



# The Delta Conservancy

Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy

Fall 2012

*"A partner for balanced ecosystem restoration and economic development in the Delta."*

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## Participants Hopeful Delta Dialogues Will Lead to Better Decisions for the Delta

Every generation must deal with the key issues of its day, and in California, few issues are more important than a reliable, clean, and safe water supply. Californians also are interested in environmental protection. These two issues can be found at the center of water policy—the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (the Delta).

A year ago the Delta Conservancy looked with a new perspective at the water conflicts surrounding the Delta. The Conservancy offered a workshop that looked at the "wicked problem" facing the Delta. A wicked problem is one that has many aspects that are connected and intertwined. Wicked problems cannot be solved like a math question, but they can be managed.

As a result of the Conservancy's workshop, a group of 22 stakeholders agreed to meet and try a new way to address the Delta's wicked problem. Called the Delta Dialogues, the stakeholders meet to develop a shared understanding about the Delta. Developing a shared understanding includes listening to all the stakeholders explain why they approach a particular topic the way they do. The term "shared understanding" in this case does not mean that stakeholders must agree with each other.

Stakeholders in the Delta Dialogues include people representing: Delta farmers and residents, recreational interests, Delta reclamation districts, Delta county local governments, water agencies, environmental

organizations, and state and federal governments. To ensure the widest range of collaboration and to develop a better shared understanding of the Delta, the dialogues also include self-identified opponents to existing state policy.

Another unique feature of the Delta Dialogues is the method used to conduct the discussions. The method is called Dialogue Mapping. Using well-developed guidelines, conversations are facilitated to respect the dynamic nature of the conversation while at the same time encourage the natural human tendency to ask questions and learn from each other. As discussions take place, they are shared visually, capturing the content of the conversation as well as the context and connections among what was said. Someone not attending the dialogues could review online what was said and follow how ideas and insights developed. Using these innovative methods, topics have included a vision of the Delta in 2040, what are the Delta residents' interests, reactions to the Bay-Delta Conservation Plan proposal, and why people distrust the government.

Site visits are another important part of the Delta Dialogues. These site visits are of places important to a stakeholder's work or life, and provides the other participants a chance to "walk in another person's shoes," to gain an awareness of that stakeholder's perspective. The site visits so far have included

*(Continued on page 2)*





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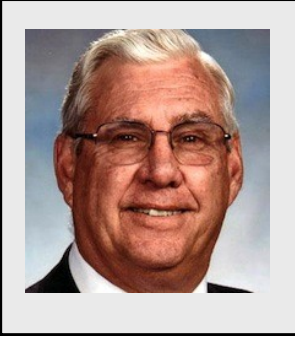
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## Chair's Perspective



# Impressed How Board is Engaged

*By Ken Vogel, San Joaquin County Supervisor and Chair, Delta Conservancy Board*

I am very pleased to have been elected to Chair the Delta Conservancy Board. The board is made up of 11 voting

members, 5 of which are County Supervisors, or their representative, from the 5 Delta Counties. I have been very impressed with how engaged the board is and how well they seem to work together. I know it is very challenging, given all of the uncertainty resulting from the ongoing Delta planning efforts, for the Delta community to welcome a new State agency into the Delta. I had similar

misgivings when I was originally asked to be a board member two years ago. However, in my time on the board I have come to understand and to expect that the Conservancy can and will be a valuable partner to the Delta community. The work the Conservancy has been engaged in to date has been focused on fostering better communications and working with the Delta community to define locally supported initiatives. It will take time for the Conservancy to demonstrate that they can be a good and effective partner. You can be certain that my fellow board members and I will be working hard to ensure that they do.

## Welcome Shakoora Azimi-Gaylon



Shakoora Azimi-Gaylon was named as the Assistant Executive Officer for the Delta Conservancy. While pursuing her graduate studies in environmental science, she managed business development for national environmental projects. She directed projects for environmental monitoring, remedial investigations, and site clean ups. Moving to the Central Valley Water Board in 2000, she worked on water quality monitoring and implementation of

management measures to improve water quality in the Delta. In 2005, she joined the State Water Board serving as the Chief of Water Quality Assessment program that prepared the California Clean Water Act Water Quality Condition Report.

In 2010, Shakoora was appointed as the Assistant Deputy Director for the Office of Information Management and Analysis, where she managed statewide programs. Among other things, she worked collaboratively with the local community to develop procedures and training opportunities for citizen groups.

## Delta Dialogues

*(Continued from page 1)*

McCormick-Williamson Tract, levees on Bouldin Island, Westland Irrigation District offices, and the Greene-Hemley pear farm and packing plant. A boat tour of the Delta, to provide a glimpse into the recreation, tourism, and business owner's perspectives, is scheduled for the fall.

Most participants have asked that the Delta Dialogues continue. The dialogues provide a unique forum that allows diverse opinions

and genuine conversation to take place. Participants have shared that they have a better understanding of other stakeholders' interests and are optimistic that this forum will lead to better decisions regarding the Delta's future.

For more information about the Delta Dialogues, please see our website at <http://delta.groupaya.net>.



## New Office Space has Board Room

I am happy to announce that the Delta Conservancy has move into our new Headquarters, located at 1450 Halyard Drive, Suite 6, in West Sacramento. While still in the legal Delta, it is close to Sacramento where for good or bad, we spend most of our time. As the Conservancy grows and

develops funded programs, we hope to open one or more satellite offices in the heart of the Delta. One of the great features of our new office is the large conference room. It will accommodate our entire Board of 23 members and has plenty of room for the public to participate. Our next Board meeting will be held at the new office on October 17<sup>th</sup>. Also we plan to have an open house sometime after the first of the year. We hope you will join us!

# The Delta California's New Get-away Destination

**That's the dream** of a small group from the recreation and tourism communities in the Delta when they discussed the idea of Branding the Delta. In addition to the economic need to attract tourists, organizers also understood the urgent need to make Californians aware of the contributions the Delta makes on their everyday lives. Discussions included how best to involve the many recreation, tourism and agriculture groups that would be impacted by a branding effort. Organizers hope to bring in professional marketing expertise to assist in creating a brand that can support the community's many diversified needs.

Long time advocates of a Delta Brand believe the need for a brand is documented well in the 2011 Economic Sustainability Plan (ESP) that identifies the region's economic impact and what is needed to sustain a viable economy in the area. The ESP identifies a "significant operational constraint for future growth in recreation demand in that there

currently exists no Delta brand, overall marketing strategy, or significant-scale focal point areas to promote."

The Conservancy coordinated the Delta branding meeting as a result of requests made during their strategic plan. Their intent is to invite community leaders to meet, collaborate and, with assistance of marketing professionals, create a brand to promote the Delta. The Conservancy sees their role as facilitators to help coordinate the effort, encourage collaboration and assist in identifying funding for the project. They've identified possible funding and are seeking input on how best to create a brand that can be supported by the many interest groups.

If you have questions, would like to be involved or would like to follow the branding effort's progress, please contact Susan Roberts, [susan.roberts@deltaconservancy.ca.gov](mailto:susan.roberts@deltaconservancy.ca.gov), or 916-375-2088.



Sacramento-San Joaquin

**Delta Conservancy**

**Staff**

**Campbell Ingram**  
*Executive Officer*

**Shakoora Azimi-Gaylon**  
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**Amanda Bohl**  
*Economic Development Lead*

**Susan Roberts**  
*Board Liaison*

**Rhonda Hoover-Flores**  
*Executive Assistant*

**Delta Conservancy**  
1450 Halyard Drive, Suite 6  
West Sacramento, CA 95691  
(916) 375-2084  
Fax: (916) 376-9688  
Email: [info@deltaconservancy.ca.gov](mailto:info@deltaconservancy.ca.gov)  
Website: [deltaconservancy.ca.gov](http://deltaconservancy.ca.gov)



# Delta Conservancy Volunteers and Staff Clean Up 1500 lbs of Trash!

**Brannan Island  
State Park  
open year round!**

**Visit  
[www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov)**

The Delta winds snatch plastic bags from picnic tables and toss them into the open arms of Brannan Island bushes. Nature's game of catch, and forgetful campers, leave behind piles of trash in the bushes and on the steep water's edge at Brannan Island State Park. At the Delta Conservancy's Clean Up Day, Saturday, September 15, volunteers and staff formed separate land and water teams to clean up the park and waterways.



Kristal Davis Fadtke & Nova; Campbell (standing) & Kim Ingram; Susan Roberts; Shakoora Azimi-Gaylon,; Liza, Liam & Andy McGuirk; Harjit Lahoria, Jim Fenton and Gary Lahmon.



Andy McGuirk, Event Coordinator

The land team braved the park's blackberry bushes and rocky water's edges to collect and bag more than 135 lbs (27 bags) of trash. They hauled away many items including an abandoned inner tube, an inflatable mattress pad and numerous runaway boxes.

The Conservancy's water team, volunteers from Snodgrass Solutions

Inc, pulled large chunks of Styrofoam, crates, 3 large rubber tires, and—their most unusual item—half a boat! Their haul weighed in at over 1400 lbs!

Thanks goes to Conservancy volunteer Andy McGuirk, a CSU Environmental Studies student and event coordinator, and Jim Fenton, president of the Snodgrass Solutions, a nonprofit dedicated to keeping Delta waterways clean, and Susan Roberts, Conservancy outreach coordinator. Before the event, they scoped the site, identified areas needing the most help and worked with the park managers to coordinate trash pickup and other details.



Harjit Lahoria, Jim Fenton and Gary Lahmon

Two weeks prior to the clean up, Jim Fenton, Harjit Lahoria and Gary Lahmon, river-clean up volunteers from Snodgrass Solutions, identified and repaired a sunken boat so they could 'float the boat' and drag it in. They also arranged clearance with the coast guard to haul it away.

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**Photos by Rodney Jones**

## Dredging: Construction of Delta's Levees

The 1,100 mile levee system at the heart of the Delta is a well-known part of daily life for farmers and residents of the region. Less well-known is the history of dredging which helped construct the intricate network of manmade levees integral to the Delta. Dating back to before the Gold Rush, the earliest levees were built by thousands of laborers, often Chinese, with back-breaking effort using hand and horse-drawn scrapers. However, after gold was discovered in the region an estimated 1 1/2 billion yards of refuse from mining entered into the Delta's rivers and streams. This excess sediment required an upgrade from manual labor dredging.

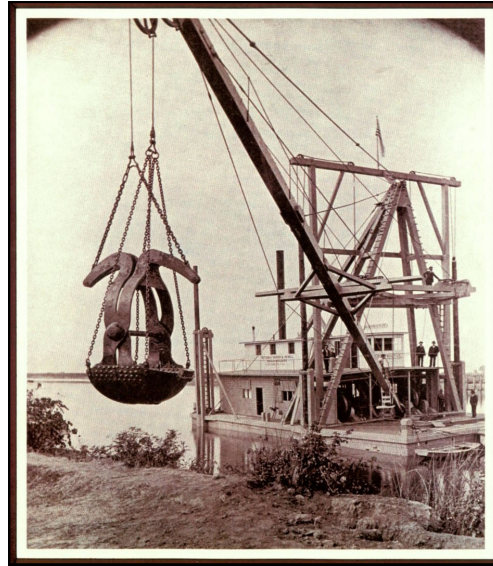
In approximately 1875, floating steam shovels began to replace manual labor, but these shovels lacked the necessary vertical

reach and weakened the natural river banks. The steam shovels were soon replaced by the more efficient sidedraft clamshell dredge. Over the next four decades, the sidedraft clamshell dredge, a uniquely American dredge, would increase the amount of reclaimed land in the Delta region to 400,000 acres.

directly parallel but on the side of the boom, thus the name "sidedraft." These cables also opened and closed the clamshell buckets, which, for the larger dredges, had capacity of up to 5 cubic yards. An estimated 85-90 sidedraft clamshell dredges have been built for levee construction in the central region of California alone, this number not including the variety of smaller dredges, which together built the levee system in existence today.

Many thanks to the Dutra Museum Foundation for providing the information and photographs in this article. For more information or to plan a visit to the Dutra Museum of Dredging in Rio Vista, CA please visit [www.dutramuseum.com](http://www.dutramuseum.com).

Written by Albert Wu, CSU Executive Fellow



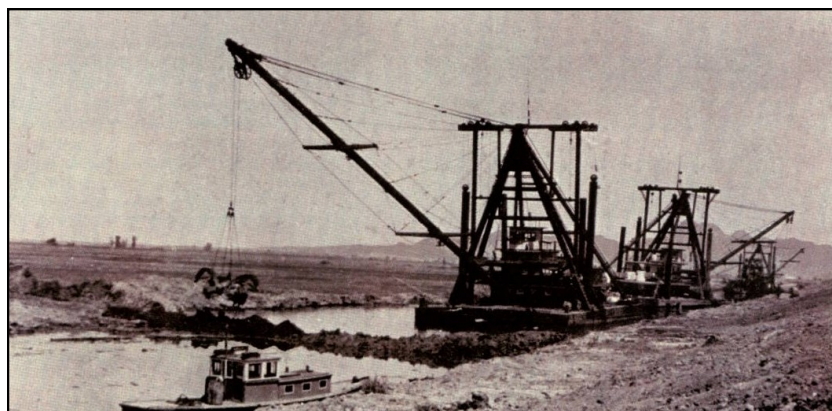
Dredge Bachman, built in 1893.



Dredge Thor, built in 1903, is shown in Bear River with original delta terrain in background.

reach and weakened the natural river banks. The steam shovels were soon replaced by the more efficient sidedraft clamshell dredge. Over the next four decades, the sidedraft clamshell dredge, a uniquely American dredge, would increase the amount of reclaimed land in the Delta region to 400,000 acres.

The sidedraft clamshell dredge operated with an "A" frame and long boom shaft—which have been constructed over 200 feet long—and cables that were not



The dredge is building a retention dam to create temporary locks to make progress through the shallow waterway.





## Science Notes from the Field

# Delta Conservancy Proposes Restoration Network

In mid August the Bay-Delta Independent Science Board met with agencies involved in Delta restoration to get input on how science will be incorporated into restoration efforts and how agencies will coordinate individual restoration projects. Conservancy Executive Officer Campbell Ingram presented the concept of a restoration network, originally proposed in the Conservancy's Strategic Plan, which would bring all of the agencies together with the Delta community to develop an implementation framework that would focus on coordination and integration. The Conservancy expects to have further input in ISB's Delta Science Plan development, which will begin this fall.

At the Bay-Delta Science Conference, scheduled October 16-18, the Conservancy will make three presentations. Campbell Ingram will present on the history and potential future of carbon sequestration in the Delta; Kristal Davis Fadtko will present a poster that uses a new Delta projects GIS database to illustrate all current Delta restoration projects and she will be a panel member of the Implications of Sea Level Rise and Climate Change for the Coastal and Interior Waters of California.

Learn more about the conference at the following link:  
<http://scienceconf.deltacouncil.ca.gov/>

## Delta Fairs, Festivals, & Events

**Delta Thunder Boat Racing**  
**October 6-7**  
[deltaboatraces.com](http://deltaboatraces.com)

**Delta Wine & Art Festival**  
**October 7**  
[Carvalhofamilywinery.com](http://Carvalhofamilywinery.com)

**Rio Vista Bass Derby & Festival**  
**October 12-14**  
[bassfestival.com](http://bassfestival.com)

**Sandhill Crane Festival**  
**November 2-4**  
[cranefestival.com](http://cranefestival.com)

## Conservancy Clean Up

*(Continued from page 4)*

The park welcomes all groups that volunteer their services for clean up. Contact Ted at 916-777-7705 if you are interested in a clean up project.

The Delta Conservancy's Clean Up was part of California Coastal Conservancy's California Coastal and Inland Waters Clean Up Day, the largest volunteer event in California.



Joe Flores



Kristal Davis Fadtko



Shakoora Azimi-Gaylon



Sacramento-San Joaquin  
**Delta Conservancy**  
1450 Halyard Drive, Suite 6  
West Sacramento, CA 95691