

Conservancy Currents

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy's Newsletter

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

Summer 2014 Volume 3, Issue 2



In this undated photograph, students perform at a cultural event at the Holland Union Gakuen in Clarksburg. The school was built in 1927 and its restoration and reuse was the subject of a May 30 Charrette held at the Old Sugar Mill in Clarksburg.

Delta Heritage Explored

Japanese-American history in the Delta took center stage at the Holland Union Gauken Charrette on May 30, 2014, at the Old Sugar Mill in Clarksburg.

The Gauken, also known as the Clarksburg Japanese School, is one of the few intact pre-World War II Japanese language schools in the State. Built in 1927, the site's uniqueness is enhanced by the adjacent teacher's residence.

Former Gauken students, Clarksburg and other Delta residents, and technical experts convened to discuss economically sustainable reuse and redevelopment options of the school that also preserves the site's important history.

To get a better understanding of the Japanese-American experience and historic preservation in the Delta, the group started the day with a tour of four key locations: the Gauken, the Locke Boarding House, the Buddhist Temple, and the Miyazaki Bath House in Walnut Grove. The Locke Boarding House is an example of government historic preservation and the Miyazaki Bath House is an example of private historic preservation. Both offer lessons and ideas as the future of the Gauken is determined.

After the tour, participants met in four small groups to discuss the various options for reuse and preservation of the school. Participants were assigned to consider one of four scenarios for ownership: community-owned by a non-profit, public-private partnership, for profit business with historic preservation protection, and state-local agency ownership and management.

Participants were encouraged to keep in mind the wishes of the current owners of the property as they explored possible

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Chair's Corner**Our Delta**

Your Delta...Our Delta

Those of us that live and work in the Delta know how diverse, multi-faceted, and layered the Delta truly is. I

was reminded of this when the Delta Protection Commission and the Conservancy released the four logo alternatives developed by the marketing consultant after months of Discovery Meetings, one-on-one and small group meetings, and familiarization tours throughout the region.

The logo alternatives were released to the community via an online survey. Over 180 people responded with comments ranging from color choices, to layout, to the placement of the birds. The survey also asked participants to rank the logos. Not surprisingly, there was no clear winner. Everyone has their favorite. Each person was drawn to a specific design for very personal reasons, much in the same way residents and visitors are drawn to the Delta. For some it's the boating. For others the wineries. For others the wide open spaces.

Logos are the cornerstone of branding and marketing efforts. Our hope is that

you will use the final logo in addition to your own marketing to highlight your presence in the Delta, much like businesses outside Yosemite use the Park as a draw, or Napa wineries use the concept of "the Napa Valley."

Logos are the cornerstone of branding and marketing

The draft logos are currently being re-worked to incorporate the ideas heard at the Commission and Conservancy board meetings and via the survey. The logos will be narrowed down to two or three alternatives and the community will be asked to provide final comments and to vote on their favorite.

Whatever your reason for loving the Delta—or a particular logo design—thank you for showing up and participating. We're all in this together. The people, the birds, the fish, the jobs, the vegetables and fruit, and the communities. Thank you for caring about this place and for working to make the Delta a great place to live, work, and play.

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Conservancy's Walk on the Wildside Display a Success

Conservancy staff and volunteers participated in this year's Walk on the Wildside community event at the Beach Lake Preserve in Freepoint.

This outdoor event—sponsored by Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge—celebrated International Migratory Bird Day by providing a free family-friendly festival highlighting local efforts in protecting and restoring native habitats and wildlife.

Festival goers met live wildlife species native to the Delta, took tours of wetland and riparian habitat, enjoyed music and discovered how to engage in protecting native habitats and wildlife in their community.

If you missed Walk on the Wildside, you can visit the Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge in Elk Grove. The refuge protects wildlife in the midst of an urban setting and provides thousands of birds migrating along the Pacific Flyway with feeding and resting habitat.

At the refuge, you can enjoy wildlife and natural scenery along the Blue Heron Trail which is accessible year-round. The refuge provides the opportunity to hike, take photos, observe, and learn more about native wildlife, plants, and ecology.

For more information, visit www.fws.gov/refuge/stone_lakes/ or call (916) 775-4421.

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Conservancy Currents is a publication of:



SACRAMENTO - SAN JOAQUIN

DELTA CONSERVANCY

A California State Agency

Campbell's Corner

A Restoration Hub for the Delta Will Help Manage "Big Data"

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta is a place of State and national importance for its rich farm economy and natural heritage values. It is also the front line of California water issues where societal goals for ecosystem protection and reliable water supply seek a durable balance. The Delta Restoration Network (DRN) was created out of recognition that restoration efforts will require a high degree of coordination and integration to be ecologically successful and broadly acceptable. A consensus of shared concerns among leaders of the Delta stakeholder and management community indicated the need to bring people together to resolve issues around ecosystem restoration and its linkages to the Delta community, agriculture, and flood protection. Meetings began in early 2012 with 14 agencies, several NGO's and Delta community participation.

Recently the DRN has developed a proposal for a Restoration Hub that would be developed as a 3 year pilot effort. The Hub proposal was developed by the DRN to address the following concerns about current restoration planning: (1) Lack of a broadly accepted landscape-scale restoration vision for restoration opportunity areas supported by conceptual and mechanistic models;(2) Lack of a standing expert restoration design

team to support timely property-scale restoration project planning, implement long-term restoration visions for restoration opportunity areas, and consider the Delta-wide effects of restoration projects; (3) Insufficient early engagement of the Delta community; and (4) Insufficient modeling, data inventory, and synthesis tools to support information sharing, analysis, and adaptive management. The Hub is intended to be a place where the best available tools can be used to integrate data and models and work with subject experts and community members to inform restoration planning and result in projects that result in high ecological value, with the least possible impact to current land uses and within the confines of the flood protection system.

We continue to work with the DRN to refine the proposal and expect to begin to seek funding to start the pilot effort soon. Summaries of the DRN meetings can be found on our web page.



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Charrette

Continued from page 1

futures for the site. The Sakata family, who has farmed in the area since the early 1900's, shared the ideal conditions under which they would donate part of the land:

- Preserve Gakuen and residence
- Never falls into private hands exclusively
- No land transaction costs
- Maintain the exterior and interior of the school and residence, except to meet code
- Reuse acknowledges the history of the site
- It does not need to be solely part of a Japanese-American historic site

Certain themes were prevalent throughout the ideas presented at the end of the meeting. Among the most common themes were: creating a site that celebrated the Japanese experience and their contribution to Delta agriculture; the possibility of making this site part of a larger National Heritage Area attraction; connecting the site with Elk Slough, either for education or recreation; and connecting the site with the farm-to-fork or farm-to-school movement.

The Charrette was sponsored by the Delta Protection Commission and the Conservancy. Grant funding for the event was provided by the California Fund of the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the California Office of Historic Preservation.

Other partners include Preserving California's Japantowns, California Preservation Foundation, the Holland Union Doshi Kai, and Mark Wilson of Wilson Farms.

A charrette report will be completed by mid-July and the Holland Union Gauken ad hoc committee—consisting of local Delta residents—will likely meet to consider next steps..

For more information, Preserving California's Japantowns video about the Gauken: "Memories of Place: Clarksburg's Japanese School," can be at <http://vimeo.com/63969138>.

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Arundo Control Program Moving Forward

The Conservancy is spearheading a long-term Arundo control and restoration program which will encompass the entire legal Delta. The first phase of the program has been generously funded for three years by the California Department of Water Resources-Delta Levees Program.

The Giant Reed, known to scientists as *Arundo donax*, was purposefully introduced to California more than two centuries ago from Eurasia. However, this fast-growing and opportunistic reed has become widespread along California waterways and is now considered an invasive species. Arundo grows in dense stands 20 feet tall, out-competes native riparian plant species, consumes large volumes of water, weakens levees, increases bank erosion during flood events, increases fire severity, and has low value for wildlife in search of foraging and nesting habitat.

The Conservancy has partnered with the Solano Resource Conservation District and the Sonoma Ecology Center to draw on their expertise and practical know-how. Project scientists will use high resolution satellite imagery and on-the-ground surveys to map than 1,100 miles of Delta waterways for Arundo infestations.

This information will be used to develop a geographic-based model to prioritize restoration efforts. These maps and models will enable the Conservancy and others to strategically target infestations, maximize habitat restoration, and coordinate efforts.

Maps and models, however, will not be enough. The Conservancy is establishing a pilot project to control Arundo and restore native riparian habitat in the Cache Slough Complex. Herbicide treat-

ment is expected to begin next fall to take advantage of a growth phase when Arundo is most vulnerable to treatment. Conservancy staff is currently obtaining the permits needed to implement the program.

Following Arundo eradication, native trees, shrubs, grasses, and other plants will be planted to prevent Arundo from returning and help to support the sustainability of Delta waterways, levees, and wildlife.

The pilot project in the Cache Slough Complex is just the start and the Conservancy anticipates expanding Arundo control and restoration throughout the Delta in the coming years. The Conservancy encourages the participation of other groups and will share the results of the mapping and prioritization modeling to ensure future efforts are coordinated and effective.

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Mercury Exposure Reduction Program

The Conservancy has partnered with the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board) and the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) to facilitate the Delta Mercury Exposure Reduction Program (MERP). This program aims to reduce human exposure to mercury that occurs from eating fish that have harmful amounts of mercury. Mercury is a toxic metal that is most harmful to infants, children, and women of childbearing age.

Over time, mercury exposure affects the nervous system and occurs when people and wildlife accumulate mercury in their body. The Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta (Delta) has been listed on the federal Clean Water Act section 303(d) List as impaired due to elevated concentrations of methylmercury in fish, which poses a human health threat. Mercury enters rivers from natural sources

as well as past and present human activities—such as gold and mercury mining. Subsistence fishing is a significant activity in the Delta, however, there is little awareness about fish contamination issues and methods of reducing exposure.

The Conservancy will work with State agencies and community members to educate at-risk populations about mercury exposure from eating contaminated fish caught in the Delta.

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Children are particularly susceptible to mercury exposure from eating certain fishes caught in the Delta. The Conservancy's MERP Project is designed to help anglers understand the risks.

Photo copyright by Niles Kynett.



Waterway Clean up a Success

Tires were the big item at the Conservancy's Delta Waterway Cleanup on April 12th. Clean-up partner Bridgestone America, hauled away 326 tires. Of these, 90 tires were pulled from the waterway; farmers brought 236 tires to Sherman Island. In addition to the tires, 80 volunteers removed 2.22 tons of trash.

Sherman Island volunteers worked in 15-20 mph winds as they cleaned the banks

and beaches of the Sacramento River. Volunteers came from Rio Vista High School, the Rio Vista Windsurfers Association, and the Sherman Island Kiteboarding Organization.

Volunteers at the Lower Morrison Creek sites were treated to sightings of active spring wildlife, including nesting Cliff Swallows, Swainson hawks, American White Pelicans and several beavers. Vol-

unteers came from Wells Fargo Bank, Golden One Credit Union, Snodgrass Solutions, River City Geocaching, and the Dining Society. Trash highlights included a rusted refrigerator and a mattress.

The Conservancy and the Sacramento Area Creeks Council thank all the volunteers for helping to keep the Delta waterways clean.

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Clockwise from upper left to right: a clean up team working alongside Lower Morrison Creek during the April 2014 Delta Waterway Clean Up; the clean up team from event co-sponsor Wells Fargo Bank; one of the volunteers surveys a pile of trash pulled out of Lower Morrison Creek, family site; and the team from Golden One Credit Union, another event co-sponsor, takes a well deserved break to get their picture taken. *Photos copyright by Niles Kynett 2014*



Men making, drying, and repairing gill nets were a common sight along the marshes and piers lining the wharves from Martinez to Pittsburg from 1870 to 1930. The water was so clear you could see the bottom. Old timers claimed fish populations during the fall king salmon run were so vast that one could walk from Antioch to Collinsville and never wet your feet. Photo credit: Pittsburg Historical Society

[Delta History](#)

Contra Costa's Maritime History

Contra Costa County maritime history is synonymous with the economic history of the California Delta. The San Joaquin River, Suisun Bay, Carquinez Strait, and San Pablo Bay historically provided the liquid highway linking the county's agricultural, industrial, and commercial endeavors to the world. From the 18th century to the Vietnam War, minerals, munitions, and melons all rolled down from the sides of Mount Diablo and the Sierra Nevada to the Contra Costa shoreline for transshipment out the Golden Gate.

In 1848, Sam Brannan proclaims on San Francisco's muddy streets, "Gold! Gold found on the American River." Brannan didn't leave for the Mother Lode himself; instead he races to Contra Costa to secure his real estate holdings and future mercantile riches. Following Brannan were entrepreneurs requiring large tracts of land for cattle raising, fishing, power sourcing (oil and coal), and manufacturing dangerous materials (munitions).

By the 1870s, commodity agriculture production joined these lucrative business ventures. More bushels of wheat were produced in the upper San Joaquin Valley during the 1870s and 80s than anywhere else in the United States. Grain feeds California's growing population, and barley was used in malt.

Delta manufacturers and military industries thrived through the Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, and the Korean Conflict, only to shut down in the 1970s due to environmental depletions. In the post-Vietnam War years, Contra Costa's role as an industrial county changed then decreased. Shipyards and railroad Pullman car shops were converted to American Standard ceramic plants and Ford Motors assembly plants. In the 1990s, these industrial employment jobs moved primarily overseas. Only the Martinez and Richmond shoreline oil refineries now use ocean tanker transport.

Agriculture moved to the San Joaquin Valley. The heyday of Contra Costa's role in the maritime trade passed. The shoreline

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Contra Costa

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today is primarily valued for its environmental, ecological, recreational, or residential real estate merits. Private citizens, non-profit organizations, and government agencies work to ensure the estuary retains its beauty and ecological status, while seeking to boost the local economy.

To learn more, please read: *Contra Costa County Maritime History* and *The California Delta*, both published by the Arcadia Publishing Company. They are available from local Sacramento and San Joaquin River Delta Bookstores.

A special thanks to Carol A. Jensen for writing this article for Conservancy Currents. Carol can be reached at

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The Delta Conservancy's Mission

Working collaboratively and in coordination with local communities, the Conservancy will lead efforts to protect, enhance, and restore the Delta's economy, agriculture and working landscapes, and environment, for the benefit of the Delta region, its local communities, and the citizens of California.

Delta Fairs, Festivals and Events

Pear Fair in Courtland

July 27

pearfair.org

Solano County Fair

July 30-August 3

scfair.com.

Taste of the Delta at Tower Park Resort

August 9

tasteofthedelta.com

Yolo County Fair

August 13-17

yolocountyfair.net

Passport Weekend

Sacramento River Delta Grown

August 16-17

sacriverdeltagrown.org

Delta Waterway Cleanup

September 21

deltaconservancy.ca.gov

Photo courtesy of ZoArt.

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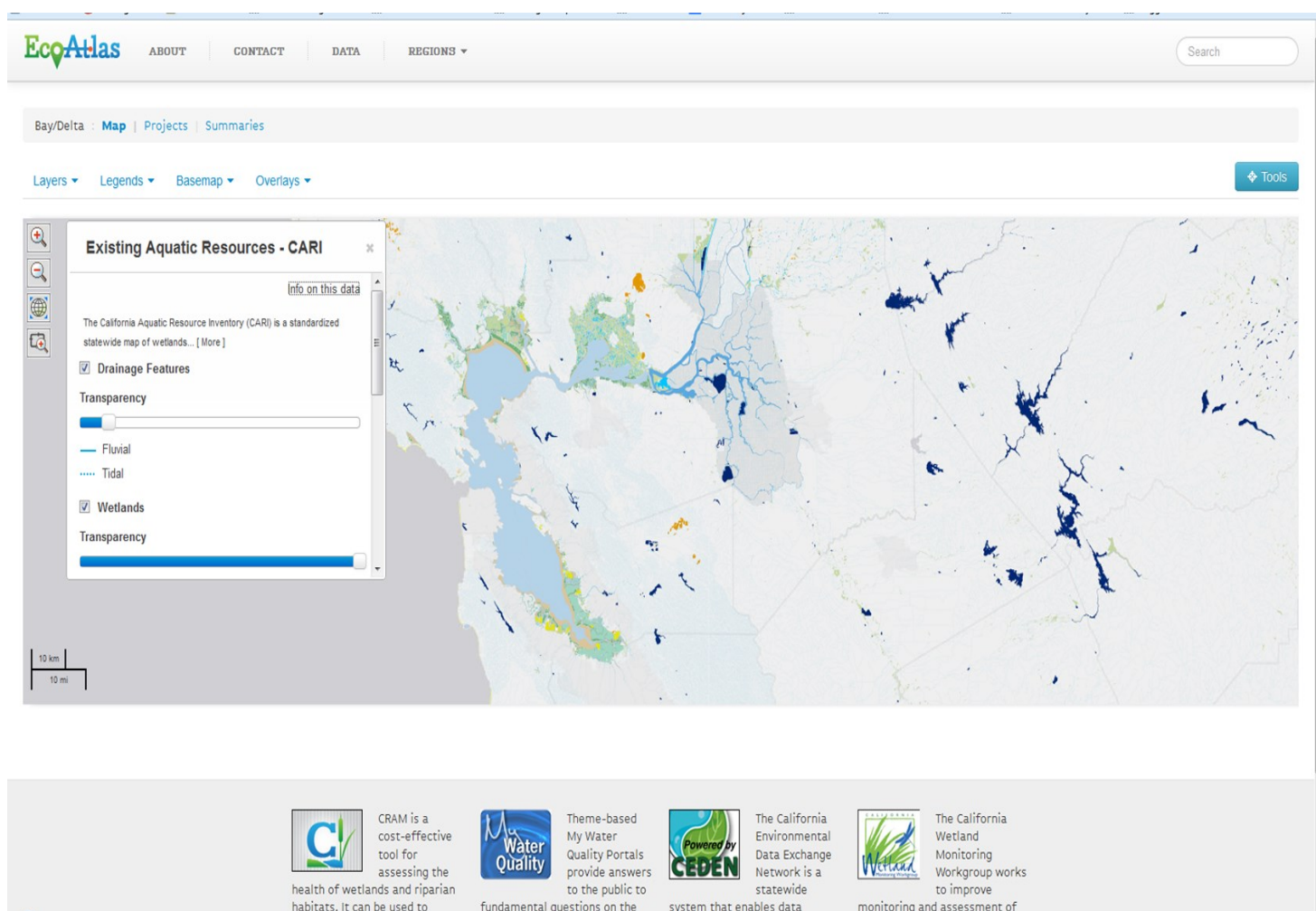
The Board meets on the fourth Wednesday of every other month, beginning with January. For Board materials, please see the Conservancy website at: www.deltaconservancy.ca.gov.

EcoAtlas Expanding

The Conservancy, in partnership with the State Water Resources Control Board (Water Board), San Francisco Bay Joint Venture (SFBJV), Central Valley Joint Venture (CVJV) and San Francisco Estuary Institute (SFEI), is expanding the current capabilities of EcoAtlas, an online wetland project tracking system. EcoAtlas provides free public access to information about the condition and extent of California wetlands. Users can view information via interactive maps and produce dynamic summaries of wetland areas and ecosystem restoration projects.

The Conservancy and its partners are enhancing EcoAtlas to meet the project tracking, assessment, and reporting needs for current and planned habitat restoration in the Bay-Delta Region. Over the last six months the Conservancy has met with entities working in the Delta and project partners to develop the new functionalities of an enhanced EcoAtlas, which include additional information fields, expanded mapping tools, data queries, and reporting abilities. For example, users will be able to see the amount and type of habitat restored through a given project, view additional data overlays on maps, and view enhanced summary reports. SFEI will soon begin programming changes to EcoAtlas and will present interim products for review. The Conservancy's database of habitat restoration projects in the Delta will then be uploaded into a newly enhanced EcoAtlas for public viewing.

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This is a screen shot from the EcoAtlas online wetland project tracking system.

Delta Watershed Initiative Network

In 2014 the Conservancy established the Delta Watershed Initiative Network (Delta WIN) to provide a forum for a comprehensive watershed approach and a platform of information for collecting, interpreting, and communicating data and information for watershed protection in the Delta. Delta waterways are listed in the Federal Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List of impaired water bodies for a range of pollutants including salinity, pathogens, organochlorine legacy pesticides, organophosphorus pesticides, metals, mercury, nutrients, invasive species, and unknown toxicity.

Delta WIN objectives are to protect water quality and to help sustain the ecological benefits of watersheds through the facilitation of a regional network of locally initiated projects. These objectives will be achieved through monitoring water quality, education and outreach, cooperative endeavors, implementing best management practices, and leveraging resources. Delta WIN partners will base their activities on sound science, innovative thinking, and effective communication to share data and information. Strategies for collectively protecting and restoring important waterways include informing and engaging the community, and efforts to address multiple causes of water quality through an integrated and coordinated approach at the watershed level.

Delta WIN stewardship activities provide opportunities to restore the watershed through ongoing projects. Existing projects and partners include Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment of Marsh Creek Watershed with Friends of Marsh Creek Watershed; Water Quality Monitoring and Educational Outreach in Yolo Basin with the Yolo Basin Foundation; and the Delta waterway clean-ups. The Conservancy's waterway clean-ups—in partnership with State Parks, the Sacramento Area Creeks Council, the Delta Protection Commission, and the California Coastal Commission—provide opportunities for community members to participate in protecting their watersheds. Cleanups are scheduled twice yearly, in April and September.

Workshop Discusses Attracting New Visitors

In coordination with the Delta Branding and Marketing Project, the Conservancy hosted *Marketing Your Delta Business* on May 6th. Participants poured over marketing worksheets in an effort to define their existing and dream audiences and how to reach them. Times and markets are changing and a lot of head-scratching occurred when asked to define what might motivate new customers to visit their business.

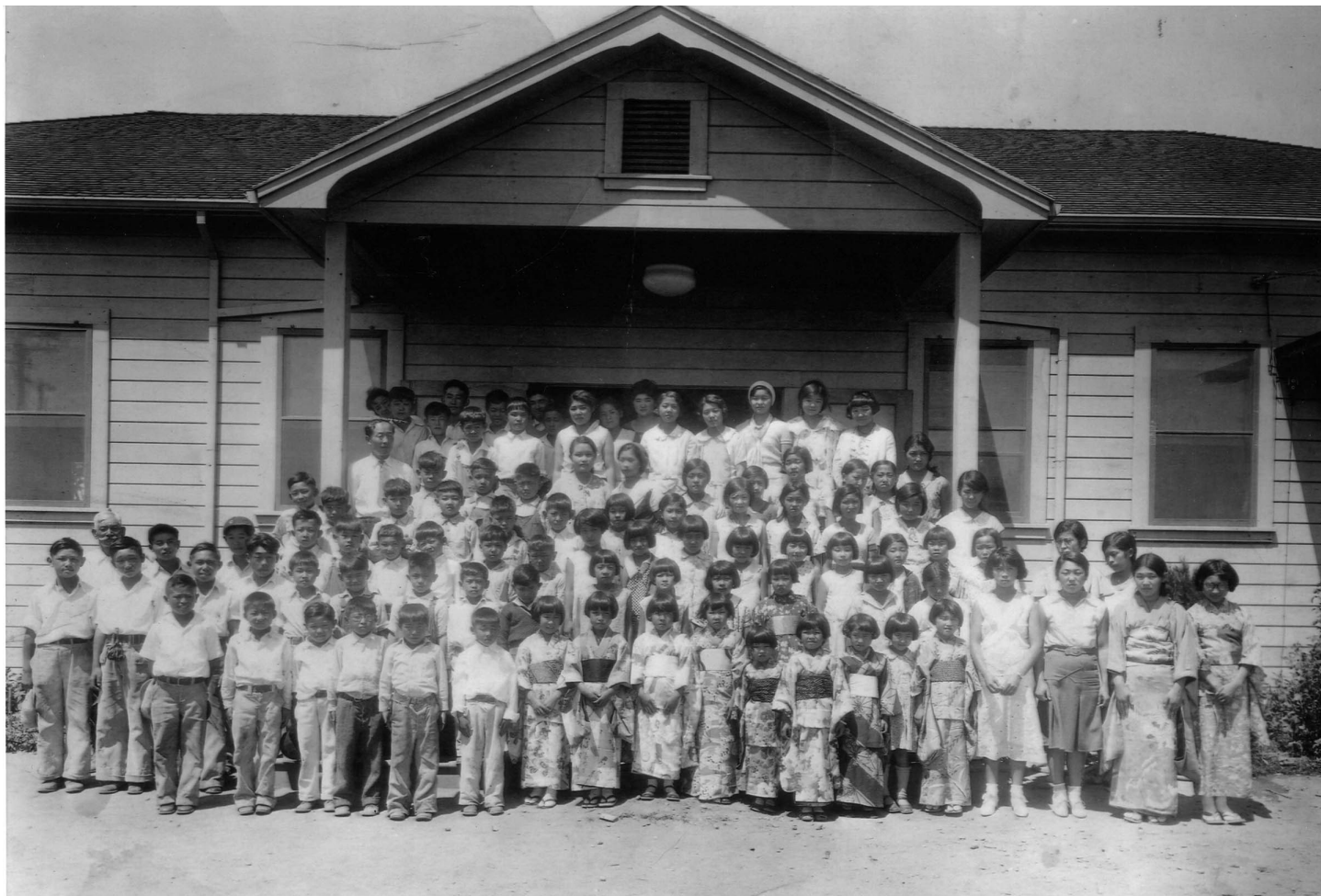
"Yosemite is famous because it is unique," stated Tim Neuharth of Sacramento River Delta Grown. "It is not advertised how unique the Delta is, yet it is the largest inland Delta in the western continent and includes a major stop on the Pacific Flyway." Clearly, the time is ripe to market the Delta as a destination.

Much discussion centered around social media marketing, when Kyle Bowlin—a participant from The Cosumnes River Preserve—shared how he successfully tapped into the power of social media using his website in conjunction with Sac 365, Yelp, SacBee, Twitter, Craig's List, and Facebook. Amazed at the time it requires to build a successful social media following, the group agreed it might be best to have one person working social media for the entire Delta.

Discussing the components of the soon-to-be-developed Delta-wide marketing plan—which includes funding for new or expanded Delta-wide tourism tools—many participants weren't certain how new customers would find their front door, but they were eager to benefit from the Delta Branding and Marketing Project.

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Students outside of the Holland Union Gakuen in Clarksburg.



SACRAMENTO - SAN JOAQUIN

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