



PUBLIC NOTICE AND MEETING AGENDA
National Heritage Area Advisory Committee

Wednesday, August 20, 2025, 10 a.m. (Tour) and 1:00 p.m. (Meeting)
Benicia Capitol State Historic Park
114 West G Street, Benicia, CA 94510

Tour of Benicia Arsenal departing from Benicia Capitol State Historic Park – 10 a.m.

- Benicia Clock Tower, 189 Washington Street, Benicia, CA
- Commanding Officer's Quarters, 1 Washington Street, Benicia, CA
- Museum of History Benicia, Arsenal Galleries, 2600 Camel Road, Benicia, CA

Agenda – 1 p.m.

1. Call to Order – Elizabeth Patterson, NHA Advisory Committee Vice Chair
2. Roll Call
3. Public Comment – An opportunity for members of the public to address the NHA Advisory Committee regarding items not on the agenda
4. Approval of the June 25, 2025, Meeting Minutes
5. Update on NHA Activities – Blake Roberts ([page 3](#))
6. Tourism Branding and Marketing Plan – Kira O'Donnell and Blake Roberts ([page 5](#))
7. Benicia History Discussion
8. Report on Delta 250 Ad Hoc Task Group – Task Group ([page 7](#))
9. Report on and Extend Term of Water Tour Ad Hoc Task Group – Task Group ([page 8](#))

10. Report on Proposition 4 Funding – Karen Buhr, Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy ([page 9](#))
11. Partnership and Passport Program Update – Blake Roberts ([page 11](#))
12. Business Partnerships – Blake Roberts ([page 14](#))
13. Federal Funding Update - Blake Roberts ([page 16](#))
14. Delta Heritage Forum Planning – Kira O'Donnell and Blake Roberts ([page 18](#))
15. Member Announcements and 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 August 19, 2025, will be shared with Committee members 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.

National Heritage Area Advisory Committee Members

Chair Dan Ray | Vice Chair Elizabeth Patterson | Diane Burgis, Commission Chair | **Michael Campbell | Colin Coffey | Lisa Craig | Dwayne Eubanks | Morris Lum | Carol Jensen | Don Nottoli | David Stuart | Oscar Villegas**, Commissioner | **Dan Whaley | Stuart Walthall | Katie Wiley**

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS: **Amanda Blosser** California State Parks | **Chris Lim** Contra Costa Resource Conservation District | **Karen Buhr**, Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy | **Jeff Henderson**, Delta Stewardship Council | **Mike Moran**, East Bay Regional Park District | **Trevor Rice**, National Park Service | **Desmond Mackell**, Suisun Resource Conservation District. Other public agency representatives may also participate as ex-officio members.

ALTERNATE MEMBERS:

Paulette Hennum | Douglas Hsia | Janet Lake | Gia Moreno

National Heritage Area Advisory Committee Meeting

August 20, 2025

AGENDA ITEM 5: Update on NHA Activities

Prepared by: Blake Roberts, Program Manager

Presented by: Blake Roberts

Recommended Action: Receive Update on NHA Activities

Type of Action: Receive

NHA Outreach

Commission staff and NHA Advisory Committee members participated in the following outreach efforts:

- **Contra Costa Watershed Forum:** NHA Advisory Committee members Chris Lim and Trevor Rice discussed the formation and current activities of the committee on July 9.
- **Sponsorships and Memberships:** Since the NHA Advisory Committee's last meeting, we have placed a hold on additional sponsorships and memberships as we adjust our budget to reflect our diminished FY 24-25 federal support. Our new executive director may choose to allocate additional funds for sponsorships and memberships as they review our financial situation.

Future outreach activities include:

- **Sacramento Historical Society Presentation:** Blake Roberts will be speaking about the Delta and NHA on Tuesday, September 23, at 6:30 p.m. at the Columbus Hall, 5961 Newman Court, Sacramento.
- **California Native American Day:** NHA Advisory Committee member Karen Buhr and Blake Roberts will help staff a booth for the three Delta state agencies on California Native American Day (Friday, September 26) held on the steps of the State Capitol Building.
- **American Planning Association California Chapter (APACA) Conference:** Blake Roberts will be the moderator and panelist for an APACA Conference session entitled "More to the Story: Comprehensive Strategies for Cultural Heritage Planning" on Tuesday, September 30 in Monterey.

VisitCADelta Website

The VisitCADelta website was originally created by the Commission and Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy in coordination with the Delta Marketing Task Force. The Commission hired Jada Portillo, a student assistant, to update the VisitCADelta.com website through the completion of the Tourism Branding and Marketing Plan.

Delta Leadership Program

In mid-September, nominations will be open for the 2026 Delta Leadership Program, a joint effort of the Delta Protection Commission and the Delta Leadership Foundation. The program targets potential or emerging leaders in the Delta from all walks of life.

Participants go through an intensive curriculum to expand their knowledge of key issues and challenges in the Delta, teach them leadership skills and tools, build relationships and trust, and foster community. The ultimate goal of the program, which has been operating since 2016, is to build a cadre of dedicated leaders to protect and improve the Delta.

Reorganization and Set Up of Advisory Bodies

Staff are conducting outreach to tribes about forming the Tribal Advisory Council identified in the Management Plan. They will be setting up the Communications and Marketing and Heritage Development and Tourism task groups as part of the Tourism Branding and Marketing Plan.

Delta Happenings and Delta Heritage Courier Newsletters

Commission staff released the July/August Delta Heritage Courier on July 10 and have included heritage-related material for the biweekly Delta Happenings newsletter. The deadlines for material for Courier issues for the remainder of 2025 are:

- **September/October:** Deadline is Friday, August 29, with a scheduled release date of Thursday, September 4.
- **November/December:** Deadline is Friday, November 7, with a scheduled release date of Thursday, November 13.

Staffing Augmentation

Staff are taking steps to add two positions for the NHA, which would make the limited term NHA information officer position permanent. Approval of the positions will be postponed until Federal funding is confirmed for Federal Fiscal Year 2026.

National Heritage Area Advisory Committee Meeting

August 20, 2025

AGENDA ITEM 6: Tourism Branding and Marketing Plan

Prepared by: Blake Roberts, Program Manager

Presented by: Kira O'Donnell and Blake Roberts

Recommended Action: Receive Report on Tourism Branding and Marketing Plan

Type of Action: Receive

Background

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area (NHA) Management Plan, which was approved on January 16, 2025, by the National Park Service Director, emphasized the importance of branding and promoting California's first and only National Heritage Area. Management Plan Strategy 3.1.3 called on the Commission to work with partners to develop a three- to five-year marketing plan.

In May, the Commission approved a contract with Honey Agency, Inc. to prepare a Tourism Branding and Marketing Plan for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area (NHA). The scope of work for the plan consists of:

- Project kick-off meeting – Including a tour of the NHA.
- Public outreach – Including up to six NHA Advisory Committee and/or advisory task group meetings, and up to three public workshops.
- Market research – Possibly including interviews, focus groups, surveys, and review of demographic data about potential target audiences for the Delta NHA.
- Identification of primary and secondary target audiences
- Assessment of existing brand
- Brand toolkit – Including a revised logo, colors, tagline, and typography and marketing and branding materials (e.g., small icons, interpretive signs, photography style, brochures, one-pagers, or rack cards, social media assets, slide deck, email templates, and advertisements).
- Draft and Final Tourism Branding and Marketing Plan – Including
 - Revised and updated key strategic imperatives, potential promotional campaigns, and key performance indicators from the 2017 *Delta Tourism Awareness 5-Year Marketing Plan*.
 - Design guidelines for branding materials.

- Brand rollout strategy, including prioritized actions, timeline, and goals.
- Strategies for management of the NHA's web and social media identity and presence.
- A media toolkit for partners.
- Communication and marketing strategies for various audiences, including visitors, NHA partners, and residents.

Current Status and Future Considerations

Commission staff and Honey held a kickoff meeting and tour on August 7. Honey has been examining past documents and is beginning public outreach and market research. The NHA Advisory Committee will be asked to provide feedback on the Tourism Branding and Marketing Plan during the planning process.

Recommended Action

Receive report on the Tourism Branding and Marketing Plan.

National Heritage Area Advisory Committee Meeting

August 20, 2025

AGENDA ITEM 8: Report on Delta 250 Ad Hoc Task Group

Prepared by: Blake Roberts, Program Manager

Presented by: Task Group Members

Recommended Action: Receive Report on Delta 250 Ad Hoc Task Group and Discuss Next Steps

Type of Action: Discussion

Background

America250 is a nonpartisan initiative working to engage every American in commemorating the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. America 250 also coincides with the 175th anniversary of California statehood and 250th anniversary of the Juan Bautista de Anza expedition through Arizona and California to the edge of the Delta. Governor Newsom and First Partner Siebel Newsom are launching a working group to coordinate activities throughout the state related to the [America 250 and California 175](#). National Park Service is leading efforts to commemorate [Anza 250](#).

Management Plan Strategy 1.2.1 calls for NHA promotion of Delta-wide themed special events such as America 250/California 175/Anza 250 to draw attention to the Delta and the NHA and develop relationships and cooperation between NHA partners. On April 23, the NHA Advisory Committee established a Delta 250 Ad Hoc Task Group to assist with planning, coordination, and implementation of events and activities within the NHA for America 250/California 175/Anza 250. The Delta 250 Ad Hoc Task Group has met on June 11 and 25.

Recommended Action

Receive report on the Delta 250 Ad Hoc Task Group and discuss next steps.

National Heritage Area Advisory Committee Meeting

August 20, 2025

AGENDA ITEM 9: Report on and Extend Term of Water Tour Ad Hoc Task Group

Prepared by: Blake Roberts, Program Manager

Presented by: Task Group Members

Recommended Action: Receive Report on Water Tour Ad Hoc Task Group, Discuss Next Steps, and Extend Term

Type of Action: Vote

Background

Management Plan Strategy 3.3.1 calls for the Delta Protection Commission to partner with public agencies and private entities to increase and expand recreation and tourism in the Delta. At their April 23 meeting, the NHA Advisory Committee established an ad hoc task group to work collaboratively with Commission staff in developing recommendations to the Committee regarding strategies to increase water tours. The task group is set to expire in August 2025.

The Water Tour Ad Hoc Task Group first met on June 10. Members are pursuing opportunities to promote water tours that will extend beyond the August 2025 expiration.

Recommended Action

Receive report on the Water Tour Ad Hoc Task Group, discuss next steps, and extend the term of the task group to August 2026.

National Heritage Area Advisory Committee Meeting

August 20, 2025

AGENDA ITEM 10: Report on Proposition 4 Funding

Prepared by: Karen Buhr, Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy, and Blake Roberts

Presented by: Karen Buhr

Recommended Action: Receive Report on Proposition 4 Funding and Discuss NHA Advisory Committee Involvement

Type of Action: Discussion

Background

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy (Conservancy) is a primary state agency in the implementation of ecosystem restoration in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and Suisun Marsh and supports efforts that advance environmental protection and the economic well-being of Delta residents. The Conservancy works collaboratively and in coordination with local communities, leading efforts to protect, enhance, and restore the Delta's economy, agriculture and working landscapes, and environment, for the benefit of the Delta region, its local communities, and the citizens of California.

SB 867, the Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024, approved by voters as Proposition 4, provided the Conservancy with \$24,752,000 for projects that reduce the risks of climate change impacts upon communities, fish and wildlife, and natural resources, and increase public access. The Conservancy is using this funding for the Delta Community, Environment and Climate Program, a competitive grant program. Conservancy staff have completed the grant solicitation notice and proposal application materials and are waiting to open the solicitation.

Three programs – Nature Based Solutions, Ecosystem Restoration and Climate Adaptation, and Community Enhancement – will each receive approximately \$8.6 million. Staff expect to run two solicitations for each program, \$5 million per program in 2025–2026 and \$3.6 million per program in 2026–2027.

Each solicitation will include two rounds of review:

1. **Pre-application:** This initial step will help staff identify projects that are ineligible, not ready, or not competitive. It will be a pass/fail process.

2. **Full application:** Projects that pass the pre-application stage will be invited to submit a full proposal. These proposals will be reviewed and scored competitively based on the following criteria: project readiness, scientific or community value, community support, geographic balance, cost share, service to disadvantaged or vulnerable communities, partnerships, tribal involvement, cost-effectiveness, alignment with state and Delta goals, long-term maintenance and sustainability, and likelihood a planning project leads to implementation.

Conservancy staff anticipate bringing initial recommendations for funding starting in May 2026.

In addition, staff anticipate launching a small grant program for awards up to \$100,000. This program is intended to support smaller organizations by building their capacity and providing technical assistance. Funds can be used for various purposes, including staffing, technical support, equipment, and research.

Recommended Action

Receive report on Proposition 4 Funding and discuss NHA Advisory Committee involvement.

National Heritage Area Advisory Committee Meeting

August 20, 2025

AGENDA ITEM 11: Partnership and Passport Program Update

Prepared by: Blake Roberts, Program Manager

Presented by: Blake Roberts

Recommended Action: Receive Update on Partnership and Passport Program

Type of Action: Discussion

Partnership Program

The Commission created a formal NHA partnership program to provide a general framework for the Commission to work with governments, educational institutions, nonprofit organizations, and other interested parties on mutually beneficial projects. The program clarifies responsibilities and expectations for the Commission and partners and provides incentives for new partners to join through specific and exclusive benefits.

The Commission's primary method of establishing these partnerships is Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs). On March 20, the Commission delegated authority to the Executive Director to sign future MOUs based on the attached template. These agreements define guidelines and benefits that generally apply to partnerships and can be customized to the specific circumstances of each partnership through appendices and addenda. The MOU will be a living document that evolves as partnerships change.

The Commission website has a [page for the partnership program](#), which includes a fillable form for prospective partners, and an updated list of partners on the [main NHA webpage](#). The Commission currently has approved agreements with the following partners:

- California State Parks, Diablo Range District
- Contra Costa County Historical Society
- Contra Costa County Library
- Crockett Museum
- Dutra Museum of Dredging
- East Bay Regional Park District
- Friends of the 1883 Clarksburg Schoolhouse
- Locke Foundation
- RioVision
- Sacramento Public Library

- Yolo County Library

Passport Program

The initial focus of the partnership program is launching our involvement in the [Passport to Your National Parks program](#), a voluntary program in which most National Park Service (NPS) units and NHAs participate. Approved partners can house passport cancellation locations where visitors can obtain stamps on their NPS passports. An appendix to the MOU specifically addresses the passport program.

As of this writing, approved partnership agreements enable the Commission to have 24 passport cancellation stations:

1. 1883 Clarksburg Schoolhouse
2. Antioch Library
3. Bay Point Library
4. Benicia Capitol State Historic Park
5. Big Break Regional Shoreline, Oakley
6. Brentwood Library
7. Clarksburg Library
8. Contra Costa County History Center
9. Crockett Library
10. Crockett Museum
11. Courtland Library
12. Dutra Museum of Dredging, Rio Vista
13. Hercules Library
14. Isleton Library
15. John Muir National Historic Site, Martinez
16. Locke Boarding House
17. Martinez Library
18. Oakley Library
19. Pittsburg Library
20. Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial, Concord (stamper housed at John Muir National Historic Site)
21. RioVision Gallery, Rio Vista
22. Rodeo Library
23. Walnut Grove Library
24. West Sacramento Library

Next Steps

Commission staff are continuing to conduct outreach to potential partners and anticipate finalizing MOUs with additional partners, including those that would participate in the passport program. We are seeking partners in those communities that do not have passport sites – Bethel Island, Byron, Discovery Bay, Hood, Knightsen, Mountain View, Port Costa, Ryde, Terminous, and Vallejo.

The Commission website now has a [passport program page](#) that announces that the program will be launching soon. Staff are anticipating receipt of stamping supplies from Eastern National, National Park Service’s nonprofit partner, in the next few weeks. At launch, the current webpage will be replaced with a new page that includes a map of passport locations and nearby attractions. Staff prepared an [NHA fact sheet \(PDF\)](#) for display at passport locations, will produce display stations for stamping supplies and fact sheets, and are working with Contra Costa County Library, Sacramento Public Library, and Yolo County Library on reading lists celebrating Delta books. Passport program partners will receive training prior to program launch.

Recommended Action

Receive update on Partnership and Passport Programs.

National Heritage Area Advisory Committee Meeting

August 20, 2025

AGENDA ITEM 12: Business Partnerships

Prepared by: Blake Roberts, Program Manager

Presented by: Blake Roberts

Recommended Action: Provide Direction on Business Partnerships

Type of Action: Discussion

Background

The Commission has created a formal NHA partnership program to provide a general framework for the Commission to work with governments, educational institutions, nonprofit organizations, and other interested parties on mutually beneficial projects. The initial focus of the partnership program is launching our involvement in the [Passport to Your National Parks program](#), a voluntary program in which most National Park Service (NPS) units and NHAs participate. Approved partners can house passport cancellation locations where visitors can obtain stamps on their NPS passports.

Business Partnerships

Since businesses may be interested in serving as passport sites, Commission staff have been considering how selection criteria can be applied in these instances. Existing criteria states that selected sites for visits and passport stamping must be within the NHA boundaries, open and accessible to the public, and either connected to interpretive themes as described in the NHA Management Plan or serving as a visitor information center. Staff have inquired with other NHAs about whether they allow businesses to serve as passport sites and, if so, how they are selected, but to date, no NHAs have said that they allow businesses as sites.

Staff recommendation is to allow businesses to serve as passport sites if the business can demonstrate a strong connection to the interpretive themes, particularly if the management plan identified them as an existing and potential interpretive site. For example, businesses such as agritourism venues and marinas are discussed as potential interpretive sites in Primary Theme 4: The Delta Becomes California's Cornucopia and Supporting Theme 3: Delta as Recreational Retreat. This condition would also include businesses in historic buildings and on sites connected to interpretive themes.

Recommended Action

Provide direction on business partnerships.

National Heritage Area Advisory Committee Meeting

August 20, 2025

AGENDA ITEM 13: Federal Funding Update

Prepared by: Blake Roberts, Program Manager

Presented by: Blake Roberts

Recommended Action: Receive Update on Federal Funding

Type of Action: Receive

Background

The Heritage Partnership Program (HPP) provides federal funding to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta NHA and nearly all members of the National Heritage Area System. Distribution of HPP funding is based on a formula that differentiates NHAs that have not yet completed their management plan (Tier 1) from those who have completed the plan (Tier 2). As a Tier 1 NHA, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta NHA received \$157,500 during Federal Fiscal Year (FY) 2024. The annual funding for Tier 2 NHAs is typically \$500,000.

Current Status

After an extended delay, the Office of Management and Budget provided National Park Service (NPS) direction on the distribution of HPP funds in early July. NPS staff recently informed Commission staff that our funding for FY 2025 will stay at Tier 1 (\$157,500) rather than moving to Tier 2 (\$500,000) as initially expected. Their staff explained that NHAs are eligible to move up to Tier 2 in the fiscal year following their management plan being approved. Since NPS approved our management plan on January 16, 2025, we will be eligible for Tier 2 funding in FY 2026.

After previously submitting a FY 2025 work plan to NPS based on Tier 2 funding, Commission staff resubmitted a work plan that reflected Tier 1 funding. Approval of the work plan is required before the Commission can receive a grant award. We are anticipating approval of the work plan soon and receipt of FY 2025 funds.

The work plan separates Commission work on the NHA into four activities:

- Activity 1: Operations – This activity encompasses development and execution of agreements, contracts, and subgrants; invoices and reports; project team meetings; bidding and contractor selections, and work to augment existing staff.

- Activity 2: Public Outreach and Partnership Development – This activity includes meetings with the NHA Advisory Committee, task groups, and the public, outreach to local tribes, informational meetings about the NHA, coordination meetings with current and potential partners, and conferences such as those held by the Alliance of National Heritage Areas.
- Activity 3: Marketing – This activity seeks to promote the NHA through marketing efforts, such as preparing the Tourism Branding and Marketing Plan, composing marketing materials, updating the VisitCADelta.com website, and publishing the Delta Happenings and Delta Heritage Courier newsletters.
- Activity 4: Heritage Projects – This activity seeks to advance heritage projects, such as the passport and Junior Ranger programs, planning for and conducting activities in conjunction with the America 250, Anza 250, and California 175 commemorations, holding the Delta Heritage Forum conference, hosting the Delta Leadership Program, developing an NHA grant program, and developing welcome, wayfinding, and interpretive signs.

Funding for Federal Fiscal Year 2026

The budget process for FY 2026 (October 1, 2025-September 30, 2026) is underway. Letters circulated by Representatives Glenn “GT” Thompson (R-PA) and Paul Tonko (D-NY) in the US House of Representatives and Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) in the US Senate recommended \$33.5 million for the Heritage Partnership Program in FY 2026. The Appropriations Subcommittees on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies in the House and Senate have proposed \$29.2 and \$29.9 million, respectively, for the program. While short of the budget recommended in the House and Senate letters, this is a positive development given that the President’s budget proposed eliminating funding and other programs are facing significant cuts.

Recommended Action

Receive update on Federal Funding.

National Heritage Area Advisory Committee Meeting

August 20, 2025

AGENDA ITEM 14: Delta Heritage Forum Planning

Prepared by: Kira O'Donnell, Information Officer, and Blake Roberts, Program Manager

Presented by: Kira O'Donnell and Blake Roberts

Recommended Action: Discuss Planning for Delta Heritage Forum

Type of Action: Discussion

Background

The Delta Heritage Forum is a free, full-day event that has been described as celebrating Delta stories, nurturing collaboration, and inspiring new thinking and initiatives in the Delta heritage community. The first event was held in 2018, prior to Congressional designation of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area (NHA). The 2024 Forum was held on Friday, November 15, at the Antioch Historical Museum, with more than 80 participants. The schedule is attached for reference.

Next Steps

After receiving feedback at the April 23 NHA Advisory Committee meeting, Commission staff are planning for the next Forum, which will have a similar format to previous Forums. This would consist of a one-day conference with panels, lightning talks, storytellers, and networking time aimed at a broad audience. Staff recommend holding the Forum in early 2026 given current constraints on staff time.

Recommended Action

Discuss planning for the Delta Heritage Forum.