generations.”

The Delta Protection Commission was created under the 1992 Act to recognize and protect the unique cultural, recreational, natural, and agricultural resources of the Delta, and the 2009 amendments to the Act further defined it as “the appropriate agency to identify and provide recommendations to the Delta Stewardship Council on methods of preserving the Delta as an evolving place.” With this mandate, the Commission focuses on the oversight of Delta land use and resource management; levees and emergency response; the support of Delta agriculture, recreation, tourism, and local economic development; and the protection of Delta historic, cultural, and natural resources.

The 15 members of the Commission include a member of the County Board of Supervisors from each of the five Delta counties (Contra Costa, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Solano, and Yolo); three elected city council members representing cities throughout the Delta; representatives from North, Central, and South Delta reclamation districts; and representatives from the California State Transportation Agency, California Natural Resources Agency, California Department of Food and Agriculture, and California State Lands Commission. Two ex officio members represent the California State Senate and the California State Assembly.

As required by Public Resources Code Section 29780, each year the Commission submits to the Governor and the state Legislature this Annual Report, describing the progress Commission actions have made towards fulfilling the requirements of the Delta Protection Act.

2023 Actions

Land & Water

- Commission staff reviewed hundreds of local and regional land use projects for consistency with the [Land Use and Resource Management Plan \(LURMP\)](#) and submitted comment letters to various entities on land use projects, detailed later in this report.
- Commission staff participated in or monitored activities related to Department of Water Resources' (DWR) [Delta Conveyance Project](#) , including the following:
 - Reviewed and prepared comments on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (Corps) draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and submitted to the Corps on March 15, 2023.
 - Published a Draft *Survey of Cultural Resources in the Conveyance Project Area* for submittal to the Corps with the EIS comment letter.
 - Conferred with the affected counties and community representatives and participated in periodic briefings from DWR's Delta Conveyance Office staff.
 - Published a newsletter for Delta interested parties on the changes Commission staff recommended to a draft Programmatic Agreement under Section 106 of the National Heritage Preservation Act in our capacity as a consulting party to the Corps and the State Historic Preservation Office.

Regional Economy

- Commission staff initiated an update to the 2019 Socioeconomic Indicators Report in collaboration with the Delta Stewardship Council. The Socioeconomic Indicators are a benchmarking tool developed from recommendations of the Commission's Economic Sustainability Plan to gauge effects of the existing and new Delta Plan and other policies on the Delta economy. They are designed to be revisited and updated approximately on a five-year cycle.
 - Staff retained researchers with social science, statistical and GIS expertise to compile and update the indicators based on the 2020 Decennial Census, American Communities Survey, and other data. The data format has been improved to facilitate future updates, and the categories of Community Anchor Institutions and Broadband Access were added. The report will be completed in 2024.

Recreation & Tourism

- Commission staff initiated a process to prioritize new segments of the [Great California Delta Trail](#) (Delta Trail) including the following:
 - Provided letters supporting funding applications in Contra Costa County for:
 - Wayfinding signage along the Carquinez Strait Scenic Loop Trail, a convergence of three important regional trails, the Delta Trail, Bay Area Ridge Trail, and the San Francisco Bay Trail.
 - The Bay Point Enhanced Bicycle-Pedestrian Improvements Project to create a safe local access route linking the Delta Trail at the Bay Point Regional Shoreline to important neighborhood destinations such as schools, a library and parks, and the Bay Point BART Station.
 - Brought together state and local trails planners to develop potential partnerships and identify new Delta Trail segments in early planning and design stages in Sacramento County.
 - Conducted two trail site visits with state and local trails planners to identify potential next segments eligible for Delta Trail designation or needing grant support for planning, design, and construction.
- Commission staff continued to lead projects related to the [Delta Tourism Awareness 5-Year Marketing Plan](#), including the following:
 - Implemented the “Welcome to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area” sign project. Signs in Yolo and Sacramento counties have been installed, marking the Delta National Heritage Area (NHA) boundary on Interstate 80, State Route 84, and at the Hood Franklin Road offramp from Interstate 5.
 - Promoted Delta community events in the *Delta Happenings* newsletter.

Heritage

- Commission staff completed the Administrative Draft Management Plan (Management Plan) for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area, a process that involved the following:
 - Nine meetings with the [Delta NHA Management Plan Advisory Committee](#) and three meetings with the Organization and Resource Stewardship task groups.
 - Presentations to state agencies and local officials, including the Delta Stewardship Council and Yolo County Board of Supervisors, about potential partnerships with the NHA.

- Meetings with tribal representatives as part of a tribal consultation process for the Management Plan.
- Meetings with key stakeholders about the Management Plan.
- Work with Point Heritage Development Consulting to develop and release the Administrative Draft Management Plan for staff, Commission, and Delta NHA Management Plan Advisory Committee meeting review.
- Commission staff and Delta Leadership Program participants initiated planning efforts to participate in the National Park Service’s Junior Ranger program.

Outreach & Education

Commission staff filled a vacant Information Officer I position, and the new hire has expanded communications efforts, including the following:

- Created a [news section](#) of the website containing original content, such as articles and news releases, and links to newsletters – a clearinghouse of information that is now easily accessible.
- Worked with California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) Website Support and Commission staff to improve website user experience and worked with a contractor to update the site and PDF documents contained in it to comply with Section 508 of the U.S. Rehabilitation Act and other state laws and policies governing accessibility.
- Expanded the amount of original content in regular e-newsletters – the bi-weekly *Delta Happenings* and bi-monthly *Delta Heritage Courier* – to increase engagement.
- Photographed events in the Delta to build a library of images that capture the cultural vibrance of this unique region.
- Collaborated with CNRA on one [Secretary Speaker Series](#) event about the Delta (“Where the Rivers Meet,” Oct. 31) and two Best Practices sessions for communications professionals throughout the Agency.
- Created and improved internal templates that enhance brand recognition for the Delta Protection Commission, such as logoed background screens for virtual meetings, letterhead, and email signatures.
- Created a social media and e-newsletter campaign for Delta Flood Preparedness Week (Oct. 21-28), part of [California Flood Preparedness Week](#), and raised awareness of the Commission’s [deltafloodready.com](#) website, generating a 300% increase in website traffic over the previous year.

Leadership & Development

- Expanded representation on the Delta Protection Advisory Committee by adding two seats - one for a member of the general public and one for a member or representative of a tribe with historic connections to the Delta.
- Reorganized the Administration and Finance division, including the following:
 - Identified the need for a Public Information Officer; reclassified a vacant position and filled it.
 - Identified the need for a Commission clerk role to centralize management of the Commission meetings and two advisory committees, reclassified a vacant position, and filled it.
 - Added a second authorized signatory.
- Filled the vacant Senior Environmental Planner position.
- Engaged an organizational assessment consultant to identify opportunities for improvement and program expansion.
- Prepared an informational binder for Commission members briefing them on the history of the Commission, its legislative mandates, and its key initiatives.
- Added a Delta as Place recurring presentation at Commission meetings to broaden Commission and public awareness of notable Delta institutions, issues, and culture.
- Received a 2023 Government Innovation Award from the American Society of Public Administration's Sacramento Chapter for the Delta Leadership Program, a joint program of the Delta Protection Commission and the Delta Leadership Foundation.

Land Use Project Comment Letters

Multi-County

Delta Conveyance Project

Preferred project proposes to construct a 45-mile-long, 150-foot-deep, 6,000-cubic-feet-per-second tunnel and associated permanent and semi-permanent above-ground features such as tunnel launch and retrieval sites, maintenance shafts, tunnel muck stockpiles, access roads, and concrete manufacturing facilities, running roughly parallel to and west of Interstate 5 to a site south of the Byron Highway and Clifton Court Forebay adjacent to Bethany Reservoir. Delta project locations directly or indirectly impacted include portions of Yolo, Sacramento, San Joaquin, and Contra Costa Counties. The project requires environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and numerous permits from state and federal agencies, as well as Certification of Consistency with the Delta Plan to the Delta Stewardship Council.

Authority: Jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional project that may affect Delta resources

Zone: Primary and Secondary

Comments: Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS): Federal NEPA lead agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers published the DEIS in December 2022. The Commission submitted timely comments in March 2023 requesting consideration of no-project alternative and expressing objections to the scope of the area of impact considered. Together with the comment letter, the Commission also submitted a draft Summary of Cultural Resources potentially affected by the Conveyance project.

Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR): The lead agency Department of Water Resources released the FEIR on December 8, 2023. Commission staff are reviewing the document and responses to all comments.

Project Size: Preferred project is a 45-mile-long project tunnel alignment in a construction corridor ranging from 3 to 5 miles wide, including above-ground facilities, beginning in Hood, Sacramento County, passing through San Joaquin and Contra Costa counties, and ending at Bethany Reservoir in Alameda County.

Farmland Conversion: None at this time, but the preferred alignment will eventually result in loss of thousands of acres of farmland.

Delta Levee Investment Strategy (DLIS) Rulemaking Process

Authority: Non-jurisdictional project that may affect Delta resources

Zone: Delta-wide

Comments: Support modifications to the definition of levee improvements. Discuss and address concerns about DLIS potentially impacting agencies' eligibility to receive Federal Emergency Management Agency funding. Meet with stakeholders and tour the Delta levee system.

Project Size: Delta-wide

Farmland Conversion: None

Sacramento County

Isleton Wastewater Treatment System Improvement Project Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND)

Authority: Jurisdictional

Zone: Primary

Comments: Project will not have an impact on Primary Zone resources and is consistent with the Land Use and Resources Management Plan. The Commission supports the project.

Project Size: Improvements at Wastewater Treatment Facility

Farmland Conversion: None

Contra Costa County

Wildhorse Road Two Parcel Minor Subdivision MND

Authority: Jurisdictional

Zone: Primary

Comments: Minimum parcel size of five acres for the General Agricultural Zoning District is not sufficient to support agricultural land use. The Commission encourages County staff to review and increase the minimum parcel sizes for agricultural zoning districts as part of the General Plan update.

Project Size: 10 acres

Farmland Conversion: None

San Joaquin County

Delta Smelt Preservation Project

Authority: Jurisdictional

Zone: Primary

Comments: Commission staff believe that the Project will have a potentially significant impact on agricultural resources by converting Prime Farmland on Bouldin Island to other uses. Potential construction-related transportation impacts along State Route 12. Commission staff encourage the project proponent to analyze cumulative impacts of restoration projects in the Primary Zone. A Draft Environmental Impact Report should be prepared for the project.

Project Size: 145 acres

Farmland Conversion: Temporary, potentially permanent

Solano County

Little Egbert Tract Multi-Benefit Project Notice of Preparation

Authority: Jurisdictional

Zone: Primary

Comments: The Commission is supportive of habitat restoration projects within the Delta, particularly those that provide increased flood protection and recreational opportunities. We urge review of the project for compliance with Land Use and Resource Management Plan policies. We have several concerns that should be addressed in the Draft EIR, including the conversion of existing farmland to non-agricultural uses, hydrological impacts on neighboring properties and for the region, and the potential impact of increased wildlife attractants on aircraft flight operations at the Rio Vista Airport and Travis Air Force Base.

Project Size: Approximately 3,000 acres

Farmland Conversion: Not available

Yolo County

Green Wave, Inc. & Green Wave Farms Cannabis Use Permit

Authority: Jurisdictional

Zone: Primary

Comments: The Commission seeks to promote and facilitate agriculture and agriculturally supporting commercial and industrial uses within the Delta. Community concerns should be addressed along with overall compliance with Cannabis Land Use Ordinance.

Project Size: 4 acres of canopy and two 6,000-square-foot buildings

Farmland Conversion: None

2023 Membership

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Supervisor, Contra Costa County

John Vasquez, Vice Chair

Supervisor, Solano County

Oscar Villegas

Supervisor, Yolo County

Patrick Hume

Supervisor, Sacramento County

Steven Ding

Supervisor, San Joaquin County

Ron Kott

Mayor, City of Rio Vista

Paul Steele

Councilmember, City of Isleton

Alan Nakanishi

Councilmember, City of Lodi

James Paroli

Representative, Central Delta Reclamation Districts

Tom Slater

Representative, North Delta Reclamation Districts

Nick Mussi

Representative, South Delta Reclamation Districts

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Delta Protection Commission Meeting

January 18, 2024

AGENDA ITEM 12: Delta Socioeconomic Indicators Update

Prepared by: Virginia Gardiner, Program Manager

Presented by: Virginia Gardiner, Program Manager and Zachary Houghton, Graduate Student Assistant

Recommended Action: Receive presentation and provide direction for outreach to Delta communities.

Type of Action: Discussion

Background

Public Resources Code §29759 requires the Delta Protection Commission (Commission) to prepare an Economic Sustainability Plan (ESP), to inform and provide recommendations for Delta Stewardship Council (Council) policies regarding socioeconomic sustainability of the Delta region. Adopted in 2012, the ESP provided the basis for the Commission’s “Proposal to Protect, Enhance, and Sustain the Unique Cultural, Historical, Recreational, Agricultural and Economic Values of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta as an Evolving Place” submitted to the Council the same year. The Proposal included policies and recommendations to be incorporated into the Delta Plan. Among these, Proposal 8.3 called for maintaining an “Economic Sustainability Scoreboard” to track progress. Later that year, the Council accepted this proposal, and corresponding performance measures were subsequently developed for Delta Plan Chapter 5, to “Protect and Enhance the Unique Cultural, Recreational, Natural Resource, and Agricultural Values of the California Delta as an Evolving Place.”

The Commission initiated the “Delta Socioeconomic Indicators Project” in June 2016, with the goal of compiling a regional dataset that would describe the overall economic and social well-being of the Delta region, to help Delta leaders and communities take stock of resources and improve quality of life. The set of indicators was developed through an iterative process with policymakers and community stakeholders of the Delta region and discussed with the Commission at its November 2016 meeting. The findings were presented to the Commission at its January 2018 meeting and published in 2019 as the *Socioeconomic Indicators Report: The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta*¹. Data is compiled for the Legal Delta separated, when possible, by Primary and Secondary Zones. Data sources for the indicators include the Decennial Census, the American Communities Survey and other national, statewide, and regional statistics that are updated regularly and

can be available for use in future reports. The indicators include the following categories: Jobs and the Economy, Working Lands, Housing and Roads, Education, and Demographics. Staff have also been working to determine if an appropriate repeatable broadband indicator can be added. These indicators combine measures of physical and human capital, revealing characteristics particular to the Delta as a whole, along with social characteristics particular to the specific communities.

Current Status

The data for this update was collected beginning August 2023 and has been compiled into a report format, with final reviews and corrections underway. The analysis replicates the methodology and design of the previous report with some technical improvements to facilitate future updates. The indicators are presented in both narrative and graphic forms that highlight trends across the Delta region. Staff will present results at the meeting.

Next Steps

Staff are finalizing the report for posting on the Commission’s website alongside the 2019 publication *Socioeconomic Indicators Report: The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta*. Following completion of the report, staff propose to develop outreach materials including infographics and social media for presentation and distribution, depending on budget and staffing, in Spring 2024. Staff are also proposing to make the anonymized data publicly available for additional research on a separate website. Finally, Commission staff are investigating coordinating presentation of the data in outreach efforts with the results of the Council’s recently published Delta Resident Survey.

Recommended Action

Receive presentation and provide direction for outreach to Delta communities.

Relationship to Vision 2030 (Commission strategic plan)

Regional Economy (Strategic Theme)

Objective E.3 Facilitate regional economic development projects using the Delta Investment Fund and other funding sources.

3.1 Pursue the development of Delta regional economy studies and trend reports to assist with decision-making and funding opportunities.

ⁱ Visser, M.A.; Brinkley, C; Zlotnicki, J. (2018)

Delta Protection Commission Meeting

Jan. 18, 2024

AGENDA ITEM 13: National Heritage Area Management Plan Update

Prepared by: Blake Roberts

Presented by: Blake Roberts

Recommended Action: Receive report on National Heritage Area Management Plan

Type of Action: Receive

Background

The Delta Reform Act of 2009 and Delta Plan Recommendation DP R1 called on the Delta Protection Commission (Commission) to pursue federal designation of the Delta as a National Heritage Area (Water Code Section 85301(b)(1)). Legislation establishing the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area (NHA) and designating the Commission as the local coordinating entity was signed into law on March 12, 2019.

The Commission's first primary task is to prepare and receive approval from the Secretary of Interior for a Management Plan. The Congressional deadline for submitting the Management Plan is March 12, 2024, five years after designation. The Management Plan will outline the significance and purpose of the NHA, as well as the activities that the Commission and a regional network of partners will undertake over the next ten to fifteen years. The Commission has worked with the NHA Management Plan Advisory Committee (NHA Advisory Committee) and four advisory task groups, Point Heritage Development Consulting, LLC (PointHDC), and California State Parks to prepare major elements of the plan.

Next Steps

Commission staff and the PointHDC team released the administrative draft management plan for Commission and NHA Advisory Committee review in December 2023. A Commission subcommittee, consisting of Chair Burgis and Commissioner Villegas, conducted two meetings in November and January to discuss plan chapters. National Park Service staff have also been conducting an initial review of the plan. The management plan includes the following chapters:

1. Introduction
2. Understanding and Appreciating California's Delta (Interpretation)

3. Stewarding the Delta's Resources
4. Supporting Tourism and Economic Development
5. Connecting and Supporting the Partnership Network
6. Establishing Sustainable Governance
7. Implementation, Evaluation, and Conclusion

We are currently incorporating feedback from the NHA Advisory Committee, Commission subcommittee, and National Park Service into the public review draft management plan.

As part of preparation of the plan, we are:

- Describing how the plan goals, objectives, and strategies will meet Congressional requirements.
- Developing an implementation plan and five-year action plan that identifies the role for the NHA, timeline, funding sources, and opportunities to collaborate for each strategy.
- Securing letters of commitment and support from partners and supporters.

Commission staff will present the contents of the draft management plan.

Recommended Action

Receive report on National Heritage Area Management Plan

Relationship to Vision 2030 (Commission strategic plan)

Delta Heritage (Strategic Theme)

H.2 Protect and promote the tribal, cultural, and historical resources of the Delta.

2.1 Implement the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area.