

Meeting Date: May 25, 2016
Page 1



1450 Halyard Drive, Suite 6
West Sacramento, CA 95691
www.deltaconservancy.ca.gov

EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT May 25, 2016

~ PROGRAM UPDATE ~

Ecosystem Restoration

Proposition 1 Grant Program: The Conservancy's Ecosystem Restoration and Water Quality Grant Program (Grant Program) focuses on the restoration of important species and habitat, on improving water quality, and on agricultural sustainability. The Grant Program identifies projects to protect and restore California rivers, lakes, streams, and watersheds that may be funded with Prop. 1 funding (Sec. 79732 et seq). Full proposals were evaluated and scored by Conservancy staff and an external review panel consisting of five State and federal agencies. Staff is recommending to the Board that nine proposals be awarded funding. For more information, please see the Request for approval of proposals for the Proposition 1 Ecosystem Restoration and Water Quality Grant Program in the board packet.

Delta Carbon Management: In February of this year, the Conservancy invited local interests, NGO's, researchers and agencies currently working on Delta Carbon issues to join a Delta Carbon Workgroup that would meet periodically to ensure awareness and coordination of all related efforts. The concept was well received and the value of increased coordination was immediately recognized at the first meeting on February 18th. At that meeting it was suggested that the group host a half day workshop on how potential carbon projects would engage the Carbon Offset Methodology for Wetlands and Rice in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, San Francisco Estuary and Coastal California, that is currently under review by the American Carbon Registry (ACR) and expected to be adopted this summer. The objective of the workshop, which was held on April 13th, was to take a hypothetical/existing Delta wetland project through the ACR protocol process, from project identification through trading emission reduction ton credits on the voluntary market as an exercise to inform refinement of the draft protocol and inform land owners who may be interested in project development. The workshop was well attended and resulted in a request for a follow on workshop to be held in early June that will focus in greater detail on how emission reduction credits are verified and marketed on the voluntary market. Notices and an agenda for the upcoming workshop will be posted on the Conservancy website and distributed to Board members and the Conservancy list serve.

EcoAtlas - Visualizing and Sharing Data Assessments: The goals of this project are to (a) collect high-priority datasets with strategic value for the region; (b) visualize those datasets geospatially; (c) share those datasets via web services; (d) implement the best available measures of planning effectiveness, including landscape-scale habitat metrics; and (e) develop training materials for outreach to ensure usability and encourage well-informed decision-making.

In March 2016 the project workgroup, including state and federal agencies, met to discuss the project status and progress. This meeting was coordinated with the California Wetland Monitoring Workgroup Level 3 Data Subcommittee to receive their input on potential datasets and mock ups of potential visualizations. As next

Meeting Date: May 25, 2016
Page 2

steps, the Conservancy is reaching out to the various Level 3 leads for discussion of quality assurance protocols and the San Francisco Estuary Institute/Aquatic Science Center (SFEI/ASC) is adding data layers identified by the project workgroup and visualizations which will be presented at the next workgroup meeting.

EcoAtlas - Advancing Performance Measure Reporting: The Conservancy, in partnership with the Delta Stewardship Council, is integrating project data and performance measures matrices between EcoAtlas and Delta View and developing new capabilities to improve reporting on performance measures for wetland restoration projects. The Conservancy has entered into a contract with the SFEI/ASC to implement this project. The Conservancy is currently working with project partners to weigh different technical approaches for implementing this project and expects to hold a kickoff meeting with project participants in May 2016.

Arundo Control and Restoration Project: In January of 2016, staff discussed the need for a no-cost time extension on the grant from DWR. This extension was agreed to, and Conservancy and DWR staff will be amending the contract over the next couple of weeks. By extending the timeframe of this grant to 2020, Solano RCD would have a full year of ground preparation and planting and four years of watering and replanting to fully establish native vegetation. The Cultural Consultation for Army Corps of Engineers 404 permit was completed and submitted to the Corps. The National Marine Fisheries Service has sent a letter of concurrence in support of the Endangered Species Act, Section 7 consultation permit to the Army Corps of Engineers. USFWS staff has written and signed a biological opinion on the Conservancy Arundo Project concluding in a negative declaration. The USFWS Section 7 consultation has been submitted to the Army Corps of Engineers. This completes the requirements for our 404 and 408 permits. Once issued by the Corps, completed 404 and 408 permits will be sent to the Central Valley Flood Protection Board and will allow them to issue an encroachment permit for the Conservancy Arundo Control and Restoration Project. It is anticipated that the permit will be going to the Board at the Flood Board meeting in May, and will complete the permitting needs for the this Project.

Water Quality

Delta Environmental Data for the Understanding of a California Estuary (DEDUCE): The DEDUCE project is a component of the Conservancy's Delta WIN project to make high priority data accessible for decision-makers, scientists, and the public through an estuary-wide data center. This project is being implemented in partnership with the Delta Science Program, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), the Department of Water Resources, the State Water Board, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

The project workgroup convened in March 2016 and discussed progress on project implementation and reviewed project deliverables. The current focus of the project is on uploading datasets that have been solicited and assembled through this process for submission to state data systems. Two Pelagic Organism Decline (POD) water chemistry datasets from 2006-2010 have been assembled, undergone quality assurance review and have been uploaded to the Estuary-wide Data Center. These water quality data have been exchanged with the California Environmental Data Exchange Network (CEDEN) and will be viewable on the Contaminant Data Display and Download tool (CD3) under the program name "Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta Data". In addition, Conservancy and SFEI/ASC staff made progress uploading data from the POD aquatic toxicity and fish data from the Sacramento River Watershed Program. Other datasets currently being prepared for upload include the California Department of Pesticide Regulation's Surface Water Database (DPR-SURF) and Sacramento Sanitation Coordinated Monitoring Program (SRC CMP) as well as Delta Mendota Canal toxicity monitoring data.

Meeting Date: May 25, 2016
Page 3

Education and Outreach

Waterway Cleanup: The Conservancy hosted a Delta Waterway Cleanup on April 9th, 2016 as part Sacramento Creek Week. Over 100 volunteer removed roughly two tons of trash in the Delta, contributing to over 16 tons of trash picked up in Sacramento County as a part of Creek Week. The Conservancy provided a Delta Trash Report Form and environmental education materials related to using the online platform Litterati for students and other members of the public to engage in citizen science while engaging in stewardship by cleaning up trash. In particular, styrofoam, bottles and bottle caps, shoes, sport balls, fishing gear and tires appear to contribute significantly to pollution along Delta waterways. The Conservancy partnered with the Sacramento Area Creeks Council, Rio Vista Windsurfing Association, the Sherman Island Kiteboarding Organization, Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District, Sacramento County Regional Parks, and the Girl Scouts Heart of Central California Cosumnes River Service Unit for this event. The next cleanup is planned for fall 2016 to coincide with California Coastal Cleanup Day.

Delta Mercury Exposure Reduction Program (MERP): Delta MERP is a multi-year effort to reduce human exposure to mercury from eating fish caught in the Delta. The Conservancy is partnering with the California Department of Public Health, and the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board to implement this project.

The focus of the Delta MERP program is currently on convening community stakeholder group meetings, producing signs to be posted in the Delta, and implementing the California Department of Health's small grant program. The latest community stakeholder group meeting was held in West Sacramento on April 4th, during which Sierra Fund staff presented information about related efforts in the Sierra regions. The Conservancy is continuing outreach with potential partners to prioritize locations in the Delta for posting Delta MERP signs. The purpose of the sign is to display information to the public about how to safely eat fish that have been caught in the Delta. The timeline for finalizing the sign has been moved from spring to summer 2016 to address comments on the sign design from the final review.

The Conservancy is working closely with Delta MERP interagency staff on implementation of the California Department of Public Health Delta MERP small grants program. The small grants program funds community-based projects aimed at increasing public awareness and understanding of fish contamination issues to reduce exposure to mercury from eating fish caught in the Delta. Three community based organizations currently have active projects that were awarded funding for 2015-2016. Applications submitted for funding in 2016-2017 are being reviewed by a panel of reviewers internal and external to the Delta MERP, and funding decisions are expected to be announced no later than May 29, 2016. Two grants of up to \$20,000 each will be awarded for community-based projects to reduce exposure to mercury from eating fish caught in the Delta.

BOARD DIRECTIVES TO STAFF – January 27th

1. Staff will email the Proposition 1 Grant presentation materials to all Board members.

Staff Response: the Proposition 1 Grant presentation materials were sent via email to all Board members.

2. Staff will communicate with the Delta counties coalition in order to seek participation from those counties in using the EcoAtlas for County-led projects.

Staff Response: staff will coordinate a date for the Conservancy to provide training on using EcoAtlas.

Meeting Date: May 25, 2016
Page 4

DELTA CONSERVANCY BUDGET UPDATE

Agenda Item 6.2: Delta Conservancy Updated Expenditure Report

OUTREACH-DELTA MEETING MATRIX

Agenda Item 6.3: Outreach-Delta Meeting Matrix including most recent events and key dates of future meetings

Contact Person:

Shakoora Azimi-Gaylon, Deputy Executive Officer
Sacramento-San Joaquín Delta Conservancy
Phone: (916) 375-2086

CORRESPONDENCE

Agenda Item 6.4: Correspondence