



PUBLIC NOTICE AND MEETING AGENDA

Delta Protection Commission

Thursday, March 7, 2024, 5-7 p.m. (end time is approximate)
The Willow Ballroom and Event Center
10724 CA-160
Hood, CA 95639

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 January 18, 2024, Meeting Minutes (page 3)

Regular Agenda

5. Report on Delta Stewardship Council Activities – Chair Diane Burgis
6. Delta as Place Presentation – Mike Campbell
7. Report on Delta Protection Advisory Committee (DPAC) Activities – Anna Swenson (DPAC Chair)
8. Executive Director's Report – Bruce Blodgett, Executive Director (page 8)
9. Delta Sustainable Insurance Model – Kathleen Schaefer (page 11)
10. Approval of the National Heritage Area Management Plan – Blake Roberts (page 13)
11. Appointments to Delta Protection Advisory Committee (DPAC) – Bruce Blodgett, Executive Director
12. Commissioner Comments/Announcements
13. 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 or not 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 March 6, 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 Meeting Minutes

Delta Protection Commission

Thursday, January 18, 2024, 5 p.m.
University Plaza Waterfront Hotel, 110 West Fremont Street, Stockton, CA 95202

Administrative Agenda

1. Call to order and Flag Salute

Vice Chair Vasquez called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m. and led the meeting participants in a flag salute.

2. Welcome and Roll Call

Commission Staff Member Debra Waltman called the roll. Present at roll call: Vice Chair Vasquez, Commissioners Villegas, Kott, Steele, Slater, Paroli, Eddie (for Ross), and Vogel (for Crowfoot), Udang (for Eggman) and Steve Sievers (for Villapudua). Commissioner Bugsch (for Lucchesi) arrived at 5:16pm. Chair Burgis, Commissioners Hume, Ding, Nakanishi, Mussi and Omishakin were absent with no alternate present. At this time, we did have a quorum present.

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

Vice Chair Vasquez asked for public comment and there was one:

Kathleen Shaefer, a PhD candidate from UC Davis, requested support with a project she is currently working on for the City of Isleton. The Jumpstart Grant was awarded from the CA Office of Emergency Services (OES) to fund a full-time grant writer for the implementation of a community-based flood insurance pilot program. In effect, this position would work toward reducing the cost of flood insurance for the citizens of Isleton. She asked for a letter of support from the Commission as she tries to work with the OES to reallocate the funding of this grant. Commissioner Steele offered to meet with her after the meeting.

Consent Agenda

4. Approval of November 16, 2023, Meeting Minutes

Motion: It was moved by Vice Chair Kott and seconded by Commissioner Villegas to approve the November 16, 2023, meeting minutes; in a voice vote, the motion passed 9-0-0 with all Commissioners present voting aye.

Regular Agenda

5. Report on Delta Stewardship Council Activities

Chair Burgis was not present, thus unable to deliver a report. Executive Director Blodgett stated that the Delta Stewardship Council will be meeting next week.

6. Elect Chair and Vice Chair for 2024

Executive Director Blodgett recommended a motion to reelect Chair Burgis and Vice Chair Vasquez for their second year.

Motion: It was moved by Commissioner Villegas and seconded by Commissioner Kott to reelect both Chair and Vice Chair; in a voice vote, the motion passed 9-0-0 with all Commissioners present voting aye.

7. Delta as Place Presentation

Dante Nomellini, Sr., Secretary and Council of the Central Delta Water Agency, delivered a presentation on the history of Water Rights in the Delta in which he detailed the actions of the Department of Water Resources and the State Water Resources Board in reference to the Delta's permanent and surplus water supplies. He emphasized the importance of the Water Code Section 11460 as a foundation for all current and future policy affecting the Delta but commented that it is often circumvented by federal and state agencies, which is a concern for the present Delta Conveyance Project. He referenced reports from official sources such as the Bureau of Reclamation, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the US Army Corps of Engineers. He highlighted alternatives to the Conveyance project to be ongoing levee improvements and desalination efforts.

Vice Chair Vasquez asked for public comment and there was none.

8. Report on Delta Protection Advisory Committee (DPAC) Activities

DPAC Chair Anna Swenson reported that a variety of topics had been discussed at the December 18 DPAC meeting, including updates on the Delta Conveyance Project EIR, the National Heritage Area Management Plan, and the levee subvention funding crisis impacting the reclamation districts. She announced the next DPAC meeting would be on February 6, 5:30 p.m. at the Stockton Sailing Club, which will have an update on the Delta Cross Channel.

Vice Chair Vasquez asked for public comment and there was none.

9. Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Blodgett brought up highlights of his report beginning with the Delta Conveyance Project where he thanked all the lawyers filing lawsuits this week and stated the deadline to file is January 19.

He then introduced the two new staff members of the Delta Protection Commission: Commission Clerk Heather McClure and Senior Environmental Planner Mike Avina.

Executive Director Blodgett touched on the “Welcome to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area” signs that had gone up in Sacramento. One on Jefferson Blvd. is back up after being damaged and the Twin Cities Road signs are now in the process of going up. The San Joaquin County signs are currently held up while Caltrans makes adjustments to adhere to their local county specs.

He expressed the tremendous job Information Officer Holly Heyser, has done at improving Commission communications through social media posts and the *Delta Happenings* newsletter, as just two examples. He encouraged anyone needing regional events promoted to contact the office.

Vice Chair Vasquez asked for public comment and there was none.

10. Appointments to Delta Protection Advisory Committee

Executive Director Blodgett drew attention to the application for Gerry Goodie on page 13 in the agenda packet, mentioning he was a recent Delta Leadership Program graduate. He recommended Goodie be appointed to the Delta Protection Advisory Committee (DPAC) for the public position. He stated that there were no applicants for the tribal slot yet but there is ongoing outreach.

Commissioner Steele expressed that Goodie was a good candidate whom he has known for a long time and supports his appointment.

Chair Vasquez asked for public comment and there was none.

Motion: It was moved by Commissioner Steele and seconded by Commissioner Kott to appoint Gerry Goodie to DPAC; in a voice vote, the motion passed 9-0-0 with all Commissioners present voting aye.

11. Approve 2023 Annual Report

Executive Director Blodgett referred the Commission to page 19 in the agenda packet regarding the Action 2023 Annual Report which he reminded is an annual requirement pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 29780. It includes the letter from Chair Burgis, a brief background of the Commission, and an overview of programs and events from the past year in the areas of: Land & Water, Regional Economy, Recreation & Tourism, Heritage, Outreach & Education, and Leadership & Development. Some of the many items include working towards new segments for The Great Delta Trail, various

outreach efforts for Delta Flood Preparedness Week, and receiving a 2023 Government Innovation Award from the American Society of Public Administration's Sacramento Chapter for the Delta Leadership Program. Finally, the Report touches on other projects coming forward in the following year, which includes the Delta Conveyance Project and the Isleton Wastewater Treatment System Improvement Project.

He recommended approving the Annual Report.

Vice Chair Vasquez asked for public comment and there was none.

Motion: It was moved by Commissioner Kott and seconded by Commissioner Villegas to approve the Annual Report; in a voice vote, the motion passed 8-0-0 with all Commissioners present voting aye. (The vote took place prior to the arrival of Commissioner Bugsch.)

12. Delta Socioeconomic Indicators Update

Program Manager Virginia Gardiner gave a report on the 2023-initiated update on the Socioeconomic Indicators for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, accompanied by Zach Houghton, UC Davis student assistant. After reviewing the original indicators and need for studying the progress of economic and social well-being in the Delta, Ms. Gardiner introduced the new items of the report's approach: broadband internet, alternate sources of performance measures, and the "R" programming language. Mr. Houghton went over key points of data changes such as population, employment rates and income, land use, housing and education. They discussed overall challenges with the study and spoke at length on broadband and the current federal funding projects and issues surrounding it.

Commissioner Villegas commented on broadband being such a foundational component, but with fiber being so expensive it would be advantageous to explore options of fiber optics.

Commissioner Eddie encouraged a regional data collection of county agricultural reports that may be helpful for the study.

Commissioner Slater offered to use DWR Land Use GIS data to produce statistics and make simple comparisons that could be valuable for the study.

Vice Chair Vasquez asked for public comment and there was none.

13. National Heritage Area Management Plan Update

Program Manager Blake Roberts provided a progress update on the National Heritage Area Management Plan. He covered the seven chapters that make up the management plan and followed with heavy encouragement for the commission members to secure letters of commitment and support. An administrative draft of the full management

plan was made available in December 2023 for NHA Advisory Committee review. The National Park Service has been engaged since the beginning of the process and has been reviewing each draft chapter. He reported they are trying to finish edits in order to release the document for public comment in February for a 30-day period. There will be two public workshops held during this time. Once the Commission approves the Plan it will be submitted to the Secretary of Interior in Spring 2024 with the goal of having as minimal feedback as possible. From there it may take them several months to review it and let us know any changes to be made before we can finalize it.

Commissioner Vogel asked when Commission comments would be most valuable, and Mr. Roberts responded saying sooner would always be better.

Commissioner Villegas thanked Mr. Roberts and staff for the tremendous amount of work done on the administrative draft. He then suggested it may be beneficial to explore a non-profit entity for partnership.

Vice Chair Vasquez asked for public comment and there was none.

14. Commissioner Comments/Announcements

Commissioner Vogel announced that the Governor proposed \$33 million for flood protection in the Delta.

Executive Director Blodgett announced the next meeting in Hood at the Willow Ballroom for March.

Commissioner Steele announced needing urgent help with sewer repair in Isleton, or the Delta will end up polluted come flood season this year.

Vice Chair Vasquez asked for public comment and there was none.

15. Adjourn

Vice Chair Vasquez adjourned the meeting at 7:11 p.m.

Delta Protection Commission Meeting

March 7, 2024

AGENDA ITEM 8: 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

Commission Budget Update

Budget and Spending for Delta Protection Commission - FY 23/24
Budget to Actuals as of 1/31/2024

FY 23-24 Categories	Budget Amount	Total Expenses and Projections	Difference
Salaries and Wages	\$1,515,000	\$1,153,343	\$361,657
Operating Expenses	\$821,000	\$842,283	\$(21,283)
Total	\$2,336,000	\$1,995,626	\$340,374

National Heritage Area

Commission staff released the public review draft management plan for public review on February 5, 2024. Regional and nationwide National Park Service staff are conducting a concurrent review of the plan. The deadline for submitting comments on the management plan is 5 p.m. on Wednesday, March 6, 2024. There were two in-person meetings on Wednesday, February 21 in Walnut Grove and Thursday, February 22 in Antioch, a meeting specifically for tribal representatives on Monday, February 26, and a virtual meeting on Wednesday, February 28. Commission staff are continuing to conduct outreach to tribes as part of our tribal consultation process.

Great California Delta Trail

A partnership between the Commission, West Sacramento, Yolo County and the Yolo County Transportation District to be known as the Yolo-Delta Trail Coalition is preparing an application for grant funding for approximately 6.6 miles of a public Class I multi-use recreation trail and bicycle commuting corridor extending between the Barge Canal Trail in central West Sacramento at Locks Drive to Clarksburg. The alignment follows the former Yolo Shortline Railroad, part of Sacramento Northern Railroad right-of-way purchased by the City in 2005 from Sierra Northern Railway. Both existing and proposed segments of the

trail are identified in the Commission’s Great California Delta Trail Master Plan, as well as active transportation plans prepared by the City, County, and the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG). The application will be submitted by February 29, and if successful, the project would engage adjacent property owners, business owners, the Clarksburg community as well as local tribal governments in developing the trail as well as a variety of interpretive, educational and marketing elements to be included. The trail would be constructed by 2029-2030.

Commission Land Use Comments

Commission staff land use activities consisted of project reviews and monitoring for all counties, as well as outreach with various planning staff. No comment letters were warranted from January 11, 2024, to February 29, 2024.

Commission Communications

Delta Happenings: Issues of *Delta Happenings* went out to subscribers and social media on January 16, January 30 and February 27. Statistics for February 27 were not available as of this writing, but the January 16 and 30 newsletters enjoyed the third and fourth highest rates in the past year of readers clicking on links for more information.

- January 16: The news items about the Delta Leadership Program kicking off and the passing of former Commission Member Larry Ruhstaller were the most clicked-on.
- January 30: The news item about the appointment of a Delta Leadership Program alumna as Deputy Secretary of Biodiversity and Habitat at the California Natural Resources Agency was the most clicked-on.

All e-newsletters can be accessed via delta.ca.gov/newsletters/.

Website news stories: We posted short articles on the Delta Leadership Program kicking off (January 12), the Commission’s appointment of Gerry Goodie to DPAC (January 18), and the release of the Delta National Heritage Area Management Plan for public comment (February 5).

Articles are available at delta.ca.gov/newslist/.

Social media:

- The most viewed, shared, and liked post in the past two months on both Facebook and Instagram was the announcement of Gerry Goodie’s appointment to DPAC.
- An announcement about the January/February issue of the *Delta Heritage Courier* commanded the second-highest reach and likes, and the NHA Management Plan comment period announcement was the second-most shared.

NHA Management Plan: The National Heritage Area Management Plan comment period was announced on February 5, 2024. It was posted on the website, sent to all e-newsletter subscribers and our media distribution list, and shared on all social media accounts.

Upcoming Delta Events

Mar. 9: Stockton Chinese New Year celebration

March 30: Eggstravaganza in Antioch

April 12: 38th Annual San Joaquin Asparagus Festival

April 13: Art in the Park in Oakley

April 13: Mad Hatter's Tea Party at Rio Vista Museum

May 4: Oakley 25th Anniversary Party

Kathleen Schaefer, P.E., CFM
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February 22, 2024

California Delta Protection Commission
980 9th Street, Suite 1500
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Members of the California Delta Protection Commission,

I am writing to you as a Ph.D. student at UC Davis with a keen interest in community resilience and sustainable development within the California Delta region. I am reaching out to request the Commission work with the City of Isleton and the Legacy Communities Geologic Hazard Assessment District (GHAD) to assist in funding the operating expenses of the Legacy Communities Geologic Hazard Assessment District (GHAD).

As you may be aware, the Legacy Communities GHAD was established as part of a collaborative initiative by the Department of Insurance and the Department of Water Resources aimed at exploring alternatives to the National Flood Insurance Program and implementing community-based flood insurance. This initiative holds significant promise in bolstering the resilience of communities within the California Delta against the increasing risks posed by flooding events.

However, sustaining the operations of the Legacy Communities GHAD requires ongoing financial support to cover various expenses such as administrative costs, outreach efforts, data collection, and analysis, among others. The City of Isleton has supported the efforts but increasingly finds its finances strained with recent wastewater treatment pond failure. As a graduate student actively engaged in community resilience and flood risk management research, I recognize the critical importance of ensuring the continuity of such initiatives to safeguard the well-being of Delta communities and their residents.

I believe that investing in the Legacy Communities GHAD aligns with the Commission's mandate to protect and enhance the unique cultural, agricultural, recreational, and scenic values of the California Delta while ensuring its long-term sustainability. By providing financial support to the GHAD, the Commission can demonstrate its commitment to fostering innovative approaches to addressing the complex challenges posed by climate change and increasing flood risks in the region.

Furthermore, I am confident that my academic background and research interests can contribute meaningfully to the objectives of the Legacy Communities GHAD. I am eager to collaborate with stakeholders and contribute my expertise to support the GHAD's efforts in developing effective flood insurance solutions tailored to the needs of Delta communities.

In conclusion, I respectfully request the California Delta Protection Commission's consideration of providing financial support to the Legacy Communities GHAD. I am available to provide any additional information or answer any questions you may have regarding this request.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to the opportunity to discuss this further and explore potential collaboration.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Schaefer

Delta Protection Commission Meeting

March 7, 2024

AGENDA ITEM 10: Approval of National Heritage Area Management Plan

Prepared by: Blake Roberts

Presented by: Blake Roberts

Recommended Action: Approval of National Heritage Area Management Plan

Type of Action: Vote

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.

Release of the Public Review Draft Management Plan

Commission staff released the public review draft management plan for public review on February 5, 2024. Regional and nationwide National Park Service staff are conducting a concurrent review of the plan. The management plan includes an introduction and six chapters:

- **Introduction** – Background on the NHA and its legislative foundation, the planning process, key partners, and foundational elements such as mission, vision, goals, significance, and themes.

- **Chapter 1, Understanding and Appreciating California’s Delta (Interpretation)** – The interpretive thematic framework, the context for interpretation and education, existing interpretation in the NHA, target audiences, and objectives and strategies for interpretation.
- **Chapter 2, Stewarding the Delta’s Resources** – Significant resources in the Delta, and challenges, opportunities, and strategies for resource stewardship.
- **Chapter 3: Supporting Tourism and Economic Development** – Current trends in sustainable tourism, tourism in the NHA, and challenges, opportunities, objectives, and strategies for heritage development and tourism
- **Chapter 4: Connecting and Supporting the Partnership Network** – Objectives and strategies for building and maintaining the network, enhancing partners' capacity, and funding projects.
- **Chapter 5: Establishing Sustainable Governance** –The Commission as local coordinating entity, potential opportunities for governance in the future, the mission and vision, recommendations for management and governance structure, and a 5-year financial projection.
- **Chapter 6: Implementation, Evaluation, and Conclusion** – An overview of the implementation plan through the 15-year authorization period (2034), the roles of the NHA in executing strategies, and evaluative measures for documenting success.

Outreach During Public Comment Period

The deadline for submitting comments on the management plan is 5 p.m. on Wednesday, March 6, 2024. There were two in-person meetings on Wednesday, February 21 in Walnut Grove and Thursday, February 22 in Antioch, a meeting specifically for tribal representatives on Monday, February 26, and a virtual meeting on Wednesday, February 28. Commission staff are continuing to conduct outreach to tribes as part of our tribal consultation process.

Next Steps

Commissions staff will provide the Commission with proposed revisions to the management plan based on public comments immediately before the Commission meeting. If the Commission approves the management plan, Commission staff will prepare a final draft for submission to National Park Service for Secretary of the Interior review by Tuesday, March 12, 2024. An additional appendix containing letters of commitment and support from partners and supporters will be in the final draft of the management plan.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

The California State Legislature provides an exemption from Environmental Impact Reports or Negative Declarations for planning studies for possible future actions that have not been approved, adopted, or funded (CEQA Guidelines Section 15262). As the CEQA lead agency, the Commission will prepare a Notice of Exemption for this management plan. If, or when, future projects of the NHA are developed that have a direct effect on cultural or natural resources in the region, the entity responsible for the individual project will review the project through appropriate pathways, such as the CEQA processes as applicable.

Recommended Action

Approve the National Heritage Area Management Plan and Commission staff filing of a CEQA Notice of Exemption with the State Clearinghouse.

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.*