



## PUBLIC NOTICE AND MEETING AGENDA

### Delta Protection Commission

Thursday, September 18, 2025, 5-7 p.m. (end time is approximate)  
West Sacramento Community Center  
1075 West Capitol Ave, West Sacramento, CA 95691

#### 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

#### Closed Session Agenda

4. The Commission will meet in closed session to interview candidates for the Executive Director position and to consider and take possible action on the appointment of an Executive Director. This closed session is authorized by Government Code section 11126, subdivision (a)(1).
5. If necessary, the Commission may meet in closed session to consider and take possible action on the appointment of an Interim Executive Director. This closed session is authorized by Government Code section 11126, subdivision (a)(1).

After the closed session, the Commission will reconvene in open session and make any required report.

#### Consent Agenda

6. Approval of Draft Meeting Minutes ([page 4](#)):
  - July 17, 2025
  - August 6, 2025
  - September 4, 2025
  - Executive Director Selection Ad Hoc Committee:
    - July 23, 2025

- July 29, 2025

7. Consider Appointments to the National Heritage Area Advisory Committee ([page 18](#))

### **Regular Agenda**

8. Discussion and possible action regarding appointment and salary for the Executive Director and subsequent steps in the hiring process. ([page 29](#))
9. Report on Delta Stewardship Council Activities – Chair Diane Burgis
10. Report on Delta Protection Advisory Committee (DPAC) Activities – Anna Swenson (DPAC Chair)
11. Executive Director’s Report – Dan Ray, Interim Executive Director ([page 30](#))
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](mailto:dpc@delta.ca.gov) or (916) 375-4800. Attachments and additional information can be found on the Delta Protection Commission website: [delta.ca.gov](http://delta.ca.gov).

Comments submitted to [submit@delta.ca.gov](mailto:submit@delta.ca.gov) by noon on September 17, 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 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 | **Sonny Dhaliwal**, San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors | **Anissa Williams**, Cities of Contra Costa and Solano counties | **David Kent**, Cities of Sacramento and Yolo Counties | **Cameron Bregman**, Cities of San Joaquin County | **Jim Paroli**, Central Delta Reclamation

Districts | **Tom Slater**, North Delta Reclamation Districts | **TBD**, South Delta Reclamation Districts | **Toks Omishakin**, CA State Transportation Agency | **Karen Ross**, CA Department of Food and Agriculture | **Wade Crowfoot**, CA Natural Resources Agency | **TBD**, CA State Lands Commission

**EX OFFICIO MEMBERS:** **Rhodesia Ransom**, California State Assembly | **Jerry McNerney**, California State Senate

# **DRAFT Meeting Minutes**

## **Delta Protection Commission**

Thursday, July 17, 2025, 5-7 p.m. (end time is approximate)

The Point Restaurant

120 Marina Dr, Rio Vista, CA 94571

### **Agenda**

#### **1. Call to Order and Flag Salute**

Chair Diane Burgis called the meeting to order at 5:14 p.m.

#### **2. Welcome and Roll Call**

Commission Clerk Heather McClure called the roll. Present at roll call: Chair Burgis, Commissioners Oscar Villegas, Pat Hume, Sonny Dhaliwal, David Kent, Tom Slater, Shannon Shaw (for Anissa Williams), Christine Birdsong (for Karen Ross), and Gloria Sandoval (for Wade Crowfoot). Vice Chair John Vasquez and Commissioners Cameron Bregman, Dean Ruiz (for South Delta Reclamation District), Jim Paroli, Toks Omishakin, and Brian Bugsch (for CA State lands Commission) were absent with no alternate present.

At this time, a quorum was present.

It was noted that Gary Prost (for ex officio Senator Jerry McNerney) arrived at 5:18 p.m. and Dotty Nygard (for ex officio Assemblymember Rhodesia Ransom) arrived at 5:19 p.m., both during Item 5.

#### **3. Public Comment – an opportunity for members of the public to address the Commission regarding items not on the agenda**

Chair Buris asked for public comment and there was none.

### **Consent Agenda**

#### **4. Approval of Draft May 15, 2025, Meeting Minutes**

**Motion:** It was moved by Commissioner Villegas and seconded by Commissioner Sandoval to approve the May 15, 2025, meeting minutes; in a voice vote, the motion passed 9-0-0, all Commissioners present voting aye.

### **Regular Agenda**

## **5. Report on Delta Stewardship Council Activities – Chair Diane Burgis**

Chair Burgis reported the Stewardship Council awarded \$5.9 million for eight scientific studies and an additional amount for two more, totaling over \$7.8 million. The funded projects address key Delta issues like tidal marsh restoration, harmful algal blooms, subsidence, carbon emissions, and endangered fish recovery efforts.

Chair Burgis asked for public comment and there was none.

## **6. Report on Delta Protection Advisory Committee (DPAC) Activities – Anna Swenson (DPAC Chair)**

This item was postponed until DPAC Chair Swenson could be present.

## **7. Report on National Heritage Area Advisory Committee (NHAAC) Activities – Elizabeth Patterson (NHAAC Vice Chair)**

Elizabeth Patterson provided a brief review of the NHAAC discussion surrounding funding sources. This includes the Heritage Partnership Program (HPP), which provides regular federal funding administered through the National Parks Service, and various potential funding sources as identified in Appendix H of the NHA Management Plan. She reported that the Advisory Committee had proposed that the Commission authorize the formation of a 501(c)(3) nonprofit public benefit corporation. The purpose of this nonprofit would be to secure funding from private and grant sources to implement the National Heritage Area Management Plan. A second part of the proposal was to explore an agreement with local jurisdictions within the NHA to share a portion of their transient occupancy tax (TOT) to support tourism and visitor-related initiatives. These ideas are intended to create financial stability amidst uncertain government funding, particularly this current fiscal year.

The Commission expressed support for the Committee to continue exploring the formation of a 501(c)(3) and a TOT funding strategy and expects a more solidified and detailed proposal to be brought back for future consideration.

Chair Burgis asked for public comment and there was none.

## **8. Executive Director's Report – Dan Ray, Interim Executive Director**

Interim Executive Director Ray presented a budget update that showed a surplus due to a major contract being delayed until the new fiscal year. He reported the NHA is anticipating up to \$500,000 in federal funds, which will allow for hiring an interpreter and to convert the NHA part-time public information officer to full-time. New partnership agreements have been signed with Contra Costa County Historical Society,

East Bay Regional Park District, and the Clarksburg Schoolhouse to expand the Passport Program. He announced the NHA's Management Plan won an Award of Excellence from the Sacramento Valley Section of the American Planning Association. Lastly, he drew attention to an article on the benefits of rice farming in the Delta, written by DPC Information Officer Holly Heyser, which has gained significant attention, including being picked up by Maven's Notebook.

Chair Burgis asked for public comment and there was none.

#### **9. Consider Approval of Appointment to Delta Protection Advisory Committee (DPAC) – Dan Ray, Interim Executive Director**

Interim Executive Director Ray reported on the resignation of Member Gary Mello due to his relocation out of state. He recommended appointing Jeff Iniguez to the vacant seat, noting Iniguez's more than seven years of farming experience and his Yolo County location, which would provide a valuable and diverse perspective to the Committee and complement the existing members.

Chair Burgis asked for public comment and there was none.

**Motion:** It was moved by Commissioner Slater and seconded by Commissioner Villegas to appoint Jeff Iniguez to the Delta Protection Advisory Committee; in a voice vote, the motion passed 9-0-0, all Commissioners present voting aye.

#### **10. Consider Approval of Striped Bass Slot Limit Proposal Letter – Virginia Gardiner, Program Manager**

Virginia Gardiner explained the Delta Protection Advisory Committee forwarded a request for the Commission to support a proposed change to the striped bass fishing regulations, which was initially brought forward by the Striped Bass Association. DPAC requested the Commission approve and send a letter to the California Fish and Game Commission supporting a proposed slot limit for striped bass of 18 inches minimum to 30 inches maximum. The letter would also acknowledge existing uncertainties and the need for additional research on fish populations, for which there is currently no funding.

The Commission discussed the proposal, which aims to improve the striped bass population. The rationale is that larger striped bass prey on larger fish, so the limit would protect smaller species like delta smelt and salmon. Concerns were raised about the potential impact on native salmon, given that striped bass are not endemic to the Delta. It was noted that some biologists suggest water quality and flows are more significant factors affecting salmon survival than striped bass predation. The

Commission acknowledged the lack of funding for further research but considered that supporting the proposal was unlikely to cause harm and would help balance recreational and biological interests.

Chair Burgis asked for public comment and there was one:

- Elizabeth Patterson cited research from FishBio indicating that predation by striped bass is a significant factor in salmon population decline and noted that California is unique in having a limit on the number of fish that can be taken.

**Motion:** It was moved by Commissioner Hume and seconded by Commissioner Villegas to approve the Striped Bass Slot Limit Proposal Letter; in a voice vote, the motion passed 9-0-0, all Commissioners present voting aye.

### **11. Delta Farmland Conversions: Water Supply, Flood Control, and Habitat Projects – Rachel Vanderwerff, Senior Environmental Planner**

Rachel Vanderwerff presented a preliminary report on Delta farmland conversions resulting from water supply, flood control, and habitat projects since 2013. The study, guided by the Delta Protection Act, has so far reviewed 23 projects and found that approximately 36,186 acres of farmland—about 8% of Delta farmland, with 95% zoned for agriculture—have been converted or are planned for conversion. Prime farmland was the most affected. The report also highlighted the economic and cumulative impacts of these conversions, sparking discussion on the long-term sustainability of Delta agriculture and the need for a more comprehensive approach to balance restoration goals with the agricultural economy. Her key findings included the number of projects by county, the significant role of the Department of Water Resources as a project sponsor, and that 57% of projects studied were outside of designated Priority Restoration Areas, indicating a need for more strategic siting.

Vanderwerff also noted the Delta Conveyance Project would impact about 2,340 acres of farmland directly, mostly prime farmland, and require an additional 3,500-9,722 acres of tidal habitat restoration for mitigation, potentially affecting a total of 5,840-13,018 acres.

The report will incorporate feedback from two public workshops that were held in July with farmers and other stakeholders. Their feedback underscored concerns about big-picture issues like low crop prices, high operations costs, and the financial stability of reclamation districts responsible for levee maintenance. Her intention is to post the draft report online for a two-week public comment period and then present the final version to the Commission in September.

Executive Director Ray followed by facilitating an in-depth discussion for input on how to shape the final version of the report.

Concerns were raised about the complexity of the issues, including how “prime farmland” is defined, the unintended consequences of land use policies (such as agricultural preserves), the impacts of the conservation economy, and the need for a more holistic view of the various impacts.

The initial proposal for a two-week public review of the draft report was deemed too short by several Commissioners and that more time was needed to allow various state and county agencies to provide thoughtful feedback. Six weeks or forty-five days was found to be reasonable. A counterpoint was made to avoid “review by overkill” by setting clear boundaries for this report, while also proposing that farmland conversion analysis become a regular, recurring report to track changes over time.

Chair Burgis asked for public comment and there were two:

- James Newcomb, Deputy Director of Natural Infrastructure and Ecosystem Resilience for Department of Water Resources, stated that his agency measures success in terms of delivering multi-benefit projects—specifically, with habitat projects, how they address subsidence and flood risk in the Delta. He recommended that the report highlight indirect benefits to agriculture, such as flood risk reduction, explaining that while some land conversion is unavoidable in tidal marsh restoration, projects can reduce pressure on levees, thereby supporting the long-term viability of adjacent farmlands. He also expressed support for the 45-day comment period, which allows his agency time to engage the right experts and provide context to help the public assess whether the approach is balanced.
- Gilbert Cosio of River Delta Consulting stressed the importance of factual accuracy and of identifying the tipping point of agricultural losses in the Delta “before we start to lose the Delta.” He questioned the multi-benefit claims of projects such as Lookout Slough and urged a stronger focus on the long-term goal of preserving the Delta, its way of life, and Delta as a place.

Executive Director Ray summarized by saying the report's data will be verified and revised if necessary, and a 45-day public comment period with notification will be sent to all relevant agencies and counties.



## **12. Delta Conveyance Project Update – Janet Barbieri, Department of Water Resources**

Chair Burgis announced that she would remain for the presentation but could not be present for the discussion, and that Commissioner Hume would chair the remainder of the meeting in her place.

Virginia Gardiner introduced the speaker, Janet Barbieri, by first explaining that the purpose of the presentation was to inform the Commission ahead of the anticipated Delta Conveyance Project's Certification of Consistency with the Delta Plan this Fall.

Barbieri provided a project background on the Delta Conveyance Project, specifically the Bethany Reservoir Alignment. Key statistics include two new intakes totaling 6,000 CFS, a 45-mile tunnel, and one pumping plant. The project's operation will be integrated with the State Water Project and aims to mitigate declining water delivery due to climate change. Her presentation detailed the \$200 million Community Benefits Program, which she stated is intended to be community-driven and provide long-lasting benefits to the local community impacted by construction. An updated draft of the program's implementation plan is expected in early August. The permitting process is ongoing, with federal Biological Opinions and the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) expected by the end of the year, and State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) hearings continuing through October.

It was noted that Chair Burgis left the meeting at 7:51 p.m., along with Commissioner Shaw.

A discussion followed with Commissioners questioning the cost-benefit analysis of the Community Benefits Program, including whether the \$200 million Community Benefit Fund was balanced against project impacts. Barbieri explained that the fund was not intended as a dollar-for-dollar mitigation but as a resource for community-identified projects, and she noted that a revised implementation plan with details on fund distribution and a community-driven process would be released in the coming weeks.

Commissioners expressed concerns that the project posed risks, including potential saltwater intrusion, and that the financial investment may be too high given the uncertainty of benefits. Additional questions were raised regarding the lack of changes to upstream reservoir operations, even in dry years. Barbieri responded that project operations are designed as part of the aggregate system but acknowledged she did not have a direct answer to that concern.

In response to a question about storage of excess water, Barbieri stated that water would be managed through a combination of existing above-ground reservoirs and groundwater banking.

Commissioner Hume asked for public comment and there was none.

### **13. Commissioner Comments/Announcements**

Dotty Nygard, on behalf of Assemblymember Rhodessa Ransom, gave an update on AB1042 (Managed Honeybee Health Program), which would establish a program at the Department of Food and Agriculture to support pollinator health, has received unanimous bipartisan support and is now before the Senate Appropriations Committee.

She also noted that Assemblymember Ransom's request for an audit of the Department of Water Resources' Delta Conveyance Project failed to advance after the State Senate declined to agendaize the item at the July 15 Joint Legislative Audit Committee meeting. A coalition of supporters will continue efforts to hold them accountable.

### **14. Adjourn**

Commissioner Hume adjourned the meeting at 8:13 p.m.

**Draft Meeting Minutes**  
**Delta Protection Commission**  
**Executive Director Final Interviews**

Wednesday, August 6, 2025, 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (end time is approximate)  
Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy Conference Room  
1450 Halyard Drive, Suite 6, West Sacramento 95691  
(Main Meeting Location)

**Solano County Government Office**  
675 Texas St., Ste. 6002  
Fairfield, CA 94533  
(Teleconference Location)

**San Joaquin County Administration Building**  
44 N San Joaquin St, Ste 627  
Stockton, CA 95202  
(Teleconference Location)

## **Agenda**

### **1. Call to order and Flag Salute**

Chair Diane Burgis called the meeting to order at 8:57 a.m.

### **2. Welcome & Roll Call**

Commission Clerk Heather McClure called the roll. Present at roll call: Chair Burgis, Vice Chair John Vasquez, Commissioners Oscar Villegas, Patrick Hume, Anissa Williams, David Kent, Tom Slater, Jim Paroli, Josh Eddy (for Karen Ross), Brian Bugsch (for State lands Commission) and Gloria Sandoval (for Wade Crowfoot). Commissioners Sonny Dhaliwal, Dean Ruiz (for South Delta Reclamation District), Toks Omishakin, and ex officio Assemblymember Rhodesia Ransom and Senator Jerry McNerney were absent with no alternate present. At this time, a quorum was present.

It was noted that Commissioner Cameron Bregman arrived during the closed session at 9:37 a.m.

### **3. Public Comment – an opportunity for members of the public to address the Commission regarding items not on the agenda**

Chair Burgis asked for public comment and there was one:

Matt Conover of Reclamation District (RD) 1002 stated that preexisting plans for habitat restoration are threatening to tip the balance against agriculture. He noted that projects by organizations such as the Nature Conservancy and the Department of Water Resources

would lead to flooding in his district. For this reason, RD 1002 endorses the current agricultural economic analysis being conducted by DPC staff and encourages staff to survey landowners on potential economic losses to help quantify those impacts. He stated his RD will provide DPC staff with a list of contacts for this purpose.

## **Closed Session Agenda**

### **4. The Delta Protection Commission will meet in closed session to consider candidates for the Executive Director position. This closed session is authorized by Government Code section 11126, subdivision (a)(1).**

The Committee moved to closed session at 9:05 a.m. to discuss the items on its meeting agenda noticed for consideration in closed session. Counsel Jessica Tucker-Mohl and Erich WonSavage of CPS HR Consulting joined the Committee for the closed session. The closed session concluded at 12:22 p.m. Chair Burgis reported the Committee took no reportable action during the closed session.

A follow-up meeting was to be scheduled for August 18, 2025, to consider the appointment and salary of an Executive Director.

### **5. Adjourn**

Chair Burgis adjourned the meeting at 12:30 p.m.

Draft Meeting Minutes  
**Delta Protection Commission**  
**Executive Director Selection**

Thursday, September 4, 2025, 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (end time is approximate)  
California Natural Resources Agency  
715 P Street, Room 02-221  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
(Main Meeting Location)

**Contra Costa County Government Office**

3361 Walnut Boulevard, Suite 140  
Brentwood, CA 94513  
(Teleconference Location)

**Novo Nordisk Foundation**

Tuborg Havnevej 19,  
2900 Hellerup, Denmark  
(Teleconference Location)

**Solano County Government Office**

675 Texas St., Ste. 6002  
Fairfield, CA 94533  
(Teleconference Location)

**State Lands Commission**

100 Howe Avenue, Suite 100  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
(Teleconference Location)

**Slater Farms Inc.**

36721 Netherlands Rd  
Clarksburg, Ca. 95612  
(Teleconference Location)

**CDFA Building**

1220 N Street,  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
(Teleconference Location)

**San Joaquin County Administration  
Building**

44 N San Joaquin St, Ste 627  
Stockton, CA 95202  
(Teleconference Location)

**Delta Farms Reclamation District No. 2030**

5555 Zuckerman Road  
McDonald Island, CA 95206  
(Teleconference Location)

**Agenda**

**1. Call to order and Flag Salute**

Chair Diane Burgis called the meeting to order at 11:10 a.m.

**2. Welcome & Roll Call**

Chair Burgis called for a short recess to accommodate the arrival of Commissioner Williams. At 11:29 a.m., once Commissioner Williams arrived at the Chair's location, Chair Burgis requested roll call. Commission Clerk Heather McClure then called the roll: Chair Burgis and Commissioner Anissa Williams were present at the Contra Costa County

Government Office in Brentwood, CA; Vice Chair John Vasquez was present at the Solano County Government Office in Fairfield, CA; Commissioner Oscar Villegas was present at 4720 South Dudley Street in Denver, CO; Commissioner Patrick Hume was present at the Sacramento County Administration Building on 700 H Street; Commissioner David Kent was present at the main meeting location; Commissioner Tom Slater was present at Slater Farms in Clarksburg, CA; and Commissioner Brian Bugsch was present at the State Lands Commission in Sacramento, CA. Commissioners Sonny Dhaliwal, Cameron Bregman, Dean Ruiz (for South Delta Reclamation District), Jim Paroli, Toks Omishakin, Karen Ross, Wade Crowfoot, and Ex officio Senator Jerry McNerney and Assemblymember Rhodesia Ransom were absent with no alternates present. A quorum was established at this time.

Chair Burgis noted that not all teleconference locations listed on the agenda were utilized and that some Commissioners were attending from locations not listed. Counsel Aitchison advised that it was appropriate to proceed with the meeting for its intended purposes.

**3. Public Comment – an opportunity for members of the public to address the Commission regarding items not on the agenda**

Chair Burgis asked for public comment and there was none.

**Closed Session Agenda**

**4. The Delta Protection Commission will meet in closed session to consider candidates for the Executive Director position. This closed session is authorized by Government Code section 11126, subdivision (a)(1).**

The Commission moved to closed session at 11:33 a.m. to discuss the items on its meeting agenda noticed for consideration in closed session. Erich WonSavage of CPS HR Consulting, Interim Executive Director Dan Ray, and Counsel Danae Aitchison joined the Commission for the closed session. The closed session concluded at 12:18 p.m. Chair Burgis reported the Committee took no reportable action during the closed session.

**5. Consider the appointment and salary of an Executive Director – The Commission**

Erich WonSavage began the discussion by noting that the salary range for this position is on the lower end, particularly given that some current DPC employees earn more than the maximum for this role. The salary range is \$133,616 to \$153,384, while certain staff in lower-ranked positions currently earn up to \$170,024.

Commissioner Slater asked whether, although the State would not authorize a higher range, it would reject an offer made at the top of the existing range. Interim Executive Director Ray responded that the State would not decline the offer but would require justification for offering the maximum salary.

Chair Burgis commented that, in the future, the Commission should work with the Governor's Office to establish a salary structure that ensures the Executive Director earns a certain percentage above those they manage. Commissioner Bugsch agreed, suggesting

the salary should be at least 5% higher than the highest-paid staff member. Chair Burgis concluded by stating that she would like to advocate for this approach in the future, and that for the present the Commission should offer the top of the current range.

## **6. Adjourn**

Chair Burgis adjourned the meeting at 12:30 p.m.

**Draft Meeting Minutes**  
**Delta Protection Commission**  
**Executive Director Selection Ad Hoc Committee**

Wednesday, July 23, 2025, 1:30-2:30 p.m. (end time is approximate)  
2101 Stone Blvd, Suite 200  
West Sacramento, CA 95691

**Agenda**

**1. Call to Order and Flag Salute**

Chair Diane Burgis called the meeting to order at 1:34 p.m.

**2. Welcome and Roll Call**

Commission Clerk Heather McClure called the roll. Present at roll call: Chair Burgis, Commissioners Oscar Villegas, Patrick Hume, Tom Slater, and Gloria Sandoval.

At this time, a quorum was present.

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

Chair Burgis asked for public comment and there was none.

**Closed Session Agenda**

**4. The Executive Director Selection Ad Hoc Committee will meet in closed session to consider candidates for the Executive Director position. This closed session is authorized by Government Code section 11126, subdivision (a)(1).**

The Committee moved to closed session at 1:36 PM to discuss the items on its meeting agenda noticed for consideration in closed session. The Interim Executive Director Dan Ray joined the Committee for the closed session. The closed session concluded at 2:42 p.m. Chair Burgis reported the Committee took no reportable action during the closed session.

**5. Adjourn**

Chair Burgis adjourned the meeting at 2:43 p.m.

The next meeting was continued to July 29, 2025, as posted at the physical meeting location and on the Commission's website in accordance with Government Code sections 11128.5 and 11129.



**Draft Meeting Minutes**  
**Delta Protection Commission**  
**Executive Director Selection Ad Hoc Committee**

Wednesday, July 29, 2025, 1:00- 4:00 p.m. (end time is approximate)  
2101 Stone Blvd., Suite 200  
West Sacramento, CA 95691

**Agenda**

**1. Call to Order and Flag Salute**

Chair Diane Burgis called the meeting to order at 1:06 p.m.

**2. Welcome and Roll Call**

Commission Clerk Heather McClure called the roll. Present at roll call: Chair Burgis, Commissioners Oscar Villegas, Patrick Hume, Tom Slater, and Gloria Sandoval.

At this time, a quorum was present.

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

Chair Burgis asked for public comment and there was none.

**Closed Session Agenda**

**4. The Executive Director Selection Ad Hoc Committee will meet in closed session to consider candidates for the Executive Director position. This closed session is authorized by Government Code section 11126, subdivision (a)(1).**

The Committee moved to closed session at 1:09 p.m. to discuss the items on its meeting agenda noticed for consideration in closed session. Erich WonSavage of CPS HR Consulting joined the Committee for the closed session. The closed session concluded at 4:32 p.m. Chair Burgis reported the Committee took no reportable action during the closed session.

**5. Adjourn**

Chair Burgis adjourned the meeting at 4:36 p.m.

## **Delta Protection Commission Meeting**

September 18, 2025

### **AGENDA ITEM 7: Appointment to National Heritage Area (NHA) Advisory Committee**

**Prepared by:** Blake Roberts, Program Manager

**Presented by:** Blake Roberts, Program Manager

**Recommended Action:** Approve appointment of NHA Advisory Committee members

**Type of Action:** Vote

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#### **Background**

National Heritage Area (NHA) Management Plan Strategy 5.2.3 guided the development of the NHA Advisory Committee, which ensures partner and public engagement in achieving Management Plan goals. The Commission approved a charter for the 15-member committee on July 18, 2024, and appointed 12 public members and 4 alternates on September 19, 2024. The public members serve three-year terms and may be reappointed. Meetings are open to the public.

For the public seats, the Commission makes four (4) three-year appointments annually. For the first appointments, four (4) seats will expire in September 2025, four (4) seats in September 2026, and four (4) seats in September 2027. The expiration date for seats were chosen randomly at the first NHA Advisory Committee meeting on October 31, 2024.

Commission staff solicited applications for the NHA Advisory Committee from interested members of the public beginning on June 2 and closing July 18. Six people applied for four open public seats:

- Jennifer Chapman
- LeighAnn Davis
- Dwayne Eubanks (Incumbent)
- David Stuart (Incumbent)
- Dan Whaley (Incumbent)
- Stuart Walthall (Incumbent)

Their applications follow this staff report, in alphabetical order.

## **Recommended Action**

Staff recommends the reappointment of Dwayne Eubanks, David Stuart, Stuart Walthall, and Dan Whaley as regular members and appointment of Jennifer Chapman and LeighAnn Davis as alternate members.

## ***Relationship to Vision 2030 (Commission strategic plan)***

### **Delta Heritage**

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.

# Applications for 2025 Openings on the Delta National Heritage Area Advisory Committee

## Jennifer Chapman

Roseville

### **1. Briefly describe why you wish to serve on the NHA Advisory Committee.**

The Delta is rich in natural and cultural resources and the newly established National Heritage Area is an exciting frontier for interpretation, education, conservation and partnerships. This part of California is interconnected to public lands I have been deeply involved with during my career-- Eldorado National Forest, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, the East Bay National Parks, and Point Reyes National Seashore. The significance of immigration history associated with the Delta provides narratives and place-based learning opportunities to help the public explore how immigration has shaped California and the United States. The current mass deportation initiative that is underway needs to be understood in a much larger context that the Delta NHA can help provide.

Having recently moved to Roseville, it has also been great to realize the extent of the salmon population in the Dry Creek watershed, with adult salmon observed just 2 blocks from my apartment. The health of the Delta is directly connected to the health of this population, and I believe the NHA can have a strong role in ensuring that outcome.

During my time living in Placerville, it became clear that many historic resources in that area were at risk, and I launched a campaign envisioning a California Gold Rush National Historical Park. The scope of this concept included the Delta region. Here is a link to the introductory campaign presentation (PDF): <https://1848gold.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/ca-gold-rush-nhp-intro-2.pdf>

It would be extremely rewarding to contribute to the stewardship of the Delta by being a member of the NHA Advisory Committee. I would love to help shape the visitor experience, develop partnerships, and protect the many natural and cultural resources in the Delta.

### **2. Describe your qualifications and skills that would benefit the NHA Advisory Committee.**

I have 30 years experience working with national parks and national forests in public affairs, communications, resource interpretation, and environmental planning. I have established and nurtured numerous partnerships with diverse stakeholders to achieve shared goals. This has included establishing internship opportunities, and continuing education credits for teacher certification programs that involved resource based / curriculum based activities. As part of my position with the Eldorado National Forest, I was the coordinator for a federal advisory committee so I am familiar with committee participation and management. This was the El Dorado County Resource Advisory Committee (RAC), one of

90 committees authorized under the Secure Rural Schools Act which allocated federal funds from timber revenues for projects that were primarily focused on watershed protection within or adjacent to national forests. I am a creative, analytical team player with advanced skills in writing, public speaking, digital media and visual communication. I have demonstrated effectiveness working with resource specialists, partners, communities, youth groups, seniors, elected officials and the news media. I also have strong interdisciplinary knowledge of natural science and resource management. I have experience with many grant programs such as California Fire Safe Councils, El Dorado County RAC, CAL FIRE Forest Health Program, Sierra Nevada Conservancy Watershed Improvement Program, California Native Plant Society, and Save the Redwoods League. This has included writing several successful grants for fire education and research in plant ecology. Experience with grant programs would benefit the NHA Advisory Committee as it moves forward to implement the recently approved management plan. Other skills I can contribute include publications development, environmental review / NEPA coordination, soliciting public input through focus groups and surveys, community engagement through activities and events, the use of social media, and volunteer management.

**3. Describe your background, employment, volunteer work or other efforts (including any committees, commissions, councils, etc., to which you currently belong), and/or work you do in Delta communities or institutions, as they relate to the NHA.**

**Work experience:**

2014-2024 / Public Affairs Officer, Eldorado National Forest, PLACERVILLE, CA

2001-2014 / Fire Communication & Education Specialist, Point Reyes National Seashore / Golden Gate NRA, POINT REYES STATION, CA

1997-2001 / Park Ranger & Education Coordinator, John Day Fossil Beds National Monument, DAYVILLE, OR

1994-1997 / Park Ranger & Museum Curator, Mount Rushmore National Memorial, KEYSTONE, SD

1992-1994 / Park Ranger, Kenai Fjords National Park, SEWARD, AK

**\*\*I have worked on a wide variety management plans for different national parks and national forests. One highlight was working with the National Park Service regional office in San Francisco, on the the San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains River Special Resource Study and Environmental Assessment which eventually led to the establishment of the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument. I also contributed to the Interpretive Development Program that established national standards for interpretation. I have developed numerous interpretive programs, guided walks, exhibits and children's activities.**

**Education:**

MS | Biology/Plant Ecology - San Francisco State University, 2011

NEPA Certificate | Utah State University, 2009

MS | Science Education - Oregon State University, 2001

BS | Natural Science - University of Alaska / Anchorage, 1999

MFA | Visual Arts - University of California / Berkeley, 1989

BA | Visual Arts - Brown University, 1987

**Other accomplishments:**

- Campaign for California Gold Rush National Historical Park / 2018-2020
- Friends of Clay Street (Neighborhood Advocacy Group, founder-coordinator) / 2017-2018
- California Interagency Incident Management Teams (PIO) / 2006-2017
- Homeowners' Association Board of Directors (2 HOAs, Novato and San Rafael) / 2008-2015
- City of San Rafael Climate Change Action Plan (Team Member) / 2008
- Volunteer Service: American River Conservancy, Wakamatsu Farm / Historic Site, Centerpoint Community Church, Blue Line Arts, Dry Creek Conservancy, Terraces of Roseville Senior Activities Program / 2020-2025
- Grants for Plant Ecology Research: California Native Plant Society, San Francisco State University, Save the Redwoods League / 2008-2010
- Freelance Reporter, "The Northern Light", University of Alaska newspaper / 1993-1994; Smithsonian / 1982

**Are you willing to serve as an alternate member?**

Yes

# **LeighAnn Davis**

Brentwood

## **1. Briefly describe why you wish to serve on the NHA Advisory Committee.**

I would like to serve on the committee because I am a Delta resident, historian, and leader. I would like to use my skills to advocate for my community.

## **2. Describe your qualifications and skills that would benefit the NHA Advisory Committee.**

I enjoy building teams and working with others to solve problems. I have strong analytical, critical thinking, and research skills that can benefit the advisory committee. I bring a historical perspective on water and the delta conservation that is unique to my education and public work, centering people and economic systems.

## **3. Describe your background, employment, volunteer work or other efforts (including any committees, commissions, councils, etc., to which you currently belong), and/or work you do in Delta communities or institutions, as they relate to the NHA.**

I am currently the executive director of the Contra Costa County Historical Society. I have served as an archivist at Park Day School (Oakland) and the USS Hornet (Alameda). I am a Delta Leadership Alumni and centered Delta history in my educational journey at CSUEB. I am a public speaker and enjoy researching constitutional law and labor history in my spare time.

## **Are you willing to serve as an alternate member?**

Yes

# **Dwayne Eubanks**

Antioch

## **1. Briefly describe why you wish to serve on the NHA Advisory Committee.**

To discover preserve and promote the heritage of the Sacramento San Joaquin Delta Area. History and Nature are my interest.

## **2. Describe your qualifications and skills that would benefit the NHA Advisory Committee.**

Retired Senior Business Systems Analyst for the Judicia Council of California (16 yrs)

President of the Antioch Historical Society 2019-2023. Past-President Antioch Historical Society 2024-present.

Education Committee Chairperson 2023-Present. Team Lead First Congregational Church mini-tower project.

Antioch Crime Prevention Commissioner 2015-2020

## **3. Describe your background, employment, volunteer work or other efforts (including any committees, commissions, councils, etc., to which you currently belong), and/or work you do in Delta communities or institutions, as they relate to the NHA.**

President of the Antioch Historical Society 2019-2023. Past-President Antioch Historical Society 2024-present.

Education Committee Chairperson 2023-Present. Team Lead First Congregational Church mini-tower project.

Antioch Crime Prevention Commissioner 2015-2020

## **Are you willing to serve as an alternate member?**

Yes



# David Stuart

Sacramento

## **1. Briefly describe why you wish to serve on the NHA Advisory Committee.**

Interest in the Indigenous cultures/history, ag history, and history of the Delta. Lifelong recreational participation—wildlife observation, boating, fishing (brother was a guide for decades), and visiting Delta heritage communities. Want to preserve the remaining natural and cultural values of the Delta.

## **2. Describe your qualifications and skills that would benefit the NHA Advisory Committee.**

Family homesteaded on Grand Island in 1860 and I'm a 4th/5th generation native of San Joaquin county. Former director of Sacramento History Museum, San Joaquin County Historical Museum, and Sacramento Science Center (now MoSAC). Former planner/cultural resource specialist for National Park Service. Anthropology /biology studies at Modesto JC, Fresno State, and U of Colorado. Author of articles on Delta Indigenous cultures/history and ag history. Served on NHA Advisory Committee since 2020. Consultant to 1883 Clarksburg Schoolhouse project since 2020. Board of Sacramento River Delta Historical Society 2022-2024.

## **3. Describe your background, employment, volunteer work or other efforts (including any committees, commissions, councils, etc., to which you currently belong), and/or work you do in Delta communities or institutions, as they relate to the NHA.**

NHA Advisory Committee, 2020-present.

Clarksburg Schoolhouse, 2020-present.

Board of Exhibit Envoy (nonprofit that develops traveling exhibitions for small museums), 2008-present.

Board of Sacramento River Delta Historical Society, 2022-2024.

Interim manager, Sacramento History Museum, 2018.

Executive Director (CEO), San Joaquin County Historical Society, 2006-2018.

Vice President of Operations (COO), Foundation for California Community Colleges, 1999-2006.

Assistant Executive Director (COO), Faculty Association of California Community Colleges, 1996-1999.

Executive Director (CEO), combined Sacramento history and science museums, 1994-1996.

Executive Director (CEO), Sacramento Science Center, 1988-1993.

Supervisor of Interpretation and Tourism, City of Ventura, 1983-1988.

Planner/Cultural Resources Specialist, National Park Service (Denver Service Center, deployed throughout US), 1978-1983.

Assistant State Archaeologist, Colorado, 1976-1978.

University of Colorado (anthropology), 1976.

California State University-Fresno (anthropology/biology), 1975.

Modesto Junior College (general ed.), 1972.

Park Aide (seasonal), Caswell Memorial State Park, 1971-1973.

Farm labor, San Joaquin and Stanislaus counties, 1963-1971.

**Are you willing to serve as an alternate member?**

Yes

# **Stuart Walthall**

Walnut Grove

## **1. Briefly describe why you wish to serve on the NHA Advisory Committee.**

In order to serve my community I would like to be aware of our National Heritage Area status, its current mission, and goals for the future.

## **2. Describe your qualifications and skills that would benefit the NHA Advisory Committee.**

I am currently Chairman of the Locke Foundation whose mission is to educate the public about the history, culture, and legacy of Locke and surrounding heritage communities. I am also Chairman of the Locke Management Association, responsible for maintenance and promotion of the town of Locke.

## **3. Describe your background, employment, volunteer work or other efforts (including any committees, commissions, councils, etc., to which you currently belong), and/or work you do in Delta communities or institutions, as they relate to the NHA.**

I have been a professional musician for 52 years. I have been Chairman of the Locke Foundation for 8 years and Chairman of Locke Management for 4 years. For ten years I have been active in Angels of the Fiends, an organization which brings Christmas to local farm worker children and their families. These activities have helped me stay aware of the organizations, businesses and most importantly, the people who reside within our National Heritage Area. The Locke Foundation, in conjunction with the Locke Boarding House Museum, is looking forward to working with the DNHA Passport Program, and helping bring awareness to the public regarding our unique and meaningful status as a NHA.

## **Are you willing to serve as an alternate member?**

Yes

## **Dan Whaley**

Courtland

### **1. Briefly describe why you wish to serve on the NHA Advisory Committee.**

Promote improving the Delta and educating others to the jewel we have and must protect.

### **2. Describe your qualifications and skills that would benefit the NHA Advisory Committee.**

Business experience and legal training

### **3. Describe your background, employment, volunteer work or other efforts (including any committees, commissions, councils, etc., to which you currently belong), and/or work you do in Delta communities or institutions, as they relate to the NHA.**

Chairman of the Delta Legacy Community Inc - non profit group representing the eleven Legacy communities of the Delta.

Owner with family of the Willow Ballroom and Event Center

### **Are you willing to serve as an alternate member?**

Yes

## Delta Protection Commission Meeting

September 18, 2025

### AGENDA ITEM 08: Executive Director Appointment and Salary

**Prepared by:** Erich WonSavage, Principal Executive Recruiter, CPS-HR

**Presented by:** Erich WonSavage, Principal Executive Recruiter, CPS-HR  
Dan Ray, Interim Executive Director

**Recommended Action: Discuss and Provide Direction on Executive Director annual salary**

**Type of Action:** Discussion

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#### Background

CPS-HR Consulting was engaged to provide an executive search for the Delta Protection Commission's next Executive Director. Finalist candidates are being interviewed by the Delta Protection Commission in closed session at this meeting. The Commissioners may provide direction that an offer/appointment be made to one candidate, contingent upon background check, and may provide direction regarding one or more alternate candidates.

#### Current Status

Below is a summary of information collected through the process for discussion.

State Classification & Salary for DPC's Executive Director – GS00:

	Min	Max
Annual	\$137,616	\$153,384
Monthly	\$11,468	\$12,782

- The previous incumbent's final pay was: \$146,352.
- Some DPC staff make more than the maximum of the Executive Director salary range – as much as \$170,024.
- The maximum consideration for this position is \$153,384.

#### Recommended Action

- (1) Discuss and provide direction regarding a hiring salary for the Executive Director position within the range of \$137,616 - \$153,384.

## Delta Protection Commission Meeting

September 18, 2025

### AGENDA ITEM 11: Executive Director's Report

**Prepared by:** Dan Ray, Interim Executive Director

**Presented by:** Dan Ray, Interim Executive Director

**Recommended Action:** Receive the Executive Director's Report

**Type of Action:** Receive

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### Commission Budget Update

Budget and Spending for Delta Protection Commission - FY 25/26 Projected Budget

FY 25/26 Categories	Budget Amount	Total Expenses and Projections	Difference
Salaries/Wages and Benefits	\$1,553,000	\$1,144,300	\$408,700
Operating Expenses	\$410,700	\$769,120**	(\$358,420)
Reimbursements	\$10,000	\$0	\$10,000
Total	\$1,973,700	\$1,913,420	\$60,280

\*\*This includes the NHA Tourism Marketing Plan contract.

### National Heritage Area Advisory Committee

The National Heritage Area (NHA) Advisory Committee met on Wednesday, August 20, 2025, at the Benicia Capitol State Historic Park in Benicia. The agenda included a presentation on Benicia's Matthew Turner Shipyard and the Delta Conservancy's Proposition 4 funding, reports from the Delta 250 and water tour ad hoc task groups, updates on the Tourism Branding and Marketing Plan, partnership and passport programs, Delta Heritage Forum, and federal funding, and discussion of business partnerships. Committee members and the public also participated in a tour of the Benicia Arsenal.

The next NHA Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 29, from 1 to 3 p.m. at a location to be determined.

### National Heritage Area Federal FY 25 Funds

National Park Service (NPS) staff informed Commission staff that our funding for Federal Fiscal Year 2025 (October 1, 2024-September 30, 2025) will stay at \$157,500 rather than increasing to \$500,000 as initially expected. NHAs typically receive higher funding after their management plan is approved. NPS staff explained that NHAs are eligible for increased funding 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 additional funding in Federal Fiscal Year 2026 (October 1, 2025-September 30, 2026).

### **National Heritage Area Partnership Program**

In March, the Commission delegated authority to the Executive Director to sign Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with NHA partners. Since the July Commission meeting, the Executive Director signed MOUs with California State Parks, Diablo Range District, Crockett Museum, Dutra Museum of Dredging, East Bay Regional Park District, Friends of the 1883 Clarksburg Schoolhouse, and Sacramento Public Library.

### **National Heritage Area Passport Program**

Passport to Your National Parks is a popular nationwide program that encourages travelers to get special “passports” stamped at participating national parks and national heritage areas. The Delta NHA is participating in this program; launch is pending successful order of the stamps from the approved National Park Service vendor.

As of this writing, staff have lined up 24 stamping station locations with NHA Partners. They have also prepared substantial materials to facilitate and promote the program and the NHA, including:

- A webpage: [delta.ca.gov/passport](https://delta.ca.gov/passport). When the program is live, the page will include an interactive map where visitors can find stamping stations and other attractions nearby.
- A [Delta NHA fact sheet \(PDF\)](#): The fact sheet includes a “By the Numbers” section, basic information about the NHA, and an updated NHA map that lists all cities and towns in the NHA (this map has replaced a less-informative map on the NHA webpage).
- A Delta reading list: [delta.ca.gov/nha/reading-list](https://delta.ca.gov/nha/reading-list). This was designed especially for libraries hosting stamping stations.
- Two types of displays to house self-serve stamping materials. The displays include QR codes and links to the NHA webpage, VisitCAdelta.com, the Delta reading list, and a website where people can purchase passports. The larger display will include a fact-sheet holder.

## **National Heritage Area Outreach**

- Commission staff and NHA Advisory Committee members participated in the following outreach efforts:
- On July 9, NHA Advisory Committee members Chris Lim and Trevor Rice discussed the formation and current activities of the committee.
- Blake Roberts spoke about the NHA to the Rotary Club of Oakley on August 21 in Oakley.
- 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.

## **Delta Conveyance**

Staff are preparing a briefing document for the Commission's Conveyance sub-committee in preparation for the Department of Water Resources (DWR) anticipated filing of a Certification of Consistency with the Delta Plan sometime before the end of the year.

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 Programmatic Agreement has been signed by the signatories: US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), DWR and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the Corps submitted it to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation at the end of August. Since the Commission may wish to join with other consulting parties such as the Delta Counties Coalition and sign as a concurring party, staff have invited the Corps and SHPO to present on the 106 process and provisions to the Commission, potentially at the November meeting.

## **Great California Delta Trail – Clarksburg Branch Line Trail Extension**

The project description for initiating California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review is nearing completion. The project has been separated into two segments which can be completed independently, with the portion of the trail already owned by the City to undergo CEQA review this fall, and the segment connecting to Clarksburg to begin CEQA approximately February 2026. The consultant team has made contacts with landowners along the proposed route, and once the project description is finalized outreach will also begin with tribal representatives. The Clarksburg Branch Line Trail extension is a proposed 6.4-mile, Class I paved multi-use (bicycling, walking, and horseback-riding) trail within a rail corridor purchased by the City of West Sacramento in 2005. As envisioned it would extend into unincorporated Yolo County along existing roads to the Clarksburg community and would include buried fiber optic conduit.



## **Commission Land Use Comments**

In 2016, the Delta Protection Commission delegated to the Executive Director its authority to comment and provide recommendations concerning land use projects and other activities as specified in Public Resources Code sections 29770(d), 29773(a) and 29703.5(a) (Resolution 16-01). Commission staff conduct weekly reviews of land use decisions by reviewing agendas for local governments and other public entities across the Delta as further described below. This review process includes:

- Local governments and agencies that make land use decisions in the Delta Primary and Secondary zones.
- Public notices for permits for selected regulatory agencies such as the US Army Corps of Engineers.
- Documents and notices posted as required under the California Environmental Quality Act on the Office of Planning and Research website.

The total weekly review of agendas and updates includes approximately 65 different agencies or local government departments. When appropriate, staff prepare comment letters on projects for the Executive Director's signature. Additionally, staff prepare letters in support of core issues and projects of local or regional importance. Correspondence sent since the previous meeting is presented in each Commission packet and summarized below.

### **Delta Cross Channel Gate Improvement Project Environmental Assessment (EA)**

Staff provided comments to the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation on its EA for the Delta Cross Channel Improvement Project. Located on the Sacramento River between Locke and Walnut Grove, Sacramento County, the gate was originally constructed in 1951 as a controlled diversion channel to manage water quality and flows in the central and southern Delta, and to help reduce salinity intrusion rates in the western Delta. It has also become an important management tool to prevent listed salmonids and other fish from being diverted towards and entrained in the massive pumps of the State Water Project (SWP) and Central Valley Project (CVP) in the south Delta. When open, Sacramento River flows are partially diverted into Snodgrass Slough and the Lower Mokelumne River, to the CVP and SWP. The open gate also offers a shortcut for recreational boaters to access parts of the eastern and south Delta. The aging structure needs updating. Improvements will include automating the gate for full remote operation and reliability, and to improve safety, and will formalize existing bank fishing and non-motorized watercraft launch with a new public access ramp.

Comments offered general support for the project, especially for the proposed public access ramp for non-motorized watercraft launch and fishing, which would enhance recreational opportunities for Locke, Walnut Grove, and beyond. Staff also recommended including reference to the Great California Delta Trail, and adherence to the “Good Neighbor” practices included in the Delta Plan’s Appendix Q2 for the adjacent agricultural operation. Finally, staff encouraged continued coordination with California State Parks as they move forward with the General Plan process for the adjacent Delta Meadows state property.

### **Delta Leadership Program**

Applications were expected to open Sept. 12 for the Delta Leadership Program, a joint effort of the Delta Protection Commission and the Delta Leadership Program. [The program](#) supports sustained leadership development in the region. The announcement for the 2026 program should be available at the link above, and Commission members are invited to share it with promising Delta leaders they have encountered.

### **Commission Communications**

This section covers newsletters and website articles published June 19-Aug. 26, with engagement highlights.

#### **Websites**

Our “coming soon” Delta NHA Passport Program page went live at [delta.ca.gov/passport](https://delta.ca.gov/passport). It explains the program and how Delta venues can become stamping station hosts. Once the program launches, it will include an interactive map showing the stamping stations (24 and counting) and nearby attractions. We have not promoted this webpage until the program launches; it is here because passport aficionados actively seek out this information.

We have hired an intern to begin updating VisitCAdelta.com, the DPC website that promotes tourism in the Delta. The effort is focused on simplifying the site and updating the venue/facility listing, which had 571 locations, some of which had closed or had new websites. We anticipate major recommendations for the website as part of the NHA branding and marketing plan (see Aug. 5 article below), so we are holding off on making major changes at this time.

#### **Website articles**

June 30: [Rice: The Other Climate- and Wildlife-Friendly Solution for the Delta](#) (most-clicked news story during this period)

July 24: [Farmland Conversion Study Comment Period – Through Sept. 8](#) (June 17

[article about farmland conversion workshops](#) was second most-clicked news story during this period; this story was fourth-most-clicked)

Aug. 5: [California's First National Heritage Area is Getting a Fresh Brand Identity](#) (this was a press release; The Fairfield Daily Republic [ran a story on it Aug. 6](#)), and it was [highlighted prominently in Mavens Notebook as well](#). (Third most-clicked news story during this period)

### [Newsletters](#)

July 1: [Delta Happenings](#): Delta Rice, Farmland Conversion, Bridge Projects (Delta rice was the most-clicked story of all newsletters in this period)

July 10: [Delta Heritage Courier](#): Port Chicago, Rattlesnakes, Whole Lotta Pears (Had the highest rate of clicked links for the period; a CBS 13 video about “The Leaning Building of Locke” was the most-clicked item in this newsletter.)

July 29: [Delta Happenings](#): Tunnel, Farmland Conversion, Ryde Peacocks (our July Commission meeting staff report about the Commission’s response to the Army Corps of Engineers Programmatic Agreement for the Sect. 106 process for the tunnel was the most-clicked link in this newsletter.)

Aug. 12: [Delta Happenings](#): Tunnel Accountability, Marketing the NHA, Webb Tract (Rio Vista Airport Day was the most-clicked item in this newsletter and the third most-clicked during this period.)

Aug. 26: [Delta Happenings](#): Tunnel, Rice Partners, Delta Cleanups, Bridge Work, Events, and More (The [Delta Counties Coalition press release \(PDF\)](#) was the most-clicked link in this newsletter and the second most-clicked during this period.)

### **Upcoming Delta Events**

For the most current event listings, subscribe to Delta Happenings at [delta.ca.gov/get-connected](https://delta.ca.gov/get-connected). For access to recent newsletters, go to [delta.ca.gov/newsletters](https://delta.ca.gov/newsletters).

## DELTA PROTECTION COMMISSION

*Diane Burgis, Chair (Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors)*

2101 Stone Blvd., Suite 200, West Sacramento, CA 95691

(916) 375-4800 | [delta.ca.gov](http://delta.ca.gov)

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July 29, 2025

Carolyn Bragg

Bureau of Reclamation, Bay-Delta Office

801 I Street, Suite 140

Sacramento, CA 95814

SENT VIA EMAIL: [cbragg@usbr.gov](mailto:cbragg@usbr.gov)

Re: Delta Cross Channel Gate Improvement Project Environmental Assessment

Dear Ms. Bragg,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Delta Cross Channel Gate Improvements Project (Project) prepared by the Bureau of Reclamation (Bureau) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The Delta Protection Commission (Commission) is a California State agency created by 1992 legislation that declared “the 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” (California Public Resources Code (PRC) section 29701).

The Delta Reform Act of 2009 declared that the basic goals for the Delta are to provide a more reliable water supply for California and protect, restore and enhance the Delta ecosystem, “in a manner that protects and enhances the unique cultural, recreational, natural resource and agricultural values of the Delta as an evolving place” (PRC section 29702). Further, the Commission is identified as a “forum for Delta residents to engage in decisions regarding actions to recognize and enhance the unique cultural, recreational, and agricultural resources of the Delta” (PRC section 29703.5(a)).

We offer the following comments from the perspective of these directives and goals and in furtherance of the collaborative spirit the Bureau has shown in developing the Proposed Action. In general, we support the Project in that it will ensure continuance of current benefits of the cross channel gate as well as improving the public access benefit and coordinating facility improvements such as parking with the Delta Meadows Park Property.

**Recreation:** The EA's Section 3.9 (Recreation), mentions the economic importance to the Delta of marinas and Legacy Communities, and also notes current opportunistic use by boaters of the open channel gate to shorten travel times. We strongly support the proposed public access ramp for non-motorized watercraft launch and fishing access which demonstrates the Project's potential for sustainably enhancing the recreation economy, consistent with the Commission's Land Use and Resource Management Plan and the Delta Stewardship Council's Delta Plan policies and recommendations for encouraging recreation and tourism.

The section describes establishment of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area (NHA). However the NHA was established by the U.S. Congress, not the California legislature. Specifically it was enacted in the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act (P.L. 116-9, Section 6001).

The section should also include reference to the Great California Delta Trail System legislation (Public Resources Code §5852-5855), which directs the Commission to adopt a plan and implementation program for a trail network that forms a continuous recreational corridor through five Delta counties (Sacramento, San Joaquin, Contra Costa, Solano and Yolo). The multi-modal trail network is envisioned to include water trails, and would link the San Francisco Bay Trail to planned Sacramento River trails in Sacramento and Yolo counties. The Commission's 2022 Great California Delta Trail Master Plan includes a recommendation for both formal trail development through the Delta Meadows Park Property, and potential designation of the Locke – Walnut Grove - Isleton area as a Delta "Adventure Hub." The proposed new public access ramp could provide an excellent launch point for a water trail.

Commission Resolutions No. 01-12 (incorporating bicycle lanes along improved Delta levees, and No. 02-12 (incorporating bicycle lanes into future projects on State Routes 4, 12, and 160) may also be relevant in the event that a future trail diverting bicycles off the River Road (a Sacramento County Scenic Road) might utilize the former Southern Pacific Railroad bridge.

We strongly encourage continued coordination with California State Parks in the process of Project final design, timing of construction and construction activities and laydown areas that may affect both recreational users of and planning for the Delta Meadows Park Property. As noted in the EA, State Parks is in the midst of a General Planning process for the property and it is to be hoped that the timing and sequencing of improvements to both facilities can be optimized.

**Resources Eliminated from Further Analysis (Table 3-1) - Agriculture:** While the EA anticipates no adverse effect to agricultural resources, the Project is located adjacent to active agricultural operations at the orchard to the south. We strongly encourage the

construction activities to be coordinated equally with the property owner(s) as with State Parks, and suggest the incorporation of the attached “Good Neighbor” practices that are adopted in the Delta Plan. Although these practices are focused on habitat restoration projects, they are applicable to any construction project adjacent to agricultural operations.

**Agencies and Persons Consulted:** The EA’s Section 4.1.1 (Agency Coordination) contains a minor error – the Delta Protection Advisory Committee (DPAC) is a committee, not an agency, created and appointed pursuant to PRC Section 29753.

Finally, we appreciate the significant outreach effort that the Bureau made in developing this project, with presentations to the Delta Protection Advisory Committee and to the Commission staff over the past several years. We hope to continue this coordination in future. Should you have any questions regarding our comments, please contact Program Manager Virginia Gardiner at (530) 650-6471 or [virginia.gardiner@delta.ca.gov](mailto:virginia.gardiner@delta.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

Dan Ray  
Interim Executive Director

Attachment – Delta Plan Good Neighbor Checklist

Cc: Patrick Hume, Sacramento County Supervisor and Commissioner  
Megan Harrison, California State Parks Diablo Region District Planner