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EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT March 25, 2015

~ PROGRAM UPDATE ~

Ecosystem Restoration

<u>Habitat Restoration Project Tracking Database</u>: The database—accessed through EcoAtlas—will be completed by the end of June. Delta habitat projects will be incorporated and detailed project information will be publicly viewable and extractable. Restoration practitioners will have the ability to enter and update project data through EcoAtlas to maintain current information over time. In May 2015, the Conservancy will hold a working meeting to demonstrate and train interested parties on using EcoAtlas.

Sharing and Visualizing Intensive Data Assessments Project: The Conservancy is scheduling a workgroup meeting in April to begin identifying high-priority datasets in EcoAtlas. This project is funded by the US EPA 2014 Wetland Development Program and its goals are to integrate site-specific data in EcoAtlas and further develop tools for visualization and reporting. The data added through this project will be visualized in EcoAtlas through integration into interactive, detailed maps and dynamic reporting summaries such as landscape profile reports which summarize information at various spatial scales.

<u>Delta Watershed Initiative Network:</u> The Conservancy and the Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) are coordinating water quality monitoring at six to ten sites at the Refuge during periods of runoff after storms and periodically throughout the year. Data is being collected under the Conservancy's monitoring plan for the Refuge. The data collected will be compiled with historic data collected by several entities at these monitoring sites.

On January 22nd, the Conservancy convened the second stakeholder group meeting for the Delta Environmental Data for the Understanding of a California Estuary (DEDUCE), an initiative of Delta WIN. This project is funded by the US EPA 2014 National Environmental Information Exchange Network and the goal is to expand the San Francisco Regional Data Center to include Delta water quality data. At the January 22nd meeting, data providers and data users discussed prioritizing available water quality data for use in the new estuary-wide data repository Regional Data Center. They also identified other programs that can provide input on this prioritization. The group will reconvene in April to report back on their outreach and selection of the priority datasets.

<u>Delta Land Management Work Group</u>: The work group met in February and March to develop a shared vision for the western Delta. Similar to the Delta Dialogues efforts, the land management work group is attempting to find common ground amongst diverse stakeholders.

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Economic Development

<u>Delta Economic Indicators</u>: Conservancy staff met with Delta Protection Commission (Commission) staff to discuss the need for and potential parameters of a Delta Economic Indicators Report (DEIR). A DEIR would evaluate key demographic, economic, and environmental conditions and trends in the Delta and develop a group of indicators over time that reflect the overall well-being of the Delta. Conservancy and Commission staff agreed on the importance of developing a DEIR and initially agreed to collaborate on the two primary areas: economic indicators and habitat indicators. It was agreed that the Commission would take the lead on the economic portion and the Conservancy on the habitat components. Conservancy and Commission staff will continue to meet and discuss the development of this project.

<u>Delta Awareness Campaign - Delta Marketing</u>: The consultant hired by the Conservancy presented its conceptual marketing plan to the Delta Marketing Task Force on March 2nd. The task force is comprised of Delta stakeholders with an interest in marketing the Delta, including business owners, convention and visitors bureau representatives, winemakers, and others. Using comments from task force participants, the consultant is now fleshing out the draft marketing plan. The consultant is also beginning to develop a Delta-wide travel and recreation web site and is meeting with VisitCalifornia to discuss cooperative media buys.

Education and Outreach

<u>Delta Mercury Exposure Reduction Program (MERP)</u>: The third Delta MERP Community Stakeholder Group meeting was held on February 4th. This meeting featured a presentation on the risks and benefits of eating fish, by Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) staff. This meeting also discussed finding participants for a workgroup to provide input on the development of warning signs for the Delta.

Delta MERP received seven applications to the Small Grants program. A total of \$60,000 was available under this solicitation. Applicants could apply for funding amounts up to \$15,000. The focus of the grant program is to support community-based organizations and Tribes in conducting projects that promote awareness and understanding of fish contamination issues in the Delta or reduce human exposure to mercury from eating Delta fish. A multi-agency committee reviewed the proposals in March and will be awarding grants by month's end.

<u>Youth Environmental Education</u>: The Conservancy visited Rio Vista High School and presented water quality information to 90 students. Students learned about watershed science, water quality chemistry, water quality monitoring equipment, and the importance of being a good steward of natural resources. The Conservancy coordinated and led a field trip for the students to the Consumes River Preserve where they collected data on water quality and learned about wetland ecology.

<u>Litterati Program</u>: The Conservancy is assisting the Sacramento Area Creeks Council in implementing a project to develop curriculum for using Litterati, a tool for tracking pollution around the world, in the classroom, and during Delta waterway cleanups. The outcome of this project will be a curriculum and activity plan that can be used by educators interested in using Litterati.

<u>Delta Waterway Cleanup:</u> The Conservancy will host the spring Delta Waterway Cleanup on April 18th, in celebration of Creek Week. The Conservancy plans to coordinate cleanup for two sites in cooperation with local

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organizations. The Bufferlands site—a nature area near Freeport, managed by the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District—and a second site located along the shores of the Sacramento River near Sherman Island County Park.

The Conservancy is partnering with the Rio Vista Windsurf Association and a Sherman Island kiteboard organization. Conservancy staff is working with local partners to provide incentives for public volunteers to attend, including a windsurfing demo at Sherman Island and a guided nature walk in the Bufferlands. The Conservancy plans to recruit public volunteers through Facebook, by networking with community organizations, and via promotional materials spearheaded by Creek Week organizers.

The cleanup is part of the Sacramento County-wide Creek Week cleanup event organized by the Sacramento Area Creeks Council. The Conservancy is also working with Bridgestone Tires to explore the opportunity to properly recycle illegally-dumped tires.

<u>Delta Dialogues</u>: The Delta Dialogues met March 6th to discuss opportunities for developing a shared vision for the south Delta that meets multiple objectives, including habitat, flood management, and water supply, and that could have landowner/local support. The design team will meet in mid-March to fine tune this vision and will be bringing this vision to the full group again in April.

Coordination and Collaboration

Invasive Species Coordination (ISC): The ISC work group met for its quarterly meeting on February 12th. The workgroup reviewed suggested research topics and discussed prioritization criteria to develop a list of priorities. The workgroup also discussed opportunities to assist the Department of Parks, Division of Boating and Waterways' efforts on the Delta Area-Wide Aquatic Weeds Control Project. The next ISC meeting is scheduled for May 2015.

December 3, 2014 - BOARD MEETING DIRECTIVES AND RESPONSES

BOARD DIRECTIVES TO STAFF

1. Staff will continue to explore translating the Conservancy's website into other languages.

Staff Response: Staff conducted an analyses for a comprehensive translation approach for the translation of the Conservancy's web site into Spanish and other languages, and presented their recommendations at the February 18th Program and Policy Subcommittee Meeting.

- 2. Staff will email a corrected budget update for January to the Conservancy Board.
 - Staff Response: Staff sent a corrected budget update for January to the Board on January 29, 2015
- 3. Staff will incorporate comments and bring the revised draft Grant Guidelines and Grant Application Packet back to the full board at the March meeting, following further discussion at the February 18th Program and Policy Subcommittee Meeting.

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Staff Response: Staff revised the draft guidelines with input from the January 28th Board meeting and the February 18th Subcommittee meeting. The revised draft guideline documents will be presented at the March 25th Board meeting.

4. Staff will determine if the liaison advisors need to submit a Form 700.

Staff Response: Staff reviewed the conflict of interest code and checked with other Conservancies, and determined that liaison advisors do not need to submit a Form 700.

DELTA CONSERVANCY BUDGET UPDATE

Agenda Item 6.3: Delta Conservancy FY 2014-15 Budget Plan and Update

OUTREACH-DELTA MEETING MATRIX

Agenda Item 6.4: Outreach-Delta Meeting Matrix including most recent events and key dates of future meetings

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