



PUBLIC NOTICE AND MEETING AGENDA **Delta Protection Advisory Committee**

Tuesday, June 3, 2025, 5:30 p.m.
Veterans Memorial Hall
610 Francis Way, Rio Vista, CA 94571

Agenda

1. Call to Order/Flag Salute – Anna Swenson, DPAC Chair
2. Welcome and Roll Call
3. Welcome New Members Jerred Dixon and Jeffrey Twitchell
4. Public Comment – An opportunity for members of the public to address the Committee regarding items not on the agenda.
5. Approval of April 1, 2025, Meeting Minutes ([p. 3](#))
6. Election of Chair and Vice Chair 2025/2026 – The Committee
7. Updated DPAC Charter and DPC Six-month Priorities– Dan Ray ([p. 6](#))
8. Report on Impacts of Habitat, Flood Control, and Ecosystem Projects on Agricultural Land – Dan Ray ([p. 13](#))
9. Golden Mussel Presentation – Cesar Blanco, USFWS Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator, Pacific Southwest Regional Office
10. Delta Waterways Cleanup – The Committee
11. Member Announcements and Next Meeting
12. Adjourn

The agenda items listed above may be considered in a different order at the Committee meeting, subject to the discretion of the Chair. At the discretion of the Committee, all items appearing on this agenda, whether or not expressly listed for action, may be deliberated upon and may be subject to action. The Committee welcomes and encourages

participation in its meetings. The Committee 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.

Comments submitted to submit@delta.ca.gov by noon on June 2, 2025, 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 Advisory Committee Members

Chair Anna Swenson and **Katherine Wiley** (Delta General Public Gerry Goodie Memorial Seat) | **Vice Chair Russ Ryan** (Delta Water Exporter) | **Arron Pellarin** and **Emily Pappalardo** (Delta Business) | **Craig Watanabe** (Delta Agriculture) | **Todd Bruce** and **Morris Lum** (Delta Recreation) | **Edward Hard** and **Erin Chappell** (State Agency) | **Jeffrey Twitchell** (Delta Flood Entity) | **Mariah Looney** (Delta Organization) | **Jerred Dixon** (Delta Conservation/Habitat Non-governmental Organization) | **Sam Garcia** (Delta Utility/Infrastructure) | **Douglas Hsia** (Delta Cultural Preservation) | **Steven Hutchason** (Delta Tribe).

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS: Representatives of the California Department of Water Resources, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Delta Stewardship Council, and Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy.

Meeting Minutes (Draft)
Delta Protection Advisory Committee

Tuesday, April 1, 2025, 5:30 p.m.
Hood Supply Co
10761 River Road, Courtland, CA 95639

1. Call to Order/Flag Salute – Anna Swenson, DPAC Chair

Chair Swenson called the meeting to order at 5:42 p.m.

2. Welcome and Roll Call

A quorum was present with members Anna Swenson, Russ Ryan, Katherine Wiley, Aaron Pellarin, Craig Watanabe, Gary Mello, Mariah Looney, Jim Cox, Douglas Hsia, Steven Hutchason, and Ex Officio Heather Swinney and Cambell Ingram.

Chair Swenson introduced the new Interim Executive Director Dan Ray. This was followed by a moment of silence in honor of Clarksburg community member Mark Wilson, who passed away the previous day.

3. Public Comment – An opportunity for members of the public to address the Committee regarding items not on the agenda

Chair Swenson asked for comments from members of the public and there were none.

4. Approval of February 11, 2025, Meeting Minutes

Member Wiley moved, and Member Hsia seconded a motion to approve the February 11, 2025, minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

At this time, Item 7 was heard out of agenda order. Following its discussion, the Committee returned to the regular agenda sequence.

5. Prop. 4 Funding Guidance – Campbell Ingram, Delta Conservancy

Ingram spoke to encourage organizations to begin considering project ideas in anticipation of upcoming grant opportunities through the Delta Conservancy. He shared that the Conservancy will receive \$29 million from the Proposition 4 bond fund, to be spent through 2027. They will focus on three key areas: ecosystem restoration, nature-based initiatives, and community development. Grant guidelines are currently being developed, with the solicitation and review process expected to begin in the fall.

Chair Swenson asked for public comments and there were none.

6. Update on Delta Protection Commission activities – Dan Ray

Interim Executive Director Dan Ray introduced the Commission’s new Senior Environmental Planner, Rachel Vanderwerff, and noted that hiring efforts for a new office manager are expected to be completed in June. He provided an update on the National Heritage Area (NHA) partnership agreements, which will begin with Passport Program locations. Ray also mentioned the intention to feature a “Delta Reading List” at these locations, highlighting books about the Delta.

Additionally, Ray outlined the Commission’s six-month direction for land use issues. This includes studying the impacts of habitat restoration and levee projects on agricultural lands, with plans to inventory and map such projects. The findings will be presented to both the Commission and County Agricultural Commissioners for further discussion and consideration.

Chair Swenson asked for public comments and there were none.

7. Freeport Trail Update – Janet Lake

Lake provided an update on the current status of the project, noting that it remains in the design phase. She shared that there is interest in extending the existing trails—which currently end at the water tower at the Freeport Water Access Park—to connect with the Great Delta Trail. However, no funding is currently available to move that portion of the project forward.

Chair Swenson asked for public comments and there were none.

8. Great Valley Farm Water Partnership Overview – Russ Ryan

Vice Chair Ryan gave an overview of the Great Valley Farm Water Partnership (GVFWP), which is a collaborative effort initiated in late 2023 between agricultural and water leaders from the Delta and San Joaquin Valley regions. Delegates included farmers, water agency leaders, and regional stakeholders focused on strengthening cross-regional understanding. The thirteen-member partnership seeks to identify sustainable, mutually beneficial solutions for both regions and to discuss shared water challenges and opportunities.

The partnership selected seven water supply and quality initiatives to focus on: sediment remediation in the South Delta, enhanced water storage capacity south of the Delta, levee investment improvements, South Delta permanent operable gates, water export improvements, predation suppression of native salmon, and invasive aquatic weed control. A December 2024 meeting with the Bureau of Reclamation, represented by Deputy Regional Director Kristin White, affirmed mutual interest in

continued collaboration. The Bureau expressed willingness to serve as a resource and engage in further discussions to develop shared solutions. Ryan informed the Committee that future meetings updates on the Partnership's progress are to be expected.

Chair Swenson asked for public comments and there were none.

9. Angel's Recovery Dive Team – Juan Heredia

Juan Heredia and his daughter Camila presented on their non-profit organization, which provides underwater search and recovery services for missing persons. Based out of California, the team utilizes professional diving skills and a deep sense of purpose to assist in bringing closure to families experiencing traumatic loss. Heredia, a passionate diver and community advocate, founded the group with the goal of combining his skills with compassionate service for families in need, especially in cases that would otherwise lack resources or support.

The team has gained recognition for its willingness to assist where others cannot, as well as their success where other divers have failed. They often operate in challenging conditions and at their own expense, driven by a mission to help grieving families find peace. He stated they often work in coordination with local law enforcement and have made a significant impact in high-profile recovery missions, earning the respect of both the public and professionals in emergency response fields. Heredia stated his family provides him a strong support system, contributing to the mission of bringing closure to grieving families.

Chair Swenson asked for public comments and there were none.

10. Feral Cats in the Delta – Lisa Kirk

Kirk was unable to attend the meeting, so this item was deferred to a future date.

11. Member Announcements and Next Meeting

Member Swinney provided an update on the Golden Mussel Task Force (GMTF), a collaborative effort involving multiple state and federal agencies. She noted that the group is working to develop a response framework built around seven key objectives to address the golden mussel invasion. A presentation is planned for the next meeting to provide further details.

Chair Swenson shared that the next DPAC meeting will be held on June 3.

12. Adjourn

Chair Swenson adjourned the meeting at 7:44 p.m.

Delta Protection Advisory Committee Meeting

June 3, 2025

AGENDA ITEM 7: Charter revisions and DPC Six-month Priorities

Prepared by: Dan Ray

Presented by: Dan Ray

Recommended Action: Receive and discuss.

Type of Action: Discussion

DPAC charter revision

At its May meeting, the Commission approved revisions to the advisory committee's charter that provide "upon referral from the Delta Protection Commission or its Executive Director, DPAC will provide recommendations to the DPC" (see attachment). The revision responds to Commissioners' desire to focus the committee's work more carefully on topics on which the Commission most needs the committee's advice. The change acknowledges committee members' expertise and its composition, reflecting opinions of a cross section of Delta stakeholders and residents. Our hope is that it enhances the committee's influence as it makes recommendations to the Commission on policies and projects on which the Commission expects to act.

This emphasis on DPAC's role in advising the Commission will require closer coordination between the Commission, its staff, and the committee and its officers. One example is scheduling topics on the committee agenda to provide sufficient time to provide meaningful input for Commission consideration. The committee will also want to reserve time to stay informed on emerging topics and to share news about Delta happenings, projects, and organizations.

The staff welcomes your ideas on how best to achieve this coordination.

Six-month work priorities

Commissioners' discussions with me have emphasized the importance of focusing the staff on actions that significantly advance the goals of the Delta Protection Act, including the implementation of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area. To sharpen our focus, our team drafted priorities to guide our work over my remaining interim tenure and my successor's first few months. Our hope was to identify actions that could be completed or well underway by fall. Some can be completed promptly. Others may test the water for more complex, longer-term efforts. We tried to identify useful deliverables that

could be produced during this short period, providing direction for the opening months of a new executive director's arrival, rather than sitting flat in the water awaiting direction while a new leader orients to their responsibilities.

In discussion at its May meeting, the Commission supported the staff's focus on five topics over the coming months. The first three may be of particular interest to the committee:

AGRICULTURE

Project: *Report on impacts of water supply, flood control, and habitat projects on Delta farmlands*

Brief description: Research and report on the impacts of water supply, flood control, and habitat projects on Delta farmlands. Hold DPC hearing/workshop with county agriculture commissioners and others to review and assess findings, including implications for agricultural economy, update report. Present findings to Commission, Delta Stewardship Council, and/or Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee.

How will it help the Delta? Protects farmland and supports balance among water supply, flood safety, and ecosystem goals with Delta as Place values. Tempers "cut-the-green-tape" efforts when farmland impacted.

DELTA CONVEYANCE

Project: *Review and comment on Delta Conveyance Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)*

Brief description: Review Army Corps of Engineers' FEIS on Delta Conveyance Project to assess adequacy of responses to Commission comments. Draft letter to Corps regarding FEIS. Assess mitigation measures' divergence from Commission recommendations and Delta Plan measures.

How will it help the Delta? Keeps pressure on Delta tunnel project. Facilitates coordination with others, including Delta Counties Coalition.

RIVERS AND LEVEES

Project: *Advocate for funds for Delta levee improvements*

Brief description: Prepare a fact sheet on benefits and costs of funding improvement of Delta Plan's very high priority levees .

How will it help the Delta? Sets up campaign for Delta levee improvement funds.

The final two projects carry out the National Heritage Area (NHA) Management Plan. They may be of more interest to the NHA Advisory Committee that the Commission has created than to the DPAC.

NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

Project: Partnership Program

Brief description: The partnership program is foundational for the NHA by establishing partnerships with federal and state agencies, Indian Tribes, non-profit organizations, and other interested parties that are mutually beneficial and are critical in implementation of the management plan. An initial focus will be implementing the “Passport to Your National Parks” program, a voluntary National Park Service program in which 43 of the 62 NHAs participate. Visitors get a cancellation ink stamp in a facsimile passport that records the name of the site and date of the visit, like getting a US passport stamped when traveling internationally.

How will it help the Delta? A healthy partnership network brings many Delta businesses, organizations, and agencies together to promote awareness of the Delta NHA; increases awareness of and visitation to the NHA; promotes access to cultural, historical, natural, and recreational sites and visitor information; and promotes partnerships.

Project: Tourism Branding and Marketing Plan

Brief description: The Commission will contract with a consultant to create a tourism branding and marketing plan for the NHA, which will include a brand toolkit, key strategic imperatives, potential promotional campaigns, key performance indicators, design guidelines, and a media toolkit. Preparation of the plan will include public outreach, market research, and brand analysis.

How will it help the Delta? Increases awareness of and provides a unique brand for the NHA and the Delta, fosters a sense of pride and identity among residents and others, encourages sustainable tourism, and promotes economic development and access to cultural, historical, natural, and recreational sites.

Discussion

How would the DPAC want to weigh in on these projects? Can it defer to the NHA Advisory Committee on those two efforts or are there aspects of those on which it feels its advice is important? Are there topics that the committee thinks should be wait-listed for consideration by the next executive director?

Delta Protection Advisory Committee Charter

First Adopted: Aug. 26, 2010

Revised: Jan. 23, 2014; May 19, 2016; Sept. 19, 2019; March 17, 2022; Sept. 21, 2023;
[ADD: and May 15, 2025]

I. Official Designation

Delta Protection Advisory Committee (DPAC) is created and appointed pursuant to Section 29753 of the Public Resources Code.

II. Scope and Objectives

The purpose of the DPAC is to provide recommendations to the Delta Protection Commission (DPC) regarding the diverse interests within the Delta.

III. Description of Duties

[ADD: Upon referral from the Delta Protection Commission or its Executive Director,] DPAC will provide recommendations to the DPC relating to the following (not necessarily in priority order):

- A. Delta's ecosystem;
- B. Water Supply;
- C. Socioeconomic sustainability;
- D. Recreation;
- E. Tourism;
- F. Agriculture;
- G. Flood Control;
- H. Environment;
- I. Water Resources;
- J. State, Local, and Utility Infrastructure;
- K. Delta Values (e.g. Public Res. Code section 29702(a) and Water Code section 85054); and
- L. Other Delta Issues

The DPAC will provide its advice based upon input from and cooperation with other stakeholders and existing organizations addressing Delta issues.

IV. Duration

The DPAC has no sunset provision and is expected to operate indefinitely. However, the DPC may review and revise this charter when necessary, pursuant to a public discussion and vote on proposed revisions.

V. Committee Reporting

The DPAC, via its Chair or designee, shall report directly to the DPC. Communication from the DPAC may include oral updates provided at DPC meetings and/or written recommendations which include specific suggestions, proposals, projects, and/or action items as well as recommended positions (including minority positions) on specific issues, projects, or plans affecting the Delta.

VI. Agency Responsibilities for Providing Necessary Support

All staff and support functions required for the operation of the DPAC will be supplied by the DPC as determined by the Chair of the DPC.

VII. Operating Support

Support for the operation of the DPAC will rely on existing DPC staff and resources, until such time as the State may allocate additional funds for the operation of the DPAC.

VIII. Allowances for Committee Members

Members of the DPAC and its sub-committees will serve without pay.

IX. Committee Voting Membership and Terms

DPAC will consist of no more than **[ADD: 17] [DELETE: 15]** voting members appointed by the DPC. As the DPAC is the voice of Delta residents and businesses, the categories of membership are as follows:

- **[ADD: 11] [DELETE: 10]** members representing Delta residents and businesses - 2 business representatives, 2 agricultural representatives, 2 recreational representatives, 1 flood entity representative, 1 Delta cultural preservation entity representative, 1 Delta organization representative, and **1-2** members of the general public;
- 2 members representing state agencies (preferably California Department of Fish and Wildlife and California Department of Parks and Recreation);
- 1 member representing a non-governmental conservation/habitat restoration organization with involvement in the Delta;
- 1 member representing an entity involved with Delta water exports;
- 1 member representing a utility or other related infrastructure that crosses through the Delta.
- **[ADD: 1 member who is a member of or represents a tribe with historic connections to the Delta.]**

DPC will make 5 to 7 three-year appointments annually, **[DELETE: beginning at the May 2022 meeting;]** according to the following schedule. DPC can also act at any time to fill a

vacancy on DPAC.

May [ADD: 2025 and every three years thereafter]: Delta Business (Seat 1), Delta General Public [ADD: (Seat 1)], Delta Flood Entity, Delta Conservation/Habitat NGO Entity, Delta Water Exporter

May [ADD: 2026 and every three years thereafter]: Delta Agriculture (Seat 1), Delta Recreation (Seat 1), Delta Organization, State Agency (Seat 1), Delta Utility and Related Infrastructure

May [ADD: 2027 and every three years thereafter]: Delta Business (Seat 2), Delta Agriculture (Seat 2), Delta Recreation (Seat 2), Delta Cultural Preservation, State Agency (Seat 2)[ADD: , Delta General Public (Seat 2), Delta Tribe]

DPAC members have no limit on serving consecutive terms, and are allowed to designate alternates to represent them at DPAC meetings. In addition, representatives of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, California Department of Water Resources, Delta Stewardship Council, Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy, a Delta-region Native American tribe, and an emergency response entity are encouraged to participate as ex-officio members.

X. Appointment of Committee Members

The [ADD: 17][DELETE: 45] voting members of the committee will be appointed by the DPC through an application process administered by DPC staff, including filling vacancies when necessary to fulfill the remainder of the term. Each appointment shall include the member's category using the descriptions identified in Article IX.

XI. Duties and Selection of Chair

The Chair of the DPAC will be chosen from and by a majority vote of the advisory committee members present. The Chair will serve for a one-year term and may be re-elected for additional terms. The committee may also appoint a Vice-Chair through a similar process.

The DPAC Chair, in consultation with the DPC Executive Director, will be responsible for scheduling meeting dates, developing DPAC meeting agendas, and the development and submission of any specific recommendations made pursuant to Article V. DPC staff will be responsible for reserving meeting locations and distribution of meeting notices and agendas.

XII. Estimated Frequency of Meetings/Establishing a Quorum

The DPAC will meet at the call of the DPAC Chair with the approval of the DPC's Executive Director. Meetings will be held no less than twice per year. A quorum is considered to be at least 50% of the DPAC membership (including alternates for absent Committee

members), and any actions taken will require approval of a majority of the DPAC members present.

XIII. Ethical Responsibilities of Members

No committee or subcommittee member shall participate in any specific matter, including a lease, license, permit, contract, claim, agreement or related litigation with the DPC or any local or state agency, in which the member has a direct financial interest.

XIV. Subgroups

As deemed necessary, the DPAC Chair, in consultation with the Executive Director of the DPC, may convene additional advisory committees, working groups or subgroups to support DPAC functions. Working groups or subgroups will report directly to the DPAC.

XV. Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act

As a state agency, the DPAC, Working Groups, and Sub-Groups are governed by the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act which requires, among other things, that (1) an agenda be posted at least ten days in advance of any meeting; (2) the agenda describe specifically the items to be transacted or discussed; and (3) the DPAC to refuse to add an item subsequent to the published agenda. In addition to these general requirements, the Bagley-Keene Act includes other specific provisions and requirements concerning the announcement and conduct of meetings.

Delta Protection Advisory Committee Meeting

June 3, 2025

AGENDA ITEM 8: Report on Impacts of Habitat, Flood Control, and Ecosystem Projects on Agricultural Land

Prepared by: Dan Ray

Presented by: Dan Ray

Recommended Action: Receive and discuss.

Type of Action: Discussion

Background

This project arises from a recognition of the increasing pace of water supply, flood control, and habitat projects that convert Delta farmlands away from production agriculture. Recent projects have been undertaken to restore tidal ecosystems at Cache Slough to benefit salmon, smelt, and other species and improve flood protection along the Yolo Bypass. Other more recently proposed projects would create privately managed mitigation banks. At Webb Tract, restoration of wetland is proposed to grow peat to slow or reverse subsidence. Prior habitat projects on Sherman and Twitchell islands had similar motivations. If the Delta Tunnel is approved, thousands more acres will be removed from agriculture in the project's footprint or to create habitat to compensate for the tunnel's harm to fish and wildlife. Long term goals in the Delta Plan and state climate policy envision further marsh restoration in the Delta.

As these projects increase, some receive less scrutiny because of recent changes in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Habitat projects, including mitigation banks, can now be excluded from impact assessment under CEQA at the discretion of the state Fish and Wildlife director. This exclusion responds to concerns about the time and costs of CEWA compliance for projects perceived as good for the environment.

Discussion

Delta residents and other stakeholders have dozens of years' experience with large habitat projects at the Cosumnes Reserve, Liberty Island, the Yolo Bypass, Dutch Slough, and now Cache Slough. Impacts to agriculture and the farm economy are already a focus of the report staff is drafting. But how else do these projects affect your community? Do the habitats they create make you feel closer to nature? Expand opportunities for outdoor

recreation? Affect flood safety? Disrupt familiar landscape? Leave you uncertain about the future?

The committee can help shape the staff's analysis and draft report by discussing how these prior projects have affected your communities. We welcome your input.