



SACRAMENTO - SAN JOAQUIN

**DELTA CONSERVANCY**

*A California State Agency*

## **BOARD MEETING AGENDA**

**Updated March 19, 2020**

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**March 25, 2020, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm**

**TELECONFERENCE ONLY**

**Phone: 1-877-402-9753**

**Access Code: 3752086 (press # after entering)**

**Please mute your phone unless you are speaking**

*In accordance with the Governor's Executive Order N-29-20 issued March 18, 2020, to maximize social distancing and public safety, the Delta Conservancy will conduct this meeting by telephone only. Board members, staff, and the public may participate remotely using the teleconference phone number and access code noted above.*

- 1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**
- 2. Welcome, Roll Call, and Introductions**
- 3. Public Comment** (*New Business*)
- 4. Consent Calendar** (*Action Item*)
  - *Approval of December 9, 2019 Board Meeting Summary and Action Items (Attachment)*
  - *Consideration of Amendment to the Term of the Bees Lakes Habitat Restoration Plan Project (Attachment)*
  - *Consideration of Amendment to the Term of the Peterson Ranch: Working Waterway Habitat Enhancement Project (Attachments)*
- 5. Executive Officer's Report, Campbell Ingram**
  - *Program Update (Attachments)*
  - *Correspondence (Attachments)*
  - *Budget and Expenditure Report (Attachment)*
- 6. Proposition 1 Program Update, Aaron Haiman** (*Attachment*)
- 7. Proposition 68 Program Update, Robyn Krock** (*Attachment*)
- 8. Delta Mercury Exposure Reduction Program Final Update, Kirt Sandhu** (*Attachment*)-**POSTPONED**
- 9. Delta Conservancy 2019 Implementation Plan Status Update and Consideration of 2020 Implementation Plan, Debra Kustic** (*Attachments*) (*Action Item*)
- 10. Consideration of the California Environmental Quality Act Exemption Findings and Grant Award for the Mello/Jensen Heirs Sandhill Crane Preserve Project, Aaron Haiman** (*Attachments*) (*Action Item*)

11. **Consideration of Grant Award for the Phase I San Joaquin River Floodplain Restoration and Floodway Enhancement at Banta-Carbona, Aaron Haiman (Attachment) (Action Item)**
12. **Consideration of Amendment to the Budget and Scope of Work for the Wildlife Corridors for Flood Escape on the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Project, Aaron Haiman (Attachment) (Action Item)**
13. **Delta Stewardship Council Update, Amanda Bohl- POSTPONED**
14. **Delta Protection Commission Update, Erik Vink -POSTPONED**
15. **Delta Conveyance Update, Carrie Buckman- POSTPONED**
16. **EcoRestore Update, Charlotte Biggs- POSTPONED**
17. **Potential Agenda Items for the May 27, 2020 Board Meeting, Campbell Ingram (Attachment)**
18. **Public Comment**
19. **ADJOURN**

- To view the members of the Delta Conservancy Board, please visit <http://deltaconservancy.ca.gov/delta-conservancy-board>.
- Attachments and additional information are on the Delta Conservancy's website at: <http://www.deltaconservancy.ca.gov>.
- If you need reasonable accommodation due to a disability, or require printed copies of meeting materials, please contact us at least five (5) days prior to the meeting date at **(916) 375-2084** or [contact@deltaconservancy.ca.gov](mailto:contact@deltaconservancy.ca.gov). This contact information may also be used for any questions you may have.
- Public comments are generally limited to three (3) minutes but may be more or less at the discretion of the Board Chair.
- The Board may consider the agenda items listed above in a different order at the Delta Conservancy Board meeting, pursuant to the determination of the Board Chair. All items appearing on this agenda, whether or not listed expressly for action, may be deliberated upon and subject to action at the discretion of the Delta Conservancy Board.



## **BOARD MEETING SUMMARY AND ACTION ITEMS**

**December 9, 2019**

**Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy Conference Room  
1450 Halyard Drive, Suite 6, West Sacramento**

### **Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance**

Meeting called to order at 9:03 a.m. by Vice Chair Leo Winternitz

### **Agenda Item 2 – Welcome, Roll Call, and Introductions**

After the Pledge of Allegiance, roll call was taken. Agenda items were heard by the Board in the order indicated below.

**Board Members Present:** Karen Mitchoff, Leo Winternitz, Dolly Sandoval, Jim Provenza, Sandi Matsumoto, Larry Ruhstaller, Kathy Miller, Don Nottoli, Bryan Cash, Christopher Lief

**Ex Officio Members Present:** Charles Dulac for Assembly member Jim Frazier

**Liaison Advisors Present:** Steve Chappell, Erik Vink

### **Agenda Item 3 – Public Comment**

None

### **Agenda Item 4 – Consent Calendar**

**MOTION:** *Supervisor Miller moved, seconded by Board Member Ruhstaller, to approve the following.*

- *September 25, 2019 Board Meeting Summary and Action Items*
- *Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy Conflict of Interest Code*

*A voice vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.*

### **Agenda Item 5 – Executive Officer's Report**

The Executive Officer introduced new staff member Dylan Moore, Community Projects Analyst, and presented highlights from the Executive Officer's Report. The Board directives to staff from the September 25, 2019 meeting were to continue providing updates on the Governor's Water Resilience Portfolio and Secretary Crowfoots' Round Table Forum. The Executive Officer stated for future meetings these updates would be reported in the Executive Officer's Report. Staff presented the September 30, 2019 Budget and Expenditure Report.

**Agenda Item 6 – Consideration of Grant Guidelines for the Proposition 68 Community and Economic Enhancement Grant Program**

The Draft Grant Guidelines for the Community and Economic Enhancement Grant Program were approved at the September 25, 2019 Delta Conservancy Board meeting and posted for public comment for 30 days. Minor updates were made based on public comment and the document was finalized.

**MOTION:** *Board Member Winternitz moved, seconded by Board Member Sandoval to approve the Community and Economic Enhancement Grant Program Guidelines.*

*A voice vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.*

**Agenda Item 7 – Proposition 1 Program Update**

Staff presented highlights from the Proposition 1 Program Update Staff Report

**Cycle 4:** Applicants for two projects are still seeking approval, Mello/Jensen Heirs Sandhill Crane Preserve and Phase 1 San Joaquin River Floodplain Restoration and Floodway Enhancement at Banta-Carbona, and have submitted documents. Conservancy staff are reviewing the documents and will provide an update at the January Board meeting. The balance of the Cycle 4 projects are all moving through the contract process.

**Cycle 3:** Knightsen Wetland Restoration and Flood Protection Project may require an amendment to extend the funding term in the future. The Three Creeks Parkway Restoration Project #2 is having land ownership complications which are being addressed.

**Cycle 2:** Projects are on task.

**Cycle 1:** Three Creeks Parkway Restoration Project #1 amendment is still in process.

**Agenda Item 8 – Consideration of Request to Extend the Term of the Fish Friendly Farming Certification Program for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Project Grant**

Barry Hill, Project Manager/Hydrologist with CA Land Stewardship institute (grantee), outlined why the project had been delayed and requested the amendment for an extension. A workbook for the Best Management Practices for Pesticide use in the Delta, is very close to completion and will be ready if the extension is granted to June 30, 2020.

**MOTION:** *Supervisor Nottoli moved, seconded by Board Member Ruhstaller to approve the amendment to the Fish Friendly Farming Certification Program for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Project grant.*

*A voice vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.*

**Agenda Item 9 – Delta Stewardship Council Update**

Amanda Bohl with the Delta Stewardship Council (Council), reported that a public draft of the update to chapter four of the Delta Plan is available on the Council website. The Council is encouraging public comment, especially from local agencies, and staff is ready and available to engage in dialogue. The Conservancy Executive staff will be reviewing the document and will share comments at the January 22, 2020 Board Meeting.



**Agenda Item 10 – Delta Protection Commission Update**

Erik Vink, Executive Director for the Delta Protection Commission (Commission), presented an update. The distribution plan for the Delta Recreational Map is in process. The Commission is creating a best practices plan for the Delta National Heritage Area. They have started a planning project on the Great Delta Trail Master Plan to connect the San Francisco Bay Trail to the Sacramento River Trail for a continuous corridor through the Delta region.

**Agenda Item 11 – Delta Conveyance Update**

Carrie Buckman, Assistant Deputy Director for the California Delta Conveyance with the Department of Water Resources (DWR) provided this update. DWR is planning to pursue a notice of preparation for the environmental impact report under CEQA. Ms. Buckman provided a general schedule of the process in a handout entitled *Key Milestones* showing completion of the planning process by the end of 2022. The DWR Delta Conveyance webpage has updated information.

**Agenda Item 12 – EcoRestore Update**

Charlotte Biggs, Program Manager with the Department of Water Resources, provided a PowerPoint presentation of EcoRestore progress in 2019 and plans for 2020. EcoRestore is tracking approximately 30 projects in the Delta region.

**Agenda Item 13 – Potential Agenda Items for the January 22, 2020 Board Meeting**

- Updates on Proposition 1, cycle 4 projects seeking a grant: Mello/Jensen Heirs Sandhill Crane Preserve, and Phase 1 San Joaquin River Floodplain Restoration and Floodway Enhancement at Banta-Carbona.
- Draft Implementation Plan
- Update on the Governor Resilience Portfolio Round Table Forum

**BOARD DIRECTIVES TO STAFF**

None

**Agenda Item 14 – Public Comment**

None

**MEETING ADJOURNED by Chair Mitchoff at 10:11 a.m.**

**Contact**

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***Consideration of Amendment to the Term of the Bees Lakes Habitat Restoration Plan Project  
Staff Report***

<b>Project Title</b>	Bees Lakes Habitat Restoration Plan
<b>Grantee</b>	City of West Sacramento
<b>Project Number</b>	Prop 1-1712
<b>Award Year</b>	2018
<b>County</b>	Yolo
<b>Category</b>	Planning
<b>Original Award Amount</b>	\$592,500
<b>Amended Request Amount</b>	\$592,500
<b>Amendment Request (Term, Scope or Budget)</b>	Term

This agenda item requests a five-month extension of the funding term for the Bees Lakes Habitat Restoration Plan project.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Board approve an extension of the Funding End Date from June 30, 2020 to November 30, 2020.

**DESCRIPTION**

The grantee has completed a baseline report, developed multiple design concepts, met with a diverse group of stakeholders, and selected a preferred alternative. The preferred alternative is supported by stakeholders and the Parks, Recreation and Inter-generational Commission of the City of West Sacramento. However, some activities have taken longer than anticipated and the grantee needs additional time to develop permit applications, incorporate feedback from the West Sacramento City Council, and finalize 65% design plans for habitat restoration at the project site. This amendment would not change the intent of the project, the project deliverables, or the outputs/outcomes.

If an extension is not approved, the grantee will not be able to complete the deliverables specified in the agreement.

**BACKGROUND**

In April of 2018, as part of Cycle 3 of the Ecosystem Restoration and Water Quality Grant Program, the Board approved the award of grant funds to the Bees Lakes Habitat Restoration Plan project. This project will develop a detailed habitat restoration plan that will restore historic physical and ecological processes at Bees Lakes, which were originally created by a breach in the levee adjacent to the Sacramento River and that have been degraded by uncontrolled human activities. This is the first amendment requested for this project.

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***Consideration of Amendment to the Term of the Peterson Ranch: Working Waterway Habitat Enhancement Project***  
**Staff Report**

<b>Project Title</b>	Peterson Ranch: Working Waterway Habitat Enhancement Project
<b>Grantee</b>	Solano Resource Conservation District
<b>Project Number</b>	Prop 1-1605
<b>Award Year</b>	2017
<b>County</b>	Solano
<b>Category</b>	Implementation
<b>Original Award Amount</b>	\$444,464
<b>Amended Request Amount</b>	\$444,464
<b>Amendment Request (Term, Scope or Budget)</b>	Term

This agenda item requests a 15-month extension to the term of the Peterson Ranch: Working Waterway Habitat Enhancement.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Board approve an extension of the Funding End Date from June 30, 2020 to October 31, 2021.

**DESCRIPTION**

The grantee has requested additional time to so they can maintain and improve the quality of habitat already installed under this grant. Although all eleven restoration sub-sites encompassed by this project have been planted, the grantee was unable to do so within the original timeline. An extension of the funding term will allow the grantee to continue maintaining the planted sites (in the form of irrigation, weed control, and site control) through an additional two irrigation seasons and one final planting season. During this time, the grantee will bolster the number of shrubs and forbs growing on site after final survival counts. An extension will increase the likelihood of plant establishment and project success. It will not change the project's scope of work.

The grantee has also requested changes to the budget that would move funding from line items that will not be fully expended to line items where those funds will be spent during the additional irrigation and planting seasons. According to the Board-approved process for amendments, the budget changes do not require Board approval; Conservancy staff will process the budget changes if the Board approves the amended term.

Without additional time, the project will face an increased risk of plant mortality and will be unlikely to meet its performance measures.

#### **BACKGROUND**

In April of 2017, as part of the Cycle 2 Proposition 1 grant program solicitation, the Board awarded grant funds to the Peterson Ranch: Working Waterway Habitat Enhancement Project. This project pairs cattle management practices with ecosystem restoration practices to create 13.5 acres of riparian habitat on actively farmed and grazed ground in the northern part of the Petersen Ranch along Lindsey Slough in Solano County. It will provide riparian habitat and improve water quality. This project was amended in February of 2019 to change the project footprint in response to wetter than anticipated soil conditions in certain areas of the project.

#### **CONTACT**

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**EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT**  
**March 25, 2020**

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**PROGRAM UPDATE**

**ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION PROGRAM**

**Nutria Eradication:**

The Executive Officer attends monthly Nutria Interagency Eradication Team meetings. The latest Department of Fish and Wildlife report is included as attachment 2. The Board will receive a full briefing on the Program status at the July meeting.

**Delta Mercury Exposure Reduction Program:**

The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board and Conservancy staff are working collaboratively to post fish consumption advisories in the Delta. To date, 85 signs have been posted at 69 sites in the five Delta counties. Delta MERP will wrap up in May of 2020. Staff presented an overview of the six-year program to the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board at their February Board meeting and will make a presentation at this meeting under Agenda Item 8. Staff will host a final stakeholder meeting on April 23, 2020.

**Delta Subsidence and Carbon Emissions:**

The first third party validation and verification of Delta carbon credits for managed wetlands is nearing completion and will be the first wetland credit certification in the nation, allowing the sale or retirement of carbon credits. The Conservancy has funded this effort for three managed wetlands totaling 1,600 acres on Sherman and Twitchell Islands, which are owned by the Department of Water Resources. The Conservancy is currently working to support the validation and verification of two additional projects in the Delta and Suisun Marsh. An article explaining carbon credits was published in *Western Water* and can be found here: <https://www.watereducation.org/western-water/can-carbon-credits-save-sacramento-san-joaquin-delta-islands-and-protect-californias>.

**Water Resilience Portfolio:**

Governor's Executive Order Number N-10-19 calls for the development of a Water Resilience Portfolio to guide the Administration's water policy. A draft of the Portfolio was released in January and comments submitted by the Conservancy's Executive Officer are attached as agenda item 5, attachment 3. The final Portfolio is expected to be released in the coming weeks.

### **COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM**

Through an interagency agreement, staff have been working with the Delta Protection Commission (Commission) to implement elements of the Five-Year Delta Marketing Plan and the Delta Sign Plan, which was a recommendation in the Marketing Plan. The Commission is pursuing the installation of 11 “Welcome to the Delta” signs in Caltrans rights-of-way around the Delta. In November 2019, the Commission applied to Caltrans Region 3 for an encroachment permit needed to post the first sign. The permit was denied. The Commission is working with Caltrans to determine if any signs can be placed in their rights-of-way. If not, the Commission and the Conservancy will work together to determine next steps. The Commission has already entered into an agreement with the California Conservation Corps for installation of the signs, should that be possible.

The Delta Marketing Plan also recommended creation of a Delta Recreation Map. In November, the Commission printed 6,500 recreation maps. The Conservancy is working with the Commission on a distribution plan for the maps.

### **Creek Week 2020:**

The Delta Conservancy will lead four cleanup sites in the Delta on April 18, 2020. The sites are located at the Bufferlands on Morrison Creek, along the bank of the Sacramento River on Sherman Island, at the edge of Suisun Marsh on the Grizzly Island Trail in Suisun City, and at Delta Meadows in historic Locke. These cleanup events are held in coordination with the Sacramento Area Creeks Council’s Creek Week. Volunteer recruitment is ongoing.

### **BOARD PACKET FORMAT CHANGES**

The Delta Conservancy has made changes to our Board meeting documents to ensure ADA compliance and all documents are accessible once posted on the Delta Conservancy website. Format updates include new letterhead and more simplified tables. These changes were made in order to ensure that all text is a minimum of size 12-point font, all colors have a high-enough contrast, color is not the only way information is communicated, and that all documents can be read by assistive technology.

### **PROGRAM AND POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING APRIL 15, 2020:**

The next Program and Policy Subcommittee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday April 15, 2020. We do not have any items for the PPS agenda at this time. Unless a need arises during this meeting, we will cancel the April 15th PPS meeting.

### **FORM 700 COMPLIANCE:**

A completed Form 700, Statement of Economic Interests, is due by April 1, 2020 for all Board Members, Board Member Alternates, and Liaison Advisors. Forms are completed on the Fair Political Practices Commission online portal. Reminders went out this week from our Board Liaison.

### **BOARD DIRECTIVES TO STAFF**

None

### **DELTA CONSERVANCY BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE UPDATE**

(Attachment 8)

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Executive Officer comments on the Governor's Draft Water Resilience Portfolio (Attachment 3)

Executive Officer comments on the Delta Stewardship Council's Amendment to Chapter 4 of the Delta Plan (Protect, Restore, and Enhance the Delta Ecosystem) (Attachment 4)

Letter dated February 28, 2020 from East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy regarding Prop 1-1709 Knightsen Wetland Restoration and Flood Protection Project (Knightsen) (Attachment 5)

Letter dated February 13, 2020 from Knightsen Town Community Services District regarding (Knightsen) (Attachment 6)

Letter enclosure dated September 11, 2019 from Knightsen Town Community Services District regarding (Knightsen) (Attachment 7)

**CONTACT**

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## Nutria Eradication Program Update

### Field Update

Since implementing the Nutria Eradication Incident Command System (ICS) in March 2018, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) redirected field crews, along with three USDA-Wildlife Services trappers and the California Department of Food and Agriculture's delimitation crews, have:

- Completed full and/or rapid assessments on over 718 K acres
- Executed entry permits with over 2500 landowners
- Set up 1,479 camera stations
  - Conducted 7,792 camera checks
- Confirmed nutria within 227 sites
- Deployed 2,477 trap sets for a total of 31,029 trap nights
- Taken or accounted for the take of 958 nutria (since Mar 2017)
  - Merced- 797
  - San Joaquin- 98 (97 from Walthall Slough)
  - Stanislaus- 49
  - Mariposa- 12
  - Fresno- 2
- Of 817 necropsies, the data has shown:
  - 1.18 sex ratio (M:F)
  - Of the females captured:
    - 35% of juvenile (2-6 mos.) females have been pregnant
    - 61% of subadult (6-14 mos.) females have been pregnant
    - 76% of adult (>14 months of age) females have been pregnant
  - 1010 fetal nutria have been documented
  - Litter size ranged from 2-11, with an average of 6.0
    - Average litter size for adult females (> 14 mos.) in California is 6.7

**From:** Ingram, Campbell@SSJDC

**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2020 12:38 PM

**To:** Vogel, Nancy@CNRA <Nancy.Vogel@resources.ca.gov>; Gibson, Thomas@CNRA <Thomas.Gibson@resources.ca.gov>

**Subject:** Delta Conservancy Comments on the Water Resilience Portfolio

Hello Nancy and Tom,

Thank you for taking the time to chat last week and for the opportunity to provide input. As I shared with you on our call, my key interests are getting state conservancies recognized as valuable partners in implementing the portfolio, and highlighting the significance of Delta subsidence in ways that get attention commensurate with the level of risk and opportunity. I hope the following does so in a succinct and acceptable way.

1. Page 15, State Government's Current Role in Water – Please consider adding an additional bullet stating – State Conservancies provide support for water related ecosystem restoration and watershed management objectives. At the second workshop for the Secretary's Green Tape initiative, there was widespread recognition that to step up our conservation efforts to meet current and future challenges we must empower and work with locals and focus on regional strategies. The state conservancies were specifically created to support this objective and have a decades long track record of delivering. Ideally this would be highlighted somehow within the WRP.
2. Page 34. State Conservancies play a significant role in achieving many of the Portfolio Actions listed in Appendix 2. We would certainly like to see our contributions recognized but understand the challenge of identifying all 10 conservancies for their individual contributions. Please consider including State Conservancies...SC to the list of Agency Acronyms Explained on page 34. Additionally, it would be appropriate to add the SC acronym to the following action numbers under the green Multiple Agencies items. I have added two notes specific to the Delta Conservancy's activities. Items 8.4 (the Delta Conservancy runs a Mercury Exposure Reduction Program funded by EPA through SWRCB), 9.3, 12.1 (the Delta Conservancy is currently the largest single funder of this program with over \$9 million committed), 13.1, 15.1, 15.2, 16.2, 18.4 20.1, 27.1.
3. Page 110, second column – please consider adding the highlighted text. The law created **two** new agencies, the Delta Stewardship Council, to advance co-equal goals....., **and the Delta Conservancy to be a state partner in implementation of the Delta Plan.**
4. Page 110, third column – have subsided 15 feet or more should be changed to 20 feet or more.
5. Page 114. Given the significance of subsidence as a key driver, please consider adding the rates of ongoing subsidence and the total carbon emission. At the beginning of the third column after the sentence that ends with atmosphere (note you need an o in atmosphere) consider adding – Subsidence is ongoing at a rate of up to 1.5 inches per year, which results over 2,000,000 million tons of carbon emissions per year. You might also consider including the Delta's contribution to CA's total carbon emission in the Delta Climate Effects section on page 111, it is between 1% and 2%.
6. Page 114, end of third column. It would also be good to characterize the risk ongoing subsidence and sea level rise present to the state and federal water projects, local agriculture and communities. Consider adding something like – This could cause significant interruption in water delivery from the state and federal water projects, inundate tens of thousands of acres of farm land and several Delta communities.

7. Page 114. I like and use the map on the left but it is important to note that it is from CALFED days (1995) and we are 2+ feet deeper than we were at that time.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment and please let me know if you have any questions.  
Campbell

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

[www.deltaconservancy.ca.gov](http://www.deltaconservancy.ca.gov)

**From:** Ingram, Campbell@SSJDC

**Sent:** Monday, January 6, 2020 8:47 AM

**To:** ecosystemamendment@deltacouncil.ca.gov

**Cc:** Tatayon, Susan@DeltaCouncil <Susan.Tatayon@deltacouncil.ca.gov>; Pearson, Jessica@DeltaCouncil <Jessica.Pearson@deltacouncil.ca.gov>; Law, Jessica@DeltaCouncil <Jessica.Law@deltacouncil.ca.gov>; Melcer, Ronald@DeltaCouncil <Ronald.Melcer@deltacouncil.ca.gov>

**Subject:** Chapter 4 Comments from the Delta Conservancy

Dear Chair Tatayon and Staff,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Preliminary Draft of Chapter 4, Protect, Restore, and Enhance the Delta Ecosystem, of the Delta Plan. The preliminary draft provides a great framework for achieving the coequal goal of protecting, restoring and enhancing the Delta ecosystem and the Delta Conservancy looks forward to being a partner in restoration efforts that help achieve the goal. The Conservancy is a unique state organization that is tasked with conducting restoration in coordination with the Delta Community and we are proud to have been able to fund 27 locally supported restoration projects to date. Please consider the following comments in future revisions to Chapter 4.

- 1) Page 4-4, consider expanding the introductory paragraph to include information contained in the beginning of the second paragraph on page 4-29 recognizing the importance of a well-coordinated and collaborative approach with the Delta Community if restoration is to be successful. Additionally it would be good to recognize the restoration partnership that is required for success, calling out state and federal agencies, NGO partners and consultants who do the work. Both concepts introduced in the first paragraph would provide a more complete context for the rest of the document.
- 2) Page 4-13, first and second paragraphs should include a brief description of subsidence in the Delta, the resulting carbon emissions and increasing risk to the state and federal water projects, local agriculture and communities. Language in the first sentence of page 4-43 recognizes the significance of the carbon emissions and how they work against the state's carbon neutrality goals. This language should be incorporated into this first discussion of climate adaptation. Additionally, it would be good to introduce managed wetlands and rice cultivation here and briefly describe the benefits of stopping subsidence and related emissions and providing benefits to avian and listed species. The second paragraph does this for tidal wetland and riparian habitat and should do the same for managed wetland/rice.
- 3) Page 4-17, second paragraph. Similar to number 2, here is another opportunity to introduce the benefits of managed wetlands.
- 4) Page 4-18, bulleted list of future characteristics should include a bullet that indicates controlled subsidence and related carbon emissions in a manner that provides economic incentives and co-benefits of risk reduction, and habitat for avian and other listed species. There are large sections of the document that discuss protection against land loss, it would seem a bullet here would reflect the importance commensurate with the attention later in the document.
- 5) Page 4-28, last sentence of third paragraph. The Conservancy very much appreciates the recognition of incremental benefits making meaningful contributions to ecological function over time. We believe this recognition is consistent with the realities of the challenges and timelines associated with large-scale restoration including lack of funding and significant local opposition to restoration at scale.

- 6) Page 4-27-29, Core Strategy 2 section. While we understand and concur with the focus on ecological function in this section, the concept of channel margin habitat is not addressed anywhere in the document. With over 1,100 miles of mostly armored edge and fast moving channels, significant effort has gone into assessing what can be done to improve edge habitat to provide benefits to migrating juvenile salmonids (Davenport analysis for DSC, and SFEI analysis for the Conservancy, draft due out by early 2020). A discussion of the topic could be appended to the functional floodplains discussion.
- 7) Page 4-33. First and second paragraphs. These two paragraphs should more explicitly connect the mechanism of subsidence, microbial oxidation of highly organic drained agricultural soils, to the rates of subsidence and rates of carbon emissions (average of 10/tons/acre/yr., in the deeply subsided areas of the Delta, and indicate the total carbon emission per year from the Delta). Again incorporating language from the first sentence on page 4-43 would be valuable.
- 8) Page 4-35. Last section of the second paragraph, second sentence beginning with Providing terrestrial and wetland habitat.... We understand the context of the section but it still seems to unnecessarily overstate the costs and diminished value of creating managed wetlands and under sells the broader climate, habitat and reduced risk benefits. The last sentence in the paragraph is the first time in the document that oxidation and carbon emissions are recognized, this can be rectified by addressing comments 2, 3, 4 and 7 above.
- 9) Page 4-36. Second to last sentence. Due to rates of carbon emissions of drained agriculture, and the production of methane when soils are re-saturated, the overall climate benefit is emission avoidance and not carbon sequestration. Sequestration is canceled by methane production. This is a fundamental difference of highly organic peat soils that should be understood.
- 10) Page 4-40. Last bullet, Western Delta/ECCC. This bullet should include managed wetlands to stop subsidence and related emissions, and provide habitat benefits.
- 11) Page 4-43. End of first paragraph. It would be good to recognize the habitat/species benefits of managed wetlands in this paragraph.
- 12) Page 4-43. First sentence last paragraph. Sequestering carbon should be changed to reducing carbon emissions.
- 13) Page 4-44. Second paragraph. While the Conservancy supports more utilization of RCDs (we partner with them on many projects) it seems odd to single them out here and not recognition other partners like reclamation districts and water districts that we partner with on these type projects. Note that New ER-D on page 4-65 recognizes other local agencies and districts. Further it is important to recognize in the areas that are rapidly subsiding in the Delta the only practice that can significantly reduce the alarming rate of carbon emissions and subsidence is rewetting the land to stop the microbial oxidation. Other practice such as the referenced grasslands protocols, while extremely valuable on the more mineral soils on the edge of the Delta and around the state are not relevant in the subsided Delta because the relationships change profoundly on peat soils. Both the state's rice protocol and the grasslands protocol do not cover the Delta for this reason. Better management of grasslands (soil amendments, no till) on more mineral soils can sequester 1 to 3 tons a carbon/yr. Re-wetting of peat soils results in an avoided emission of 10 tons of carbon/yr., and sequestration rates that are cancelled by methane production. See comment 9 above.
- 14) Page 4-53. Second paragraph. Add the Department of Fish and Wildlife to the parenthetical that identifies the Conservancy as funding state-led programs. DFW also has Prop. 1 and 68 dollars for the Delta.
- 15) Page 4-55. Delta Conservancy box. Please include that we are actively developing carbon market incentives and pilot projects.
- 16) Page 4-57. Ownership and Management section. This section recognizes the Conservancy's authorization to acquire and manage lands but does not recognize the ongoing role of DFW, DWR and Department of Parks in managing lands currently.

- 17) Page 4-67. ER R7. The Department of Boating and Waterways should be recognized here. Also, funding strategies for control of existing terrestrial invasive species (not just new) should be developed as well. Existing aquatic species are pretty well covered by DBW, but underfunded.
- 18) Page 4-69. ER RF (b). Consider adding, "to stop subsidence and related carbon emissions and", between necessary and to achieve.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comments and please feel free to reach out for any clarification of the comments here.

Campbell

Campbell Ingram

Executive Officer

***Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy***

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

[www.deltaconservancy.ca.gov](http://www.deltaconservancy.ca.gov)



**EAST CONTRA  
COSTA COUNTY  
HABITAT  
CONSERVANCY**

*City of Brentwood*

*City of Clayton*

*City of Oakley*

*City of Pittsburg*

*Contra Costa County*

February 28, 2020

Knightsen Town Community Services District  
P.O. Box 763  
Knightsen, CA 94548  
(sent via email: knightsenCSD@gmail.com)

Dear Chairperson Bello-Kunkel and Directors of the Knightsen Town Community Services District (KTCSD) Board:

The East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy (Conservancy) is providing written responses to the questions you sent to the Conservancy about the proposed restoration project on the east side of Knightsen (letter dated September 11, 2019).

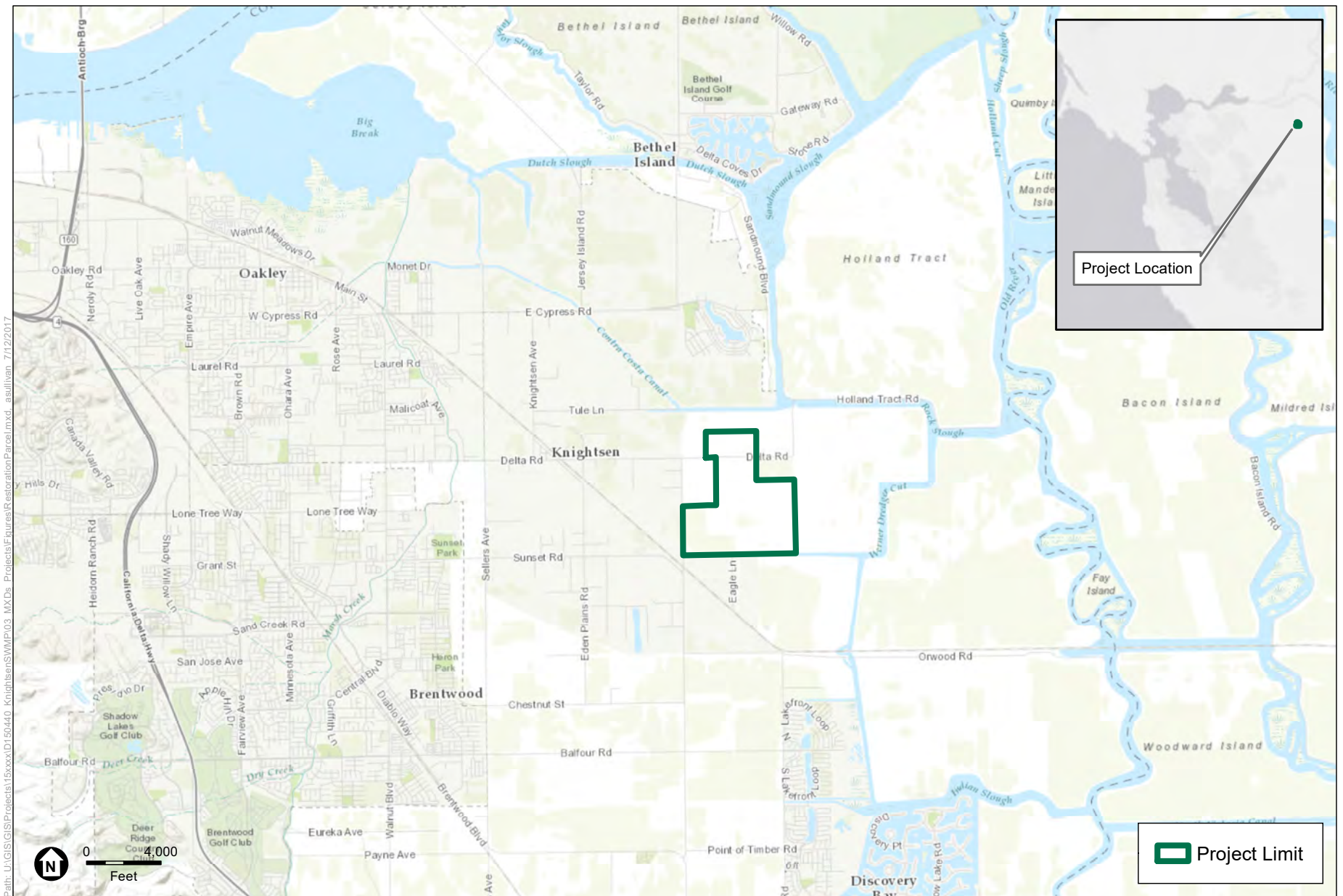
Your letter posed a number of questions about the project. Some questions can be answered at this time, while others require additional studies to be completed before definitive answers can be provided. In the following pages we will answer your questions to the extent that we can and indicate where additional data needs to be collected to provide the complete answer you have requested.

We apologize for the length of time it's taken to assemble this response to your letter. We have gone through extended processes both contractual and analytical in response development. This project is in its planning phase, with conceptual design alternatives and associated reports finalized at the end of September 2019. The project team is continuing to work on the next phase of planning which will develop more information and data to inform project decisions.

In response to KTCSD and community concerns and to inform design development we have initiated a second phase of data collection and analysis that will continue over the coming months. It should be noted that all projects go through a process of defining conceptual alternatives and then analyzing and evaluating those alternatives to refine and select the preferred project alternative. Our project is in the analysis and evaluation phase and we are sharing our plans for additional data collection and analysis with you at this time though the data collection and analysis is not complete. We do this in the spirit of sharing and seeking further comment from the Community of Knightsen (Community), and we ask for understanding when a full response cannot yet be given until further data is collected and analyzed.

The project team would be pleased to meet with the KTCSD to discuss these responses and provide additional clarification if requested. Members of the project team will also be available at future public outreach meetings to discuss the project and answer questions.



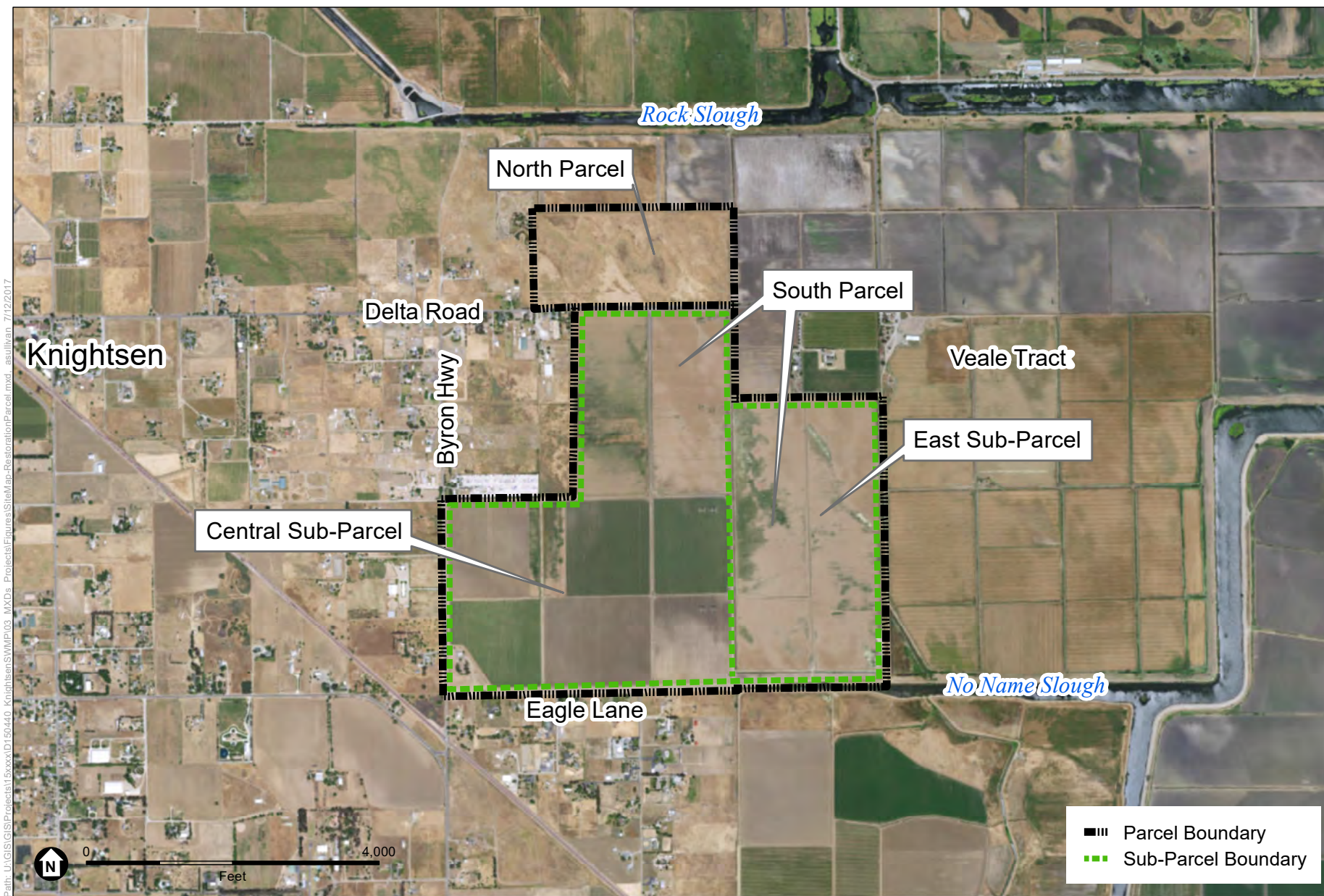


SOURCE: ESRI World Topographic Map

Knightsen Wetland Restoration and Flood Protection Project. D170045.00

**Figure 1**  
Location Map



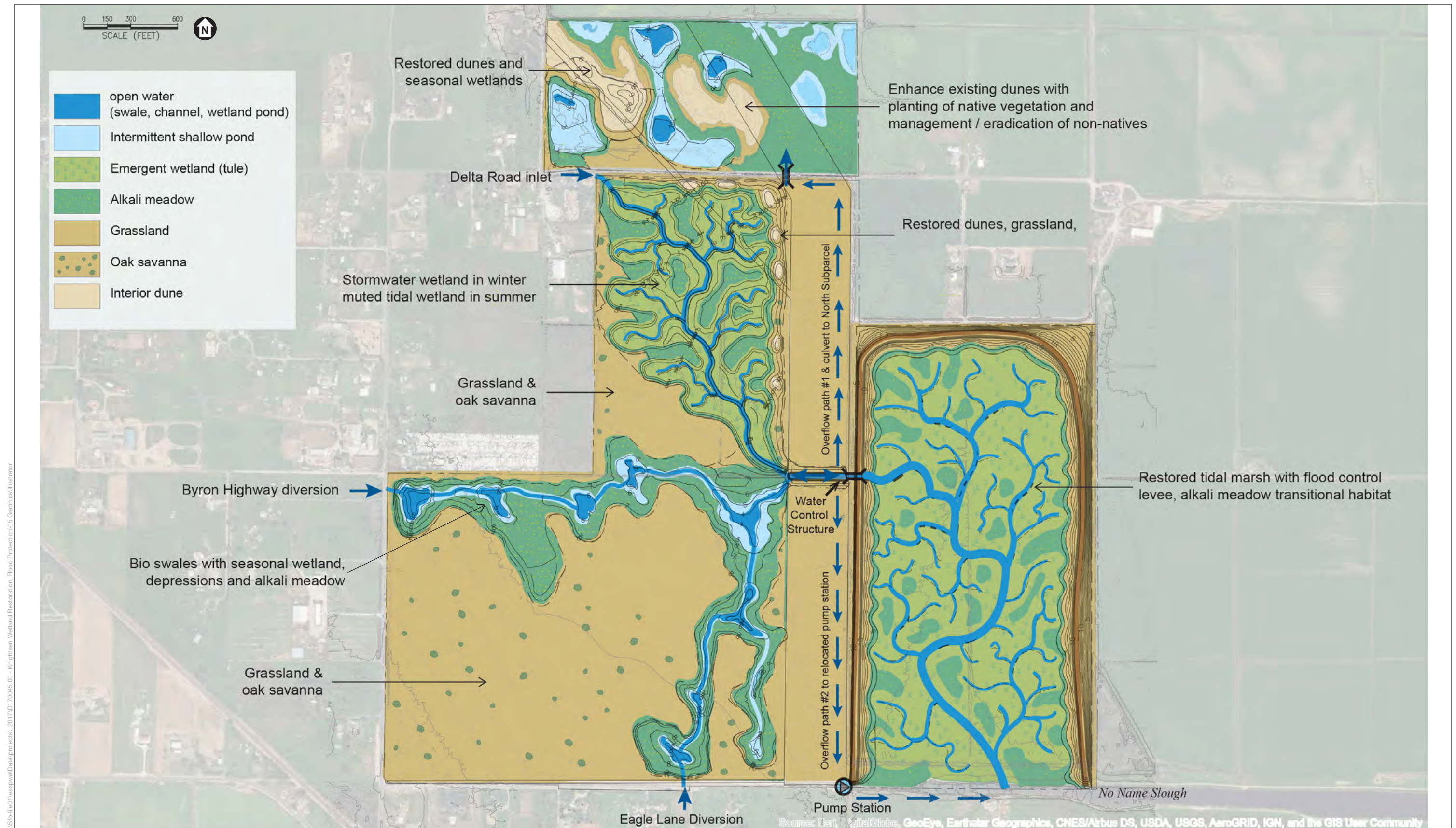


SOURCE: ESRI World Topographic Map

Knightsen Wetland Restoration and Flood Protection Project. D170045.00

**Figure 2**  
Project Site Map





SOURCE: ESA, 2019

Knightsen Wetland Restoration and Flood Protection Project. D170045.00

**Figure 3**

Concept Alternative 1





SOURCE: ESA, 2019

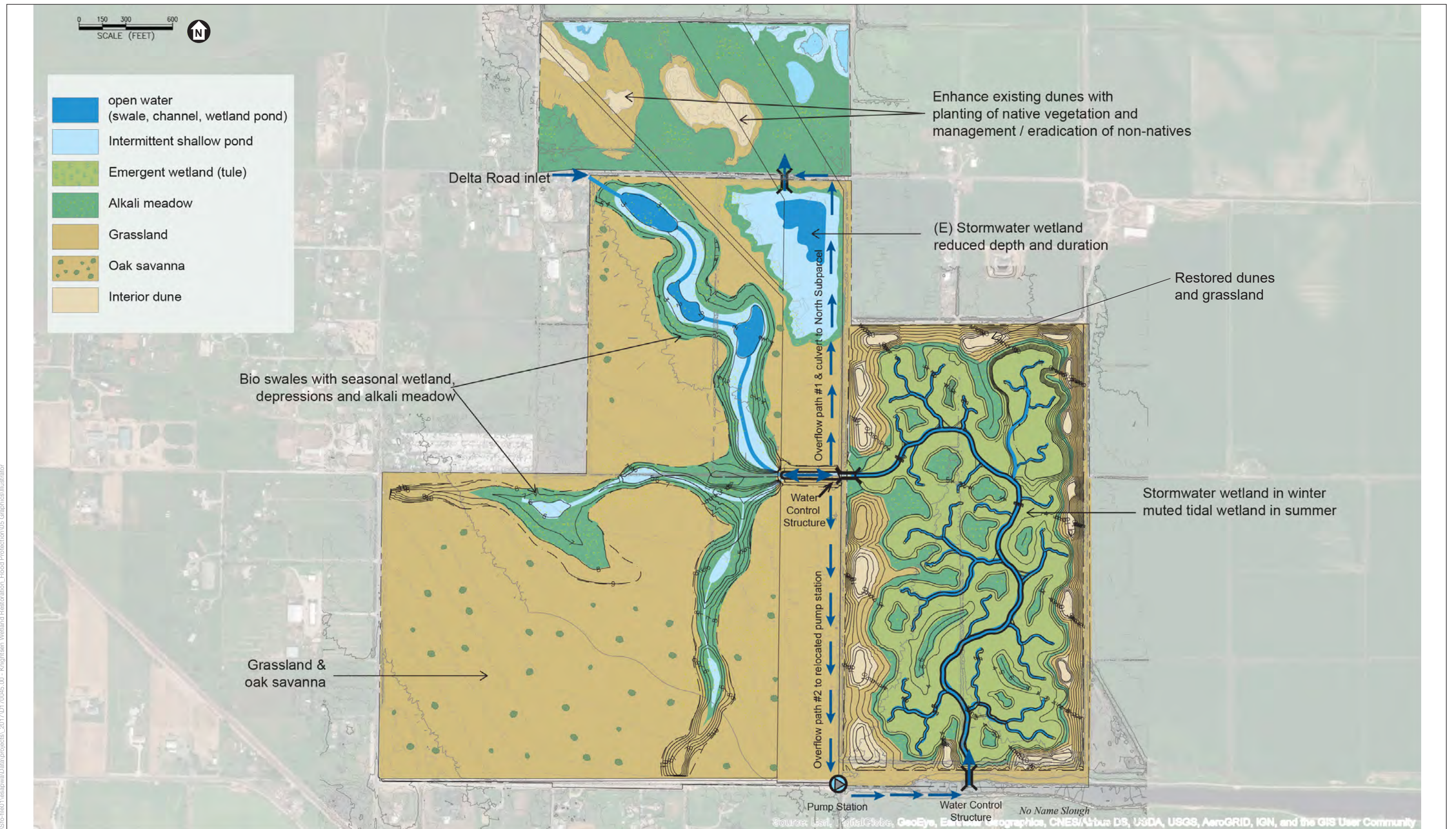
Knightsen Wetland Restoration and Flood Protection Project. D170045.00

**Figure 4**

Concept Alternative 2



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SOURCE: ESA, 2019

Knightsen Wetland Restoration and Flood Protection Project. D170045.00

**Figure 5**

Concept Alternative 3



To assist in reading the responses to your questions, a list of abbreviations and acronyms are provided below. For reference, the project vicinity, project location and conceptual alternative maps (3) from the January 2020 Knightsen Wetland Restoration and Flood Protection Project Conceptual Alternatives Report are included for reference herein as Figures 1-5. The full report can be accessed online: <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/7624/Knightsen-Wetland-Restoration-Project> .

#### Acronyms/Abbreviations

CCCFC	Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, also referred to as CCC Flood Control or Flood Control District
CCCMVCD	Contra Costa County Mosquito and Vector Control
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
EBRPD	East Bay Regional Park District
ECCCCHC	East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy also referred to as the Conservancy, or Conservancy
ESA	Environmental Science Associates
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
KTCSD	Knightsen Town Community Services District
NAVD	North American Vertical Datum
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services

*KTCSD Q1: In the “Knightsen Habitat Restoration Feasibility Study,” prepared by Environmental Science Associates (ESA) dated 1/28/2013, it states, “Potential constraints to neighbor properties may include a high ground water table and increased flood risk and seepage with restoration” (page 7). In the “Knightsen Wetland Restoration and Flood Protection Project Baseline Soils Evaluation and Hydrologic Monitoring” document prepared by Balance Hydrologics dated June 2019, it states, “Overall, the site is extremely well-suited for restoring tidal marsh but not without a potential for increased seepage and flood risk to neighboring properties” (page 2).*

*It is absolutely critical for the KTCSD board and members of this community to know whether the proposed wetlands will INCREASE the flood risk and impede existing groundwater/surface water drainage patterns for property owners in the vicinity of the proposed wetlands. We need to know specifically what the Habitat Conservancy (ECCHC)/East Bay Regional Parks (EBRPD) will do to ensure the proposed wetlands will not increase the flood risk. We need proof regarding the effectiveness of any measures ECCHC/EBRPD will implement to eliminate this risk.*

#### **Response 1:**

Flood risk management has been on the forefront of all conversations since this project was originally described in 1998 as the Knightsen Biofilter Project - initially as a single purpose flood control and stormwater management project. The project has evolved from a single purpose project to a multi-objective project, and this has enabled additional partners and funding to support the project. The project team and partners have prioritized flood risk management in the development of the conceptual designs for this project

The reports quoted were produced by consultants that were hired and paid for by public agency partners (Conservancy, KTCSD and CCC Flood Control). The Conservancy and CCC Flood Control are working to best protect the Community from flooding while also achieving other needed benefits in the region. In addition to the quotes selected in the above question, the reports describe how the project intends to address these noted potential constraints/impacts. ESA’s Knightsen Habitat

Restoration Feasibility Study (ESA, 2013) indicates these potential constraints “could be managed by 1) limiting the site location where full tidal circulation is allowed, 2) allowing for dampened or managed tidal circulation in certain areas, 3) providing engineered flood control levees around the site, 4) providing drainage ditches/maintaining pumping to manage groundwater elevation around the site, and 5) implementation of an adaptive monitoring/management program to identify problems and to manage the site if problems are identified.” Similarly, Balance Hydrologics’ Baseline Soils Evaluation and Hydrologic Monitoring report (Balance, 2019) indicates that “A number of concepts were proposed to manage this constraint” – referencing the management/mitigation measures cited by ESA’s Feasibility Study.

The KTCSD’s question has two components, flood risk and increased groundwater levels/seepage, each of which are responded to below.

Flood Risks from No Name Slough and water on the project site:

FEMA maps indicate that areas within and around the project site that are below approximately EL 9’ NAVD (elevation nine feet) are within the 100-year floodplain. The US Army Corps of Engineers identified a 100-year flood level of EL 9.55’ NAVD along Old River at the mouth of Rock Slough near the project site. Areas around the project site are currently protected from flooding by existing agricultural levees along Rock Slough and No Name Slough. While these existing levees do not meet FEMA criteria, they do provide a level of flood protection to neighboring properties.

For areas of the project site where restoration of tidal marsh is proposed, the project would include a new, engineered flood control levee to provide equal or higher than current levels of flood protection on the project site and for adjacent properties. The new levee would be built to current standards, providing increased seismic stability in addition to similar or higher levels of flood protection from water on the project site. Thus a benefit of the project would be a decrease in flood risks from No Name Slough due to a more robust levee system on site.

Flood risk from storm water from within/traveling through the Community of Knightsen:

The Community is already impacted by runoff from upgradient land that drains stormwater toward Knightsen and around the project site, where it is pumped into No Name Slough. Impacts from this drainage pattern include localized flooding during high rainfall years and the Community has been significantly impacted for extended periods with historically high rainfall-runoff. The 1982-83 and 1998 flood events are examples of this. One of the most heavily impacted areas of the Community is located adjacent to the project site including areas along Byron Highway, Delta Road, and to a lesser extent, along Eagle Lane.

During high rainfall years, septic systems in low lying areas have been impacted due to high groundwater levels exacerbated by storm water sitting in drainage ditches and stormwater pooling on private properties.

During extended periods of extreme rainfall-runoff, areas along Delta Road and Byron Highway have experienced more significant flood impacts due to limited conveyance in existing drainage ditches & culverts. In 2010, the KTCSD entered into an agreement with the prior owner of the project site (Ron Nunn) to allow stormwater to flow on to the property and then supported the pumping of this water from that site into No Name Slough. With the agreement in place, flood risk in the community has been significantly reduced, particularly for the properties near the intersection of Delta Road and Byron Highway, and the project site now serves as temporary flood storage, holding excess stormwater from Knightsen’s drainage network before it is pumped over the levee into No Name

Slough. The existing flood control function of the project site is now limited by the capacity of the existing agricultural drainage pump and site configuration. Even with additional rented pumps during the winter months in 2019, water remained ponded on the project site for several weeks at a time, causing crop damage and potentially backing up onto the neighboring Veale Tract. A long-term low-maintenance solution is therefore needed to manage stormwater at the project site, so that it can continue to provide the flood control benefit established by the 2010 KTCSD agreement.

One of the objectives of the proposed project is to provide better long-term flood management by increasing conveyance and storage for stormwater runoff generated by upgradient properties that currently flows toward the project site. Project conceptual designs include elements that provide increased conveyance capacity to move stormwater runoff away from homes, increase storage volumes on the project site to store runoff, and increase capacity to allow for gravity discharge to the Delta (in addition to potentially providing a new and larger pump included for overflows). Thus, the project would support the KTCSD's efforts to address flooding within the Community in the vicinity of the project site.

The Conservancy values the collaborative efforts that KTCSD has engaged in in the past to address stormwater drainage issues in this part of the Community and welcomes the opportunity improve flood conveyance across the project site with the project. In order to achieve a mutually beneficial solution, ongoing communication, continued collaboration, effective pump operations, and routine ditch maintenance will all be required.

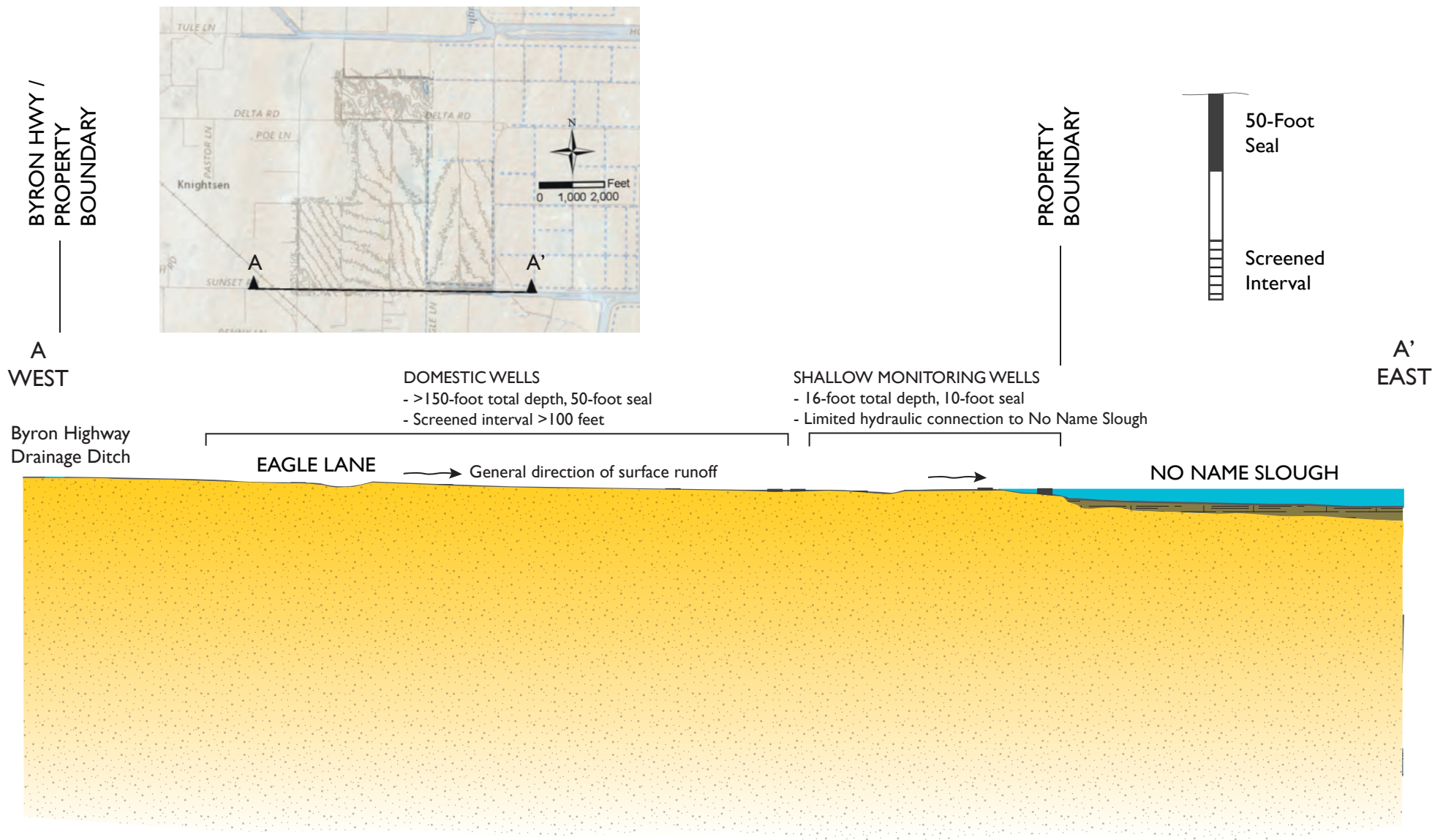
#### *Work already planned that will help respond to KTCSD Questions/Concerns*

Developing design parameters for a new flood protection levee began in December 2019. The Conservancy hired Hultgren-Tillis Engineers, a well-respected geotechnical engineering firm with extensive experience in designing flood control levees in the Delta Region, to provide geotechnical engineering support for the project.

The geotechnical scope of work includes:

- Exploration of subsurface conditions by drilling soil borings and performing cone penetrometer tests along the alignment of proposed new levees and berms to depths of up to 40 feet below ground surface.
- Excavation of test pits within areas of proposed excavation to determine if existing soils are suitable for levee construction.
- Based on the field exploration results, Hultgren-Tillis will analyze slope stability, including static and seismic loading and settlement, and evaluate the potential for under-seepage.
- Develop levee design recommendations to meet current standards for slope stability, estimated settlement, and any special considerations to address under-seepage in areas with sands in the subsurface.
- Installation of additional monitoring wells to assist in evaluating surface-groundwater interactions along the perimeter of the property that is proposed for the introduction of tidal influence and neighboring properties.

The work that Hultgren-Tillis is doing will generate information required to design levees that meet current engineering standards, maintain or increase flood protection from No Name Slough for properties neighboring the project site, and employ engineering measures to address potential under-seepage if necessary.



**NOT TO SCALE**

**Figure 6.** Schematic geologic cross-section A-A' along Eagle Lane, Knightsen, CA.

Wetlands proposed for restoration at the Nunn Property will be supported by surface runoff from the west and tidal action via connection to No Name Slough, with limited influences on shallow groundwater, as observed in monitoring wells on site. Domestic wells in the vicinity of the Nunn Property are greater than 100 feet deep with screens at depths greater than 50 feet, and are required to have a 50-foot seal. Domestic wells draw on a deeper aquifer semi-confined by a clay aquitard, and therefore are expected to have limited or no hydrologic connectivity to the surface water, stormwater, or associated shallow groundwater at the Nunn Property. Additional analyses including groundwater modeling and geochemical “fingerprinting” of various waters will allow this conceptual understanding of groundwater to be tested.



### **Groundwater Levels/Seepage**

The project concept designs consider groundwater levels and potential for seepage. To provide additional context on these terms, this response letter discusses the surface water and groundwater (shallow groundwater and deeper aquifers) as well as tidal water. These three water sources are illustrated in Figure 6 and further described below:

- No Name Slough is under the influence of “tidal action.” Water in the tidal action zone fluctuates between approximately 2 and 8 feet (NAVD), and is relatively fresh, with lower salinity than water found on the project site.
- “Shallow groundwater” fluctuates between 2 and 8 feet below the ground surface on the project site, and is affected primarily by seasonal rainfall, onsite irrigation, and surface drainage from neighboring properties, with very limited effects from tidal action in No Name Slough. Salinity in shallow groundwater is generally higher than that found in No Name Slough.
- Domestic wells in the vicinity of the project site draw on the “local aquifer,” which is located deeper than 100 feet below the ground surface and thick clay layers.

The potential for increased groundwater levels identified in ESA’s 2013 Feasibility Assessment relate to shallow groundwater, and potential influences from tidal action near properties that are down-gradient from the project site (north & east of the site). For example, there is potential to raise groundwater levels to a small degree on Veale Tract. One of the primary concerns that Hultgren-Tillis Engineers will be considering in developing recommendations for construction of new levees to prevent the potential for under-seepage below new levees, in particular for the neighboring Veale Tract which relies upon pumping to control groundwater levels in support of their agricultural practices. Higher water on one side of the levee (e.g. high tide) could create pressure that may cause water to seep under the levee to the other side where water levels are lower. This under-seepage could influence groundwater levels on the lower side.

As discussed in Balance Hydrologics’ 2019 Baseline Soils Evaluation and Hydrologic Monitoring Report, there appears to be limited subsurface hydraulic connectivity between tidal action and shallow groundwater levels on the project site. Data collected from August 2017 through March 2019 indicate very minor (less than 6 inches) tidal influence in only 1 shallow monitoring well, located approximately 300 feet to the north of No Name Slough, with no tidal influences detected beyond 750 feet from No Name Slough (the next closest well). In addition, tidal influences are not anticipated to be detected in domestic wells which draw on the local aquifer, due to separation by clay layers at depth and overall distance from current and potential future tidal action on the project site (Figure 6). Balance Hydrologics is in the process of conducting additional analyses to further evaluate and document the separation between these water bodies (tidal [No Name Slough], shallow ground water and aquifer).

Monitoring data indicate that groundwater at the site generally flows from southwest to the northeast (similar to surface grades). Thus, properties to the south and west are not anticipated to see any significant changes in shallow groundwater (i.e. septic systems) or the local aquifer (i.e. drinking water wells). Additional analysis is continuing and includes the development of a numerical groundwater model that will allow for further evaluation of the potential impacts associated with the different project alternatives. This new information will help refine project design parameters to avoid project impacts.

Proposed swales and wetlands near the southern and western boundaries of the project site will support surface water ponding and shallow groundwater levels during the wet season and will be

designed to convey most storm water flows at depths less than 6- to 12-inches. There is no new tidal influence proposed on the project site that is adjacent to homes on Eagle Lane. Soils and existing groundwater data developed in the 2019 indicate that changes to shallow groundwater levels from this ponding would be limited to the immediate vicinity of the proposed swales and wetlands, and changes in the local aquifer are not likely to be detectable. Furthermore, areas that are upgradient from new wetland features are not anticipated to be affected by the changes in surface water ponding. Additional work is currently being carried out to confirm this understanding and guide the development of project elements.

#### New Work in Response to KTCSD Question

To better address the KTCSD's concerns, the Conservancy has contracted with Balance Hydrologics to develop a more detailed understanding of surface/subsurface groundwater through data collection and modeling to evaluate whether the proposed project could potentially impact shallow groundwater hydrology or the local aquifer and modify the project design to avoid such impacts. The groundwater model will compare existing vs. anticipated conditions with the proposed alternatives during extended periods of heavy stormwater-runoff that have historically caused localized flooding and issues with septic systems in the area. As part of the analysis, Balance Hydrologics will consider:

- Current irrigation practices along the southern and western site boundaries to support irrigated agriculture that raise the groundwater table.
- Current drainage conditions within ditches along Delta Road, Byron Highway, and Eagle Lane where clogged and undersized culverts create high surface water levels within the existing road side ditches during and following extended periods of heavy rainfall-runoff, and may impact shallow ground water levels when inundated for longer periods of time.
- Proposed drainage conditions which would increase conveyance capacity on the project site resulting in reduced surface water levels in existing roadside ditches while routing runoff into proposed swales and wetlands on the project site.
- Potential impacts of tidal or muted tidal wetlands on the site on shallow ground water and the local aquifer.

The Conservancy will utilize the results of the groundwater modeling assessment in choosing a preferred alternative and in developing the design of the preferred project. If modeling indicates that groundwater levels at neighboring properties could be increased, the design for onsite swales and/or wetlands would be modified as needed to avoid any estimated increases in shallow groundwater levels. Potential modifications could include:

- Moving proposed swales and wetlands away from neighboring properties sufficiently to avoid any significant changes in groundwater levels at adjacent offsite properties.
- Moving proposed swales and wetlands away from areas with sandy soils to reduce shallow groundwater levels at adjacent offsite properties during extended periods of heavy rainfall-runoff.
- Limiting the degree of tidal action in muted tidal wetlands.
- Moving the location of restored tidal marsh to sufficiently limit changes in shallow groundwater or local aquifer conditions.

*KTCSD Q2: What risk does the higher ground water table discussed above and acknowledged by your consultants pose with regard to wells and septic systems on properties in the vicinity of the proposed*

*wetlands? We need to know specifically what ECCHC/EBRPD will do to ensure the proposed wetlands will not negatively impact wells and septic systems. We need proof regarding the effectiveness of any measures ECCHC/EBRPD will implement to eliminate this impact.*

**Response 2:**

The initial task in understanding any project concept is to identify potential project impacts. The “higher groundwater table” comment made by the Conservancy’s consultants was offered as a potential project constraint to inform design. This potential impact was addressed at the feasibility level as one that could be managed, and several management actions to address the potential for a higher groundwater table were discussed. The potential for higher groundwater levels referenced at the feasibility level were discussed primarily in consideration of the neighboring, down-gradient Veale Tract which depends on groundwater pumping to support agriculture. The potential constraint/impact was not meant to refer to adjacent properties to the south and west of the project site.

We do not expect wells or septic systems would be impacted by the proposed project as presented in the conceptual alternatives for the following reasons.

- Domestic groundwater wells in this region typically draw from a local aquifer, over 100-feet below the ground surface, that is separated by clay layers from surface water and shallow groundwater. Additional studies are being conducted by Balance Hydrologics to confirm this understanding of the separation between the local aquifer, domestic wells, and surface water at the site.
- As described in the 2019 baseline soils and hydrology report (Balance, 2019), shallow groundwater generally flows to the northeast. The project is therefore not likely to have a significant effect on shallow groundwater levels and septic systems at up-gradient locations adjacent to the project site, such as residential properties along Eagle Lane, Byron Highway, or Delta Road.
  - Under current conditions, local septic systems are impacted by very poor drainage. Runoff conveyance along Byron Highway and especially Delta Road is significantly restricted by undersized and clogged culverts. This poor drainage results in higher water levels within existing ditches during and after extended periods of heavy rainfall-runoff, which, in turn increases shallow groundwater levels in the vicinity. The project concept designs are intended to ameliorate these drainage problems by providing a place for water that backs up and sits in ditches to flow.
  - Some residents have mentioned that their septic systems already back up during rainy winters and some residents are already impacted under the current land use and drainage practices in Knightsen. Since the project aims to alleviate existing drainage issues, we anticipate the project will also alleviate septic system back-up issues.
  - The project has offered to accept stormwater from the community at locations that would more efficiently move stormwater onto the project site, reducing flows and stormwater levels in roadside ditches on Byron Highway and Delta Road. If some stormwater conveyance improvements can be made to deliver the runoff away from the residences and on to the project site more quickly, this will help directly alleviate some of the problems that residents currently experience related to poor drainage in existing roadside ditches.

**New work in Response to KTCSD Question**

To evaluate whether the proposed conceptual alternatives could potentially impact neighboring wells or septic systems, the Conservancy has contracted with Balance Hydrologics to provide additional analysis.

To the extent that residents will allow, Balance Hydrologics will gather data on neighboring properties and collect water samples and groundwater elevations from existing wells. This information, combined with shallow groundwater sampling and measurements from piezometers on the project site, and surface water sampling and elevation observations will provide a more complete picture of subsurface water conditions in the area. The samples will be analyzed for general minerals and salinity to evaluate hydrologic connectivity between shallow groundwater and surface water at the site and the deeper local aquifer from which the residential wells draw.

To assess potential changes to shallow groundwater elevations, Balance Hydrologics will develop a surface water/shallow groundwater model to analyze the potential for impacts to shallow groundwater levels associated with project alternatives. If needed, the Conservancy will revise the design of the preferred alternative to avoid potential increases in groundwater levels at adjacent properties as discussed in Response 1.

*KTCSD Q3: The January 28, 2013 feasibility study also states, "With a low gradient slopes and no barriers to estuarine transgression, there is potential for tidal wetlands to transgress landward as sea level rises" (page 7). Some of the proposals you presented at the community meeting on July 11, 2019, included plans for the installation of gates that would allow tidal flow to transgress on to the parcel. During the community meeting concern was raised about the future impact of global warming/sea level rise if tidal wetlands is a feature of the proposed wetlands, but that concern was not addressed.*

*As you know, there are developed real estate parcels including homes that are immediately adjacent to the proposed wetlands property. It is absolutely critical for the KTCSD Board and community members to know whether the proposed wetlands project will put Knightsen residents at increased risk with regard to global warming/sea level rise. We need to know specifically what ECCHC/EBRPD will do to ensure the proposed wetlands does not increase the likelihood of Knightsen being impacted by global warming/sea level rise. We need to know how the gates will be monitored and who will be accountable for maintaining that monitoring (including the funding source) to ensure that they open and close in a timely and effective manner. We need proof regarding the degree to which any measures ECCHC/EBRPD implement will negate any increased risk of impact from global warming/sea level rise.*

**Response 3:**

Sea level rise is an issue for the Knightsen area regardless of the project. Many of the properties in Knightsen are already in the 100-year floodplain, and protected by an agricultural levee that will experience increased pressure as sea levels rise. The risk to these properties related to sea level rise does not increase with a project on this site.

Rather, the project site is now a site in the community that is publicly held with the purpose of providing wetlands to facilitate flood water conveyance and is factoring in near-term sea level rise projections in the development of project plans. Proposed levees would be constructed with a wide footprint to allow for future raising of the levees to accommodate projected sea level rise to 2050 or 2100 depending on the sea level rise scenario considered.

With respect to maintenance of proposed gates:

- The Conservancy is evaluating two operational seasons – wet & dry, with gates closed in the wet season allowing only outflow and opened in the dry season allowing limited muted tidal action (i.e. 1-2 feet of tide range).
- Responsibility for maintaining and monitoring the gates has not been determined at this early stage of planning. The Conservancy currently anticipates the gates would open/close seasonally, so it is not a burdensome task. On other project sites where this kind of management regime is utilized, the landowner, the tenant (grazing or agricultural), or other local agency (like the local mosquito abatement district) has taken on this responsibility.

In conclusion, the proposed approach is not significantly different than the current situation where the community is 100% dependent on stormwater flowing on to the project site and being pumped from the site. If those pumps stop running, runoff would overflow onto the Veale tract and/or back up into the ditch along Delta Road and flood upgradient residential properties. Thus, the Community is dependent maintenance and monitoring of existing flood conveyance facilities either with or without the project.

*KTCSO Q4: The wetlands proposal includes plans for regrading and altering topography of the wetlands parcel. As you are aware, stormwater naturally flows towards and onto the proposed wetlands. Will the Habitat Conservancy/EBRPD plans to regrade and alter the topography of the site change the way stormwater runoff flows on to and/or through the property? Will the Habitat Conservancy/EBRPD plans impede, or limit the natural flow of stormwater from the outlying areas in any manner?*

**Response 4:**

Throughout the September 11<sup>th</sup> letter, the KTCSO refers to the concept that water flows “naturally” to the project site under current conditions. The topography in this area is highly altered from its original natural configuration. Figure 3 in the Conceptual Alternative Report shows that the historical land cover in the area was predominantly tidal marsh, alkali meadow, oak savanna and interior dune. This figure is taken from the Historical Ecology Study (Stanford et al., 2011) which shows the local landscape at a larger geographic scale. Before land modifications, such as the construction of levees, this project site, as well as other properties in the region, formed part the Delta Shoreline. Water likely drained to the shoreline through shallow swales across the landscape. There is nothing to indicate that water had a focused drainage pattern along what is now Delta Road and then flowed south to No Name slough (which is also a constructed feature, not historically present). As the land was modified to drain marshes and tidal wetlands for agriculture and other uses, ditches and other features were constructed to move water across the landscape. The project alternatives are designed to address this altered drainage pattern that does not function effectively for the Community of Knightsen, for agricultural operations on the project site, for native habitats or for water quality.

Regardless of the historical configuration of the landscape, there are now features that need to be protected -- homes, infrastructure, and other land uses. The project team has taken these human made features into account when developing the restoration concept alternatives, incorporating these current drainage patterns into the alternatives and proposing additional places where water can enter the project site to benefit drainage that flows through and from Knightsen. As stated in all project descriptions, one of the project objectives is to move stormwater away from adjacent residential areas and towards wetland areas on the project site as quickly as possible to reduce

flooding in adjacent residential areas. Each of the proposed alternatives provides significantly more flood conveyance from neighboring properties onto the project site than under current conditions.

*KTCSD Q5: At the outreach meeting on July 11, 2019, the Habitat Conservancy/EBRPD presented aerial photos from 1998 which purportedly show accumulated water in the Knightsen community caused by stormwater runoff. These aerial photos were presented as evidence of flooding and evidence of how stormwater moves in Knightsen*

*A community member testified that this accumulation of water did not entirely result from stormwater runoff and that much of the water came from irrigation district facilities. Other community members have also stated that excess water accumulation in 1998 was largely due to other causes aside from direct stormwater runoff. Has the Habitat Conservancy/EBRPD looked into this matter to ascertain what caused the accumulated water shown in the pictures? Has Habitat Conservancy/EBRPD verified that these aerial photos truly depict how rainfall runoff moves in Knightsen.*

**Response 5:**

The photos in question were provided by Seth Cockrell from the community of Knightsen in 2001 shortly after the 1998 flood event and were presented to illustrate what occurs during a major flood event. These photos are extremely valuable to understand where stormwater flows and where flooding occurs during an extreme event. Those photos were included in Philip Williams and Associates' (PWA) 2002 Knightsen Water Quality Wetland Feasibility Assessment. Those photos were accepted at the time as representative of flood conditions in Knightsen. The source of that water can be argued, but that is not the intent of referencing the photos. Rather the photos illustrate which areas are vulnerable to flooding in the Community.

Knighsten is the downstream receiving location for runoff that is generated east of Marsh Creek. During the rainy season, irrigation district facilities are generally filled with runoff as upstream property owners commonly pump stormwater into these facilities. Thus, it is possible that irrigation district facilities were utilized by local/upgradient properties to pump runoff into irrigation ditches and the local tile drain network that allowed this runoff to reach Knightsen faster. However, all of the runoff shown in those photos ultimately flows towards Knightsen and the project site whether by irrigation canals, overland, or by the existing drainage network.

The 1998 storms and the resulting accumulation of water shown in those photos were significant storm events and they were preceded by large storms around the new year. The state saw more than 3 times the average rainfall in February. The 1998 event was historic, and while we have not had a winter as significant as 1998 in the past 20 years, it is not unreasonable to prepare for a similar event of that magnitude (or larger).

*KTCSD Q6: Community members have expressed concern about the proposed wetlands possibly resulting in future water quality regulations. In particular, at the outreach meeting on July 11, 2019, concern was raised that as protected species (plants and/or animals) migrate to the proposed wetlands parcel, water that naturally flows there, or water that may in the future be routed to the property will be regulated and/or be subject to some form of water quality treatment.*

*During the outreach meeting ECCHC/EBRPD officials stated that no such regulations or treatment requirements would be implemented. Nevertheless, there are concerns that if the proposed wetlands*

*are created, at some future date, ECCCHC, EBRPD, Contra Costa County, or some other entity (e.g. EPA, Fish and Wildlife, etc.), may implement such regulations and/or treatment requirements.*

*Are these concerns warranted? If no, what assurances, if any, can you provide that such concerns are unwarranted?*

**Response 6:**

The project alternatives developed include features that serve to improve water quality. y. These conceptual design alternatives incorporate state guidance on the design of swales and shallow wetlands for water quality treatment while also providing valuable habitat for special status species and other flora and fauna. There are no existing or proposed regulations that would require treatment of water entering a water quality treatment facility.

The project partners (ECCCHC, Contra Costa County and EBRPD) have no intent nor plan to impose any such regulations, nor have we received any indication of such intent from any regulatory agency.

*KTCSD Q7: As you are aware, KTCSD is currently considering a number of drainage projects. Is the development of the wetlands project dependent upon KTCSD implementing some, or all of these drainage projects? If yes, which projects in particular?*

**Response 7:**

The project has developed alternatives that consider the stormwater improvement projects recommended to the KTCSD and also has workable alternatives if the KTCSD chooses not to implement any stormwater improvement projects.

The most important of the recommended stormwater improvement projects both for the restoration project site and for drainage issues in Knightsen include:

- **Byron Highway Diversion** - would divert runoff flowing towards Delta Road and deliver this runoff directly to the project site. This project allows the project site to convey this runoff at higher elevations allowing for gravity drainage towards No Name slough. This project also significantly reduces runoff that currently gets backed up at Delta Road & Byron Highway due to the undersized and clogged culverts along Delta Road.
- **Delta Road Drainage Improvements** – increasing the size of the culverts along Delta Road (east of Byron Highway) to match (ideally exceed) the capacity of the existing 30-inch culvert at Delta Road under Byron Highway would significantly reduce the potential for drainage issues and flooding at Delta Road & Byron Highway. This project is critical to address the drainage issues along Delta Road as all of this runoff flows to the project site regardless of whether the KTCSD (and/or residences along Delta Road) improves the existing driveway crossings. These improvements would need to be adopted by all residences along Delta Road, as the capacity of the system is limited by the smallest and/or most clogged culvert along the road.
- **Eagle Lane Diversion** - would divert runoff from the Eagle Lane area directly to the project site. This diversion would allow properties along Eagle Lane to more quickly discharge runoff to the project site and provide for increased capacity to route stormwater runoff via gravity across the project site towards No Name Slough. This project could help reduce groundwater levels in the Eagle Lane area by reducing nuisance ponding and moving runoff away from residential properties.

The project can move forward without drainage improvements, though there may be greater community benefits realized from the implementation of flood management and drainage improvements within Knightsen.

*KTCSD Q8: If KTCSD does not implement any of the seven proposed drainage projects under consideration, what impact will that have on the proposed wetlands project? If KTCSD does not implement any projects, what impact will that have with regard to storm water which naturally flows towards and onto the wetlands parcel?*

**Response 8:**

As stated above, the Conservancy has developed conceptual alternatives that allow for the KTCSD to decline to participate in the project. However, we believe this approach would not serve the Community's interests.

- Not taking advantage of the project site would be a missed opportunity for the Community. This parcel has been identified in numerous studies by the County and their consultants as an ideal place to implement stormwater improvement projects because so much runoff flows by and towards this parcel.
- The project site offers the potential to receive significantly increased runoff volumes and flows resulting from installing larger culverts along existing drainage corridors along up-gradient parcels to help reduce surface water depths in existing ditches along up-gradient parcels.

*KTCSD Q9: Liquefaction. The proposed wetland parcel is in a zone that has been identified by US Geological Survey as subject to liquefaction in the event of an earthquake. Increasing the saturation of surface sands will worsen the impact of liquefaction on neighboring properties. Is the proposed wetlands project being designed to take liquefaction into account in regard to wetland flood control designs as well as impact to structures on neighboring properties? If soils that are prone to liquefaction are converted to wetlands, what impact does that have in the event of an earthquake? Is the potential for liquefaction increased? If liquefaction occurs on the proposed wetlands parcel, does that pose increased risk to neighboring properties? This was brought up by a community member during the outreach meeting on July 11, 2019. This concern was not addressed during that meeting.*

*We need to know specifically what ECCHC/EBRPD will do to ensure the proposed wetlands will not increase the risk to neighboring properties in the event of seismic activity.*

**Response 9:**

The design of the proposed new flood control levees would take into account liquefaction as part of slope stability analyses included in the geotechnical engineering investigation, analysis and recommendations. New levees on the project site, constructed to current geotechnical standards, would be less likely to be impacted by liquefaction during a potential earthquake than the existing agricultural levees the Community currently relies on for flood protection.

Wetlands on the project site would not increase liquefaction potential or risks for other properties as a result of seismic activity because:

1. The project would not alter the soils below other parcels, and
2. The project will evaluate the potential to increase shallow groundwater levels at adjacent parcels and, if necessary, refine the proposed designs of swales and wetlands as needed to limit any potential increases in shallow groundwater levels at neighboring properties.



*KTCSD Q10: Do you have any knowledge of, or information regarding wetlands restoration projects that have been implemented in other places where the wetlands are in such close proximity to private residences and/or in an area requiring above grade septic systems? What have you learned from studying those projects?*

**Response 10:**

The Conservancy has hired a consultant team that has designed, implemented, and monitored wetland restoration projects adjacent to existing homes in many locations.

Examples of projects implemented by implemented by the Habitat Conservancy's consultant team that are adjacent to residential areas include:

- Hamilton Wetlands – Novato
- Bahia Wetlands – Novato
- Martinez Regional Shoreline – Martinez at Alhambra Creek
- Muzzi Marsh – Corte Madera
- Dutch Slough – Oakley (largest Delta Restoration so far & currently under construction)
- Crissy Field Restoration – San Francisco

Regarding the proximity to properties with above grade septic systems, we are not sure if any of the residences adjacent to the above projects were dependent on septic systems or a sanitary sewer system, however, we believe most are likely on a sanitary sewer system since these sites are in areas that are more intensely developed than Knightsen. As discussed in Response 2 above, potential impacts to upgradient septic systems will be analyzed and studied in greater detail, but are not expected to be significant. By contrast, if the KTCSD and the Community implement stormwater improvement projects to more efficiently route runoff away from residential areas and on to the project site, issues with high groundwater during wet years impacting septic systems are likely to improve.

*KTCSD Q11: During the community outreach meeting on July 11, 2019, many community members expressed concern that ECCHC/EBRPD had not done a sufficient job notifying community members about the outreach meetings and involving community members in the planning process. Several people felt your consultant team lacked the technical knowledge of Knightsen to accurately design the wetlands. Several people suggested that a citizen advisory group be formed, but that suggestion did not seem to be well received by ECCHC/EBRPD.*

*Since that meeting, you have created a website and made several documents available on the website. This information is very helpful with regard to informing the community. Nevertheless, community members expressed interest in having ECCHC/EBRPD increase efforts to include community members in the planning process. What immediate steps are you taking to do this? How will you advertise future outreach meetings? Will you consider establishing a citizen advisory group or some other mechanism for involving the community in your project planning?*

**Response 11:**

The question multiple parts. Responses are provided below in separate sections.

Noticing of Meetings, Outreach, and Opportunities to Engage: The ECCHC wishes to cultivate a positive, collaborative relationship with the Knightsen Community that supports our mutual interests. Acting transparently, as evidenced by the updated website and release of planning documents, are part of the Project's outreach plan. There will also be opportunities for public engagement and outreach in the current phase of project development.

At the community meeting, it was suggested that future meetings be noticed in the Brentwood Press in addition to posting a sign at the Knightsen post office, sending an email notice to the KTCSD and the project email list. People who are interested in receiving project updates and notices can sign up on the project website: <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/7624/Knightesen-Wetland-Restoration-Project>. The Conservancy is planning to notice meetings using all of these suggestions that were received.

There was a suggestion that the Conservancy convene a citizen's advisory group. The Conservancy and partners have considered this and would prefer to host a series of topic-focused outreach meetings that are open to all who are interested, not a selected subgroup of the community. These meetings will be structured to provide information as well as engage in dialog to receive comments and answer questions. These meetings will be noticed (as indicated above) and be facilitated by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party.

Qualifications of Consultant Team: The Conservancy selected consultants to work on this project specifically because of their experience in studying drainage, soils, and shallow groundwater-surface water interaction in Knightsen, Veale Tract, and Holland Tract. Team members have experience completing large-scale Delta and Bay wetland projects. The team also has extensive biological knowledge of special status species (plants and animals) in the area, and how to manage habitats and create and restore wetlands to support these target species. The project team was selected through a competitive process that included an interview by a panel with representatives from the Habitat Conservancy, East Bay Regional Park District, Contra Costa County Flood Control District and the Knightsen Town CSD.

#### New/Additional Work in Response to KTCSD Questions/Concerns

The project team plans to convene a total of six meetings in 2020-2021. Three meetings will each be focused on a key topic. The project team is open to suggested topics for these focused outreach meetings.

An additional three meetings will be held to discuss project development milestones and any other items of interest to the community. The project milestone meetings are anticipated to be scheduled in conjunction with completion of the following:

- Completion of geotechnical studies and groundwater modeling
- Alternatives Evaluation and Selection of preferred alternative
- Initiation of CEQA process

Future meetings will be announced on the Project's website, and shared at least 2 weeks in advance using the noticing strategies listed above.

*KTCSD Q12: In April 2016, property owners in the vicinity of the proposed wetlands project received a letter from you "re: East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP Preserve System Neighboring Landowner Assurances Program." That letter stated, in part, that neighboring farmers, "may be concerned that populations of state or federally listed species in the Preserve System may expand and colonize or use*

*their lands, potentially restricting land use activities.” The letter addressed a permit program of some type for farmers.*

*The letter was not clear regarding what limitations the proposed wetlands may impose on farming activities and what the extent of such limitations may be. The letter was not clear with regard to what farmers can or should do to exempt themselves from such limitations.*

*Knightsen residents ask for more information and clarification regarding what limitations, if any, may be placed on farming activities as a result of creation of the proposed wetlands, and what farmers can do, if anything, to exempt themselves from such limitations.*

**Response 12:**

The Neighboring Landowner Assurances in the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan / Natural Community Conservation Plan requires the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy send a letter to all agricultural properties within 1 mile of a property that has been conserved and will be managed to support special status species (state and federally listed). As the ECCCHC cannot be certain of all the land uses within one mile of an acquired conservation property, the letter is sent to all properties even though it only applies to properties in an agricultural use. The section of the guiding documents that includes this requirement can be found here: <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/depart/cd/water/HCP/news.html> .

The acquisition of and restoration of this property does not change any laws or regulations related to agricultural activities. If the owner of an agricultural property within one mile of the conserved property is concerned there will be adverse impacts related to state or federally listed species, the Conservancy is willing to provide assurance by issuing a permit to that property owner for incidental take of species that may populate the agricultural property as a result of a change in management on the conserved property.

The Conservancy does not anticipate any limitations being placed on nearby agricultural activities as a result of conservation or restoration of the property. However, during the development of the guiding documents of the Conservancy, the Contra Costa Farm Bureau requested this assurance be included in case there was an unanticipated consequence to agricultural activities.

*KTCSD 13: What is the proposed timeline for implementation (i.e., design, permitting, EIR/EIS, and construction) of the proposed wetlands project? What are the steps (phases) and specific currently proposed dates for that implementation process? At what steps (phases) in the process will community input be solicited and incorporated into the proposed project?*

**Response 13:**

The project construction schedule depends on project readiness and funding. The earliest we anticipate construction is 2023. A general schedule of next steps is provided below:

- 2020 – Selection of preferred alternative and preliminary design
- 2021 – Design Development, Permitting, CEQA
- 2022 – Summer, Final Design and Construction Bid Package
- 2023 – Spring/Summer, earliest anticipated start of construction window

Anticipated Community meetings:

Please see response to Q12. Three meetings will be tied to project milestones and three topic-focused meetings will be convened in 2020 – 2021.

*KTCSD: What other agencies (public, private, not for profit) are involved in providing input regarding the proposed wetlands project? What other agencies (public, private, not for profit) are involved in funding the proposed wetlands project? What is the Delta Conservancy's role and involvement in this proposed project?*

**Response 14:**

Currently, the local agency partners are:

- East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy
- Contra Costa County Flood Control & Water Conservation District
- East Bay Regional Park District

Other agencies that have been contacted to provide feedback in this process so far (and will receive follow-up communication) include:

- Contra Costa County Mosquito and Vector Control District
- Contra Costa County Water District
- East Contra Costa County Irrigation District
- Knightsen Town Community Services District
- Reclamation District 2065 (Veale Tract)
- Reclamation District 799 (Hotchkiss Tract)
- Western Area Power Administration (on-site utility)
- Pacific Gas and Electric (on-site utility)

State funding partners (current/recent):

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife (proposition 1 funds)
- Delta Conservancy (proposition 1 funds)
- Future phases of funding TBD

Delta Conservancy's role: The Delta Conservancy's role is currently as a funder.

*KTCSD Q15: Contra Costa County has capital improvement plans that include improving and/or widening roads in the vicinity of the proposed wetlands including Delta Road and Byron Highway. Will these roadway improvements impact the proposed wetlands project? If yes, what will those impacts be and how will they be addressed?*

**Response 15:**

The proposed wetlands project will need to consider existing road easements and capital improvement plans in the design development phase. We anticipate that all improvements along roads would be located outside of the existing road easements and/or any areas that are included in the County's future capital improvements. Coordination with the agencies responsible for those improvements will be engaged with prior to preliminary design work.

KTCSD Q16: *What impact will the proposed wetlands have with regard to mosquitos and vector control issues in the community? If there is any adverse impact, what steps will ECCHC/EBRPD take to address those impacts?*

**Response 16:**

The team understands from the local Contra Costa County Mosquito Vector Control officer and in meetings with neighboring property owners, existing issues in the community require regular treatment. Activities associated with the current agricultural operations will be eliminated at the site after the wetlands restoration (including drainage ditches that do not drain fully due to the reverse gradient along the ditches to route runoff and agricultural water towards the pump station). The project team has met with the local Mosquito and Vector Control agency and are incorporating their recommendations regarding site configuration and wetland inundation into the project alternatives.

Related to the project, design guidance from CCC Mosquito and Vector Control includes:

- Designing tidal wetlands to drain so there is a consistent flow into and out of tidal wetlands areas that minimizes ponding and areas of limited movement.
- Designing seasonal wetlands that are shallow enough to dry out by April / May before the mosquitos begin their more significant breeding seasons.
- Providing access for mosquito abatement personnel to treat areas as needed.

The expectation is that with the reduction of standing water on site during mosquito breeding periods, the on-site sources will be greatly reduced or eliminated.

As reports are completed, information will be made available on the project website. The project team will continue to work to address the concerns raised by the KTCSD and Community. The project team would be pleased to meet with the KTCSD to discuss these responses and provide additional clarification if requested.

Sincerely,



Abigail Fateman  
Executive Director

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DELTA CONSERVANCY  
MAILROOM

2020 FEB 18 PM 3: 53

**Board of Directors**

Trish Bello-Kunkel, Chairperson  
Gilbert Somerhalder, Vice Chairperson  
Linda Matteri, Treasurer  
Curt Caldwell, Director  
Angela de Fremery, Director

**Knightsen Town Community Services District  
P.O. Box 763  
Knightsen, CA 94548**



February 13, 2020

Board of Directors & Executive Officer Campbell Ingram  
Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy  
1450 Halyard Drive, Suite 6  
West Sacramento, Ca 95691

Dear Board of Directors and Mr. Ingram:

On February 6, 2020, the Board of Directors of the Knightsen Town Community Services District (KTCSD) adopted Resolution 2020-1 ("Resolution"). Among other things, this Resolution rejects and nullifies a draft Storm Water Resources Plan (SWRP) that was prepared for the District. The scope of the SWRP included a drainage plan for the community of Knightsen which would direct run off towards a proposed wetlands project named the Knightsen Wetland Restoration and Flood Protection Project ("Proposed Project"). The Proposed Project involves the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy (ECCCHC), East Bay Regional Parks District (EBRPD), and Contra Costa Public Works Department – Flood Control District.

**Pursuant to the Resolution, KTCSD determined that these drainage projects routing run off towards the Proposed Project will not be implemented.**

ECCCHC has used purported drainage and flood control benefits for the small community of Knightsen as a significant justification for the Proposed Project and may continue to use these purported benefits as justification to be awarded future grant funding for the Proposed Project.

We do not believe the Proposed Project benefits the Knightsen community with regard to flood control and drainage. In fact, the Proposed Project may increase the flood hazard for many Knightsen residents. Therefore, any assertion that the Proposed Project provides multi-benefits with regard to drainage and flood control is highly questionable at best.

The KTCSD Board and community members who have attended KTCSD meetings, as well as outreach meetings sponsored by ECCCHC/EBRPD on May 2, 2018 and July 11, 2019, have expressed many questions and concerns about the Proposed Project. Many of these questions and concerns were delineated in a letter KTCSD sent to ECCCHC on September 11, 2019 (enclosed).



Paramount among these concerns is fear that the Proposed Project will impact shallow wells and septic systems of adjacent and nearby property owners and increase the flood risk for adjacent and nearby property owners. Consultants employed by ECCCHC agree that the Proposed Project could increase ground water tables and result in seepage and increased flood risk. In the "Knightsen Habitat Restoration Feasibility Study" prepared by Environmental Science Associates (ESA) dated 1/28/2013 they stated, "Potential constraints to neighbor properties may include a high ground water table and increased flood risk and seepage with restoration." As recently as last year, another consultant hired by ECCCHC, Balance Hydrologics, stated, "Overall the site is extremely well-suited for restoring tidal marsh but not without potential for increased seepage and flood risk to neighboring properties."

There is a proper place for wetlands restoration, however locating a wetlands adjacent to and in very close proximity to a significant number of residences is not the proper place.

To date, ECCCHC has not responded either verbally or in writing to the questions and concerns posed to them during the outreach meetings and in the September 11, 2019 letter from KTCSD. On October 29, 2019, KTCSD voted to take a position in opposition to the Proposed Project. Unless and until KTCSD receives responses sufficient to alleviate the community's concerns, KTCSD remains in opposition to the Proposed Project.

Sincerely,



Trish Bello-Kunkel, Chairperson  
Knightsen Town Community Services District  
[KnightsenCSD@gmail.com](mailto:KnightsenCSD@gmail.com)  
925-551-1410

Enclosure: KTCSD letter to East Contra Costa Habitat Conservancy, September 11, 2019

Cc: Barbara A. Brenner, Partner, Churchwell White LLP



**Knightsen Town Community Services District  
P.O. Box 763  
Knightsen, CA 94548**

**Board of Directors**  
Trish Bello-Kunkel, Chairperson  
Gilbert Somerhalder, Vice Chairperson  
Linda Matteri, Treasurer  
Curt Caldwell, Director  
Angie de Fremery, Director

September 11, 2019

Ms. Abigail Fateman  
East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy  
Contra Costa County, Department of Conservation and Development  
30 Muir Road  
Martinez, Ca 94553

Dear Ms. Fateman

I am responding to your email request on August 13, 2019, asking to attend a Knightsen Town Community Services District (KTCSD) meeting. On Thursday, September 5, 2019, the KTCSD board met and decided to **extend an invitation to you and members of your team to attend our next regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, October 3, 2019.**

**Please let me know whether you will be attending that meeting by no later than Friday, September 27, 2019.**

As you are aware from the feedback you received at the two community meetings held on May 2, 2018, and on July 11, 2019, members of the Knightsen community have many questions and concerns about the proposed wetlands project. **The KTCSD board and members of this community expect answers to these questions and responses to our concerns when you are present at the KTCSD meeting.**

Questions and concerns are numerous and include the following:

- 1) In the "Knightsen Habitat Restoration Feasibility Study," prepared by Environmental Science Associates (ESA) dated 1/28/2013, it states, **"Potential constraints to neighbor properties may include a high ground water table and increased flood risk and seepage with restoration"** (page 7). In the "Knightsen Wetland Restoration and Flood Protection Project Baseline Soils Evaluation and Hydrologic Monitoring" document prepared by Balance Hydrologics dated June 2019, it states, **"Overall, the site is extremely well-suited for restoring tidal marsh but not without a potential for increased seepage and flood risk to neighboring properties"** (page 2).

**It is absolutely critical for the KTCSD board and members of this community to know whether the proposed wetlands will INCREASE the flood risk and impede existing groundwater/surface water drainage patterns for property owners in the vicinity of the proposed wetlands. We need to know specifically what the Habitat Conservancy (ECCHC)/East Bay Regional Parks**



(EBRPD) will do to ensure the proposed wetlands will not increase the flood risk. We need proof regarding the effectiveness of any measures ECCHC/EBRPD will implement to eliminate this risk.

- 2) What risk does the higher ground water table discussed above and acknowledged by your consultants pose with regard to wells and septic systems on properties in the vicinity of the proposed wetlands? We need to know specifically what ECCHC/EBRPD will do to ensure the proposed wetlands will not negatively impact wells and septic systems. We need proof regarding the effectiveness of any measures ECCHC/EBRPD will implement to eliminate this impact.
- 3) The January 28, 2013 feasibility study also states, **"With a low gradient slopes and no barriers to estuarine transgression, there is potential for tidal wetlands to transgress landward as sea level rises"** (page 7). Some of the proposals you presented at the community meeting on July 11, 2019, included plans for the installation of gates that would allow tidal flow to transgress on to the parcel. During the community meeting concern was raised about the future impact of global warming/sea level rise if tidal wetlands is a feature of the proposed wetlands, but that concern was not addressed.

As you know, there are developed real estate parcels including homes that are immediately adjacent to the proposed wetlands property. **It is absolutely critical for the KTCSD Board and community members to know whether the proposed wetlands project will put Knightsen residents at increased risk with regard to global warming/sea level rise. We need to know specifically what ECCHC/EBRPD will do to ensure the proposed wetlands does not increase the likelihood of Knightsen being impacted by global warming/sea level rise. We need to know how the gates will be monitored and who will be accountable for maintaining that monitoring (including the funding source) to ensure that they open and close in a timely and effective manner. We need proof regarding the degree to which any measures ECCHC/EBRPD implement will negate any increased risk of impact from global warming/sea level rise.**

- 4) The wetlands proposal includes plans for regrading and altering the topography of the wetlands parcel. As you are aware, storm water naturally flows towards and onto the proposed wetlands. **Will ECCHC/EBRPD plans to regrade and alter the topography of the site change the way storm water flows on to and/or through the property? Will the ECCHC/EBRPD plans impede, or limit the natural flow of storm water from the outlying areas in any manner?**
- 5) At the outreach meeting on July 11, 2019, ECCHC/EBRPD presented aerial photos from 1998 which purportedly showed accumulated water in the Knightsen community caused by storm water run-off. These aerial photos were presented as evidence of flooding and evidence regarding how storm water moves in Knightsen.

A community member testified that this accumulation of water did not entirely result from storm water run-off and that much of the water came from irrigation district facilities. Other community members have also stated that excess water accumulation in 1998 was largely due

to other causes aside from direct storm water run-off. **Has ECCHC/EBRPD looked in to this matter to ascertain what caused the accumulated water shown in the pictures? Has ECCHC/EBRPD verified that these aerial photos truly depict how rainfall run-off moves in Knightsen?**

- 6) Community members have expressed concern about the proposed wetlands possibly resulting in future water quality regulations. In particular, at the outreach meeting on July 11, 2019, concern was raised that as protected species (plants and/or animals) migrate to the proposed wetlands parcel, water that naturally flows there, or water that may in the future be routed to the property will be regulated and/or be subject to some form of water quality treatment.

During the outreach meeting ECCHC/EBRPD officials stated that no such regulations or treatment requirements would be implemented. **Nevertheless, there are concerns that if the proposed wetlands are created, at some future date, ECCHC, EBRPD, Contra Costa County, or some other entity (e.g. EPA, Fish and Wildlife, etc.), may implement such regulations and/or treatment requirements.**

**Are these concerns warranted? If no, what assurances, if any, can you provide that such concerns are unwarranted?**

- 7) As you are aware, KTCSD is currently considering a number of drainage projects. **Is the development of the wetlands project dependent upon KTCSD implementing some, or all of these drainage projects? If yes, which projects in particular?**
- 8) **If KTCSD does not implement any of the seven proposed drainage projects under consideration, what impact will that have on the proposed wetlands project? If KTCSD does not implement any projects, what impact will that have with regard to storm water which naturally flows towards and onto the wetlands parcel?**
- 9) **Liquefaction.** The proposed wetland parcel is in a zone that has been identified by US Geological Survey as subject to liquefaction in the event of an earthquake. Increasing the saturation of surface sands will worsen the impact of liquefaction on neighboring properties. **Is the proposed wetlands project being designed to take liquefaction into account in regard to wetland flood control designs as well as impact to structures on neighboring properties? If soils that are prone to liquefaction are converted to wetlands, what impact does that have in the event of an earthquake? Is the potential for liquefaction increased? If liquefaction occurs on the proposed wetlands parcel, does that pose increased risk to neighboring properties?** This was brought up by a community member during the outreach meeting on July 11, 2019. This concern was not addressed during that meeting.

**We need to know specifically what ECCHC/EBRPD will do to ensure the proposed wetlands will not increase the risk to neighboring properties in the event of seismic activity.**

10) Do you have any knowledge of, or information regarding wetlands restoration projects that have been implemented in other places where the wetlands are in such close proximity to private residences and/or in an area requiring above grade septic systems? What have you learned from studying those projects?

11) During the community outreach meeting on July 11, 2019, many community members expressed concern that ECCHC/EBRPD had not done a sufficient job notifying community members about the outreach meetings and involving community members in the planning process. Several people felt your consultant team lacked the technical knowledge of Knightsen to accurately design the wetlands. Several people suggested that a citizen advisory group be formed, but that suggestion did not seem to be well received by ECCHC/EBRPD.

Since that meeting, you have created a website and made several documents available on the website. This information is very helpful with regard to informing the community.

**Nevertheless, community members expressed interest in having ECCHC/EBRPD increase efforts to include community members in the planning process. What immediate steps are you taking to do this? How will you advertise future outreach meetings? Will you consider establishing a citizen advisory group or some other mechanism for involving the community in your project planning?**

12) In April 2016, property owners in the vicinity of the proposed wetlands project received a letter from you "re: East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP Preserve System Neighboring Landowner Assurances Program." That letter stated, in part, that **neighboring farmers, "may be concerned that populations of state or federally listed species in the Preserve System may expand and colonize or use their lands, potentially restricting land use activities."** The letter addressed a permit program of some type for farmers.

The letter was not clear regarding what limitations the proposed wetlands may impose on farming activities and what the extent of such limitations may be. The letter was not clear with regard to what farmers can or should do to exempt themselves from such limitations.

**Knightsen residents ask for more information and clarification regarding what limitations, if any, may be placed on farming activities as a result of creation of the proposed wetlands, and what farmers can do, if anything, to exempt themselves from such limitations.**

13) What is the proposed timeline for implementation (i.e., design, permitting, EIR/EIS, and construction) of the proposed wetlands project? What are the steps (phases) and specific currently proposed dates for that implementation process? At what steps (phases) in the process will community input be solicited and incorporated into the proposed project?

14) What other agencies (public, private, not for profit) are involved in providing input regarding the proposed wetlands project? What other agencies (public, private, not for profit) are involved in funding the proposed wetlands project? What is the Delta Conservancy's role and involvement in this proposed project?

15) Contra Costa County has capital improvement plans that include improving and/or widening roads in the vicinity of the proposed wetlands including Delta Road and Byron Highway. **Will these roadway improvements impact the proposed wetlands project? If yes, what will those impacts be and how will they be addressed?**

16) **What impact will the proposed wetlands have with regard to mosquitos and vector control issues in the community? If there is any adverse impact, what steps will ECCHC/EBRPD take to address those impacts?**

I know that community members have other questions about the wetlands that may arise during the meeting. For instance, there has been conflicting information presented about the recreational opportunities the proposed wetlands may or may not afford the community. In any case, **besides responding to all the questions/concerns addressed above, the Knightsen community and the KTCSD board seek information to help us determine whether the proposed wetlands will be an overall benefit or burden to the community.**

I hope that you and other members of your team are able to attend the KTCSD meeting on Thursday, October 3, 2019. **Again, please verify your attendance no later than Friday, September 27, 2019.** We look forward to your presentation and to getting responses to the community's questions and concerns.

Sincerely,

  
Trish Bello-Kunkel, Chairperson  
Knightsen Town Community Services District  
[KnightsenCSD@gmail.com](mailto:KnightsenCSD@gmail.com)  
925-551-1410

## SACRAMENTO-SAN JOAQUIN DELTA CONSERVANCY BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE REPORT July 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019

	A	C	D	E	F
1	<b>CATEGORY OF EXPENDITURES</b> Personal Services (PS)	<b>Delta Conservancy Budget</b>	<b>Actual Expenditures</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Percent of Budget Expended</b>
2	Salaries & Wages	\$1,149,573	\$583,833	\$565,740	51%
3	Temporary Help	\$36,398	\$22,896	\$13,501	63%
6	Benefits	\$630,196	\$298,177	\$332,019	47%
7	<b>TOTAL PERSONAL SERVICES</b>	<b>\$1,816,167</b>	<b>\$904,907</b>	<b>\$911,261</b>	<b>50%</b>
8	<b>CATEGORY OF EXPENDITURES</b> Operating Expenditures and Equipment (OE & E)	<b>Delta Conservancy Budget</b>	<b>Actual Expenditures</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Percent of Budget Expended</b>
9	General Expense	\$20,866	\$7,086	\$13,780	34%
10	Printing	\$4,628	\$1,375	\$3,253	30%
11	Communications	\$5,100	\$2,219	\$2,881	44%
12	Postage	\$424	\$107	\$317	25%
14	Travel-In State	\$9,400	\$3,296	\$6,104	35%
16	Training	\$6,700	\$1,125	\$5,575	17%
17	Facilities Operation	\$139,085	\$33,930	\$105,155	24%
20	Contracts & Personal Services-External	\$140,082	\$7,642	\$132,440	5%
21	Departmental Services-Admin Interdepartmental	\$190,178	\$31,717	\$158,461	17%
23	Information Technology	\$63,130	\$650	\$62,480	1%
24	Central Administrative Service	\$10,672	\$0	\$10,672	0%
27	Non-Capital Asset Purchases	\$69,644	\$56	\$69,588	0%
28	Other Items of Expense	\$2,000	\$1,266	\$734	63%
29	Unallocated Operating Expense & Equipment*	\$643,561	\$0	\$643,561	0%
31	Grants and Subventions	\$34,661,000	\$239,868	\$34,421,132	1%
32	<b>TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES &amp; EQUIPMENT</b>	<b>\$35,966,470</b>	<b>\$330,337</b>	<b>\$35,636,133</b>	<b>1%</b>
33	<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>Delta Conservancy Budget</b>	<b>Actual Expenditures</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Percent of Budget Expended</b>
34	<b>TOTAL PS &amp; OE &amp; E</b>	<b>\$37,782,637</b>	<b>\$1,235,244</b>	<b>\$36,547,394</b>	<b>3%</b>
35	REIMBURSEMENT	(\$125,366)	(\$68,357)	(\$57,009)	55%
36	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$37,657,272</b>	<b>\$1,166,887</b>	<b>\$36,490,385</b>	<b>3%</b>

\*Unallocated Operating Expense and Equipment:  
General Fund \$45,904, Prop 1 \$248,720, Prop 68 \$348,937



## **Proposition 1 Program Update Staff Report**

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### **Cycle 5 Update**

Staff proposes to open the fifth Proposition 1 grant solicitation cycle in August of 2021 and present recommendations for grant awards to the Board for consideration in spring of 2022. The funding remaining in the Conservancy's Proposition 1 bond allocation leaves between \$2 million and \$5 million available for Cycle 5, depending on the decisions that the Board makes on subsequent items on this agenda. By opening the Cycle 5 solicitation in August 2021, the Conservancy will be able to integrate Proposition 1 grant funding with the November ballot's anticipated climate resiliency bond, should it be approved by voters. Further, the proposed timing provides the best alignment between completion of planning grants that the Conservancy has previously awarded and availability of implementation funding.

### **Cycle 4 Update**

At the May 22, 2019 Board meeting, the Board directed staff to work with applicants for three projects and present recommendations for each for consideration at a future Board meeting. At the September 25, 2019 Board meeting, the Board approved funding for one of the three projects; an update is included in the Approved Project Update section with the Cycle 4 projects, below. An update on the remaining projects is provided here.

- *Mello/Jensen Heirs Sandhill Crane Preserve, submitted by the Agricultural-Natural Resources Trust (#Prop 1-1801).* Staff is presenting a recommendation for this project to the Board at this meeting (see agenda item 10).
- *Phase 1 San Joaquin River Floodplain Restoration and Floodway Enhancement at Banta-Carbona, submitted by Banta-Carbona Irrigation District (#Prop 1-1810).* Staff is presenting a recommendation for this project to the Board at this meeting (see agenda item 11).

### **Approved Project Update**

To date, the Conservancy has approved a total of 27 projects committing approximately \$35.3 million for Proposition 1 projects. A brief overview of each grant cycle, including the status of each funded project for which there is an active or pending grant agreement, is provided herein.

### **Cycle 4 – Fiscal Year 2018-2019**

The Board awarded approximately \$11.9 million for eight projects (seven planning and one implementation). One grant agreement has been executed; staff is working with grantees to negotiate seven grant agreements.

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Blacklock Restoration: Phragmites Control Study (Planning)</b>
<b>Amount Awarded</b>	\$387,440
<b>County</b>	Solano
<b>Conservancy ID</b>	Prop 1-1803
<b>Grantee</b>	Department of Water Resources
<b>Overview</b>	Test methods for controlling invasive species in future restoration at the Blacklock restoration site
<b>Grant Agreement Status</b>	Pending
<b>New Information</b>	Grant agreement is being reviewed by grantee

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Delta Waterways Habitat Restoration Planning (Planning)</b>
<b>Amount Awarded</b>	\$347,481
<b>County</b>	Solano
<b>Conservancy ID</b>	Prop 1-1804
<b>Grantee</b>	Solano Resource Conservation District
<b>Overview</b>	Planning for restoration and enhancement of waterways and edge habitats on working lands in Solano County
<b>Grant Agreement Status</b>	Active as of 12/19/2019
<b>New Information</b>	None

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Paradise Cut Conservation and Flood Management Project, Phase 2 (Planning)</b>
<b>Amount Awarded</b>	\$265,254
<b>County</b>	San Joaquin
<b>Conservancy ID</b>	Prop 1-1806
<b>Grantee</b>	San Joaquin Resource Conservation District
<b>Overview</b>	Outreach and planning to advance the Paradise Cut Flood Bypass in San Joaquin County
<b>Grant Agreement Status</b>	Pending
<b>New Information</b>	None



<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Elk Slough Fish Passage and Flood Improvement (Planning)</b>
<b>Amount Awarded</b>	\$984,695
<b>County</b>	Yolo
<b>Conservancy ID</b>	Prop 1-1807
<b>Grantee</b>	Reclamation District 999
<b>Overview</b>	Planning for habitat and flood control enhancements along Elk Slough
<b>Board Action/Deadline</b>	Approved – September 2019
<b>Grant Agreement Status</b>	Pending
<b>New Information</b>	None

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Lower San Joaquin Riparian Corridor (Planning)</b>
<b>Amount Awarded</b>	\$522,027
<b>County</b>	San Joaquin
<b>Conservancy ID</b>	Prop 1-1808
<b>Grantee</b>	American Rivers
<b>Overview</b>	Planning for restoration of floodplain and riparian habitat along the lower San Joaquin River
<b>Grant Agreement Status</b>	Pending
<b>New Information</b>	None

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Marsh Creek Channel Restoration (Planning)</b>
<b>Amount Awarded</b>	\$519,494
<b>County</b>	Contra Costa
<b>Conservancy ID</b>	Prop 1-1809
<b>Grantee</b>	American Rivers
<b>Overview</b>	Planning for Marsh Creek floodplain and riparian habitat restoration
<b>Grant Agreement Status</b>	Pending
<b>New Information</b>	None

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Nutria Eradication Project, Phase 2 (Implementation)</b>
<b>Amount Awarded</b>	\$8,483,080
<b>County</b>	Multiple
<b>Conservancy ID</b>	Prop 1-1813
<b>Grantee</b>	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
<b>Overview</b>	Surveys for and removal of invasive species to minimize or avoid impacts to wetland habitats and water quality
<b>Grant Agreement Status</b>	Pending
<b>New Information</b>	Grant agreement is being reviewed by grantee



<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Oakley Creekside Park Restoration (Planning)</b>
<b>Amount Awarded</b>	\$436,465
<b>County</b>	Contra Costa
<b>Conservancy ID</b>	Prop 1-1814
<b>Grantee</b>	City of Oakley
<b>Overview</b>	Planning for restoration of floodplain and riparian habitat along Marsh Creek
<b>Grant Agreement Status</b>	Pending
<b>New Information</b>	None

**Cycle 3 – Fiscal Year 2017-2018**

The Board awarded approximately \$16.0 million for eight projects (four planning and four implementation). Seven grant agreements have been executed; staff is negotiating one grant agreement.

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Bay Point Habitat Restoration Project (Implementation)</b>
<b>Amount Awarded</b>	\$2,100,000
<b>County</b>	Contra Costa
<b>Conservancy ID</b>	Prop 1-1701
<b>Grantee</b>	East Bay Regional Park District
<b>Overview</b>	Restore 44 acres of wetland and grassland and 5,595 linear feet of saline emergent marsh channel at Bay Point Regional Shoreline Park
<b>Grant Agreement Status</b>	Active as of 4/10/2019
<b>New Information</b>	Project construction has begun. The grantee is working on finalizing land tenure documents. The land is owned in part by the grantee and in part by the State of California/State Lands Commission.

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Restoration Planning at River Garden Farms: Improving aquatic habitat resiliency on working lands along the Sacramento River (Planning)</b>
<b>Amount Awarded</b>	\$661,189
<b>County</b>	Yolo
<b>Conservancy ID</b>	Prop 1-1702
<b>Grantee</b>	American Rivers
<b>Overview</b>	Develop restoration design plans for seven different project sites at River Garden Farms to restore ecosystem function in floodplain, wetland, and riparian habitats and provide habitat connectivity on a working farm
<b>Grant Agreement Status</b>	Active as of 1/22/2019
<b>New Information</b>	None

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Knightsen Wetland Restoration and Flood Protection Project (Planning)</b>
<b>Amount Awarded</b>	\$1,225,000
<b>County</b>	Contra Costa
<b>Conservancy ID</b>	Prop 1-1709
<b>Grantee</b>	East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy
<b>Overview</b>	Advance planning for restoring wetlands and managing and treating storm water on public land in Knightsen
<b>Grant Agreement Status</b>	Active as of 3/20/2019
<b>New Information</b>	An amendment for a no-cost extension to the funding term of the grant agreement is being routed for approval. The Knightsen Town Community Services District Board still has concerns about the project, but the grantee is engaging in further outreach to the community to address these concerns.

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Grizzly Slough Floodplain Restoration Project at the Cosumnes River Preserve (Implementation)</b>
<b>Amount Awarded</b>	\$8,700,800
<b>County</b>	Sacramento
<b>Conservancy ID</b>	Prop 1-1710
<b>Grantee</b>	Department of Water Resources
<b>Overview</b>	Restore wetland and riparian habitat to the 334-acre site by breaching the levee and reintroducing tidal and seasonal flooding, and by establishing native vegetation
<b>Grant Agreement Status</b>	Pending
<b>New Information</b>	Grant agreement is being reviewed by grantee

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Three Creeks Parkway Restoration Project #2 (Implementation)</b>
<b>Amount Awarded</b>	\$999,318
<b>County</b>	Contra Costa
<b>Conservancy ID</b>	Prop 1-1711
<b>Grantee</b>	American Rivers
<b>Overview</b>	Add one acre of habitat to the current Three Creeks Parkway Restoration project, thereby enhancing the ecological benefits of that project, while satisfying flood conveyance needs to protect the local area and allowing the larger project to move forward
<b>Grant Agreement Status</b>	Active as of 7/26/2019
<b>New Information</b>	The County is in escrow for the purchase of the water quality basin property

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Bees Lakes Habitat Restoration Plan (Planning)</b>
<b>Amount Awarded</b>	\$592,500
<b>County</b>	Yolo
<b>Conservancy ID</b>	Prop 1-1712
<b>Grantee</b>	City of West Sacramento
<b>Overview</b>	Develop a detailed habitat restoration plan to restore disturbed riparian habitat, control non-native species, improve pond water quality, and improve the ability of the Bees Lakes area to support listed species
<b>Grant Agreement Status</b>	Active as of 1/9/2019
<b>New Information</b>	Grantee is coordinating with interested stakeholders and has selected a preferred design alternative and identified next steps for moving forward. The Grantee has requested an amendment to extend the funding term of the grant agreement (see consent calendar).

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Stone Lakes Restoration Project (Planning)</b>
<b>Amount Awarded</b>	\$635,573
<b>County</b>	Sacramento
<b>Conservancy ID</b>	Prop 1-1713
<b>Grantee</b>	Ducks Unlimited, Inc.
<b>Overview</b>	Planning to restore approximately 257 acres of seasonal wetland and 39 acres of riparian seasonal wetland, and enhance 20 acres of existing low-quality wetland on the Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge
<b>Grant Agreement Status</b>	Active as of 4/2/2019
<b>New Information</b>	None

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Nutria Eradication Project (Implementation)</b>
<b>Amount Awarded</b>	\$1,125,577
<b>County</b>	Multiple
<b>Conservancy ID</b>	Prop 1-1718
<b>Grantee</b>	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
<b>Overview</b>	Eliminate nutria from all known and discovered locations in California to prevent nutria from causing significant ecological damage in the Delta
<b>Grant Agreement Status</b>	Active as of 1/14/2019
<b>New Information</b>	None

**Cycle 2 – Fiscal Year 2016-2017**

The Board awarded approximately \$4.4 million for four projects (one planning and three implementation).

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Dutch Slough Revegetation (Implementation)</b>
<b>Amount Awarded</b>	\$2,900,000
<b>County</b>	Contra Costa
<b>Conservancy ID</b>	Prop 1-1602
<b>Grantee</b>	Reclamation District 2137
<b>Overview</b>	Establish and maintain 468 acres of native tidal marsh, riparian, and grassland vegetation at the Dutch Slough restoration site
<b>Grant Agreement Status</b>	Active as of 8/29/2019
<b>New Information</b>	None

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Petersen Ranch: Working Waterway Habitat Enhancement Project (Implementation)</b>
<b>Amount Awarded</b>	\$444,795
<b>County</b>	Solano
<b>Conservancy ID</b>	Prop 1-1605
<b>Grantee</b>	Solano Resource Conservation District
<b>Overview</b>	Restore 13.5 acres of riparian habitat and improve water quality through improved cattle management practices on approximately 525 acres of active farmland along Lindsey Slough
<b>Grant Agreement Status</b>	Active as of 9/1/2017
<b>New Information</b>	The Grantee has requested an amendment to extend the funding term of the grant agreement and some adjustments to the line item budget (see consent calendar)

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Restoration of Priority Wetlands for Endangered Species at the Cosumnes River Preserve (Implementation)</b>
<b>Amount Awarded</b>	\$943,549
<b>County</b>	Sacramento
<b>Conservancy ID</b>	Prop 1-1608
<b>Grantee</b>	Sacramento County Regional Parks
<b>Overview</b>	Restore 110 acres of freshwater wetlands to benefit listed species
<b>Grant Agreement Status</b>	Active as of 1/8/2018
<b>New Information</b>	None

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Investigations of restoration techniques that limit invasion of tidal wetlands (Planning)</b>
<b>Amount Awarded</b>	\$107,655
<b>County</b>	Contra Costa
<b>Conservancy ID</b>	Prop 1-1612
<b>Grantee</b>	The Regents of the University of California (UC Davis)
<b>Overview</b>	Identify improved methods for tidal wetland revegetation that reduce invasion by non-native plants at Dutch Slough
<b>Grant Agreement Status</b>	Active as of 1/8/2018
<b>New Information</b>	None

#### Cycle 1 – Fiscal Year 2015-2015

The Board awarded approximately \$3.9 million to seven projects (four planning and three implementation). To date, three grants have closed.

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Habitat and Drainage Improvement Project (Implementation)</b>
<b>Amount Awarded</b>	\$2,000,000
<b>County</b>	Yolo
<b>Conservancy ID</b>	Prop 1-Y1-2015-003
<b>Grantee</b>	Ducks Unlimited
<b>Overview</b>	Implement habitat and working landscape enhancements in the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area
<b>Grant Agreement Status</b>	Active as of 6/18/2019
<b>New Information</b>	Additional funding for construction costs is required for this project. Grantee and several potential funders have met to discuss funding strategies. If additional funds are not secured from alternate sources, the Board may be asked to consider an amendment to increase the award amount.

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Fish Friendly Farming Certification Program for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Planning)</b>
<b>Amount Awarded</b>	\$89,450
<b>County</b>	All Delta Counties
<b>Conservancy ID</b>	Prop 1-Y1-2015-005
<b>Grantee</b>	California Land Stewardship Institute
<b>Overview</b>	Develop a program to work with farmers to improve water quality, that is specific to the crops and water quality concerns in Delta counties
<b>Grant Agreement Status</b>	Active as of 1/9/2017
<b>New Information</b>	None

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Three Creeks Parkway Restoration Project (Implementation)</b>
<b>Amount Awarded</b>	\$836,409
<b>County</b>	Contra Costa
<b>Conservancy ID</b>	Prop 1-Y1-2015-009
<b>Grantee</b>	American Rivers
<b>Overview</b>	Convert denuded flood control channel at the confluence of Marsh, Sand, and Deer Creeks into a healthy stream corridor
<b>Grant Agreement Status</b>	Active as of 6/27/2017
<b>New Information</b>	The grantee prepared a construction bid package and began seeking bids in late December 2019. The County approved the construction subcontractor in March, and construction is planned to start in May 2020. The grantee prepared a revegetation bid package and began seeking bids in February 2020. Revegetation work is planned to begin in fall 2020. The amendment approved by the Board on 12/9/2018 is being finalized.

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Wildlife Corridors for Flood Escape on the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Project (Implementation)</b>
<b>Amount Awarded</b>	\$688,195.64
<b>County</b>	County Yolo
<b>Conservancy ID</b>	Prop 1-Y1-2015-016
<b>Grantee</b>	Yolo Resource Conservation District
<b>Overview</b>	Restore up to 5 miles (22 acres) of floodway-compatible wildlife and pollinator habitat, providing a transit corridor for wildlife during floods
<b>Grant Agreement Status</b>	Active as of 1/24/2017
<b>New Information</b>	Project is experiencing issues with plant survival due to flood-related complications. Staff is presenting a request to amend the agreement's budget and scope to the Board at this meeting (see agenda item 12)

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Lower Marsh and Sand Creek Watershed Riparian Restoration Planning Project (Planning)</b>
<b>Amount Awarded</b>	\$73,493
<b>County</b>	Contra Costa
<b>Conservancy ID</b>	Prop 1-Y1-2015-019
<b>Grantee</b>	American Rivers
<b>Overview</b>	Improve restoration project efficiency within the Marsh/Sand Creek watershed through development of a programmatic CEQA document and permit, including storm water planning
<b>Grant Agreement Status</b>	Closed as of 12/31/2019
<b>New Information</b>	Closed, a final report is available for review by the Board

**Background**

The Conservancy's Proposition 1 Ecosystem Restoration and Water Quality Grant Program funds \$50 million in multi-benefit ecosystem and watershed protection and restoration projects in accordance with statewide priorities. The Grant Program is a two-step process, requiring both a concept proposal and a full proposal. Full proposals are subject to a rigorous scoring and evaluation process by both staff and a professional review panel, and are recommended for funding based upon score and funding availability.

**Contact**

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(916) 376-4023



**Proposition 68 Program Update  
Staff Report**

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**PROGRAM UPDATE**

The Proposition 68 Community and Economic Enhancement Grant Program is designed to promote a robust Delta economy, support the vitality of Delta communities, and allow staff to partner with project proponents to develop proposals that meet these goals. The grant program opened and began accepting submissions of concept proposals on January 6, 2020. The Conservancy received five concept proposals as of the end of February, as summarized below. One proposal was deemed ineligible due to a failure to meet the requirements of General Obligation Bond Law. Staff is working with the remaining applicants to assess the viability of proposed projects.

Staff is working with a variety of community partners to facilitate their participation in the Proposition 68 grant program. Outreach efforts have connected staff with an array of communities within the Delta, including a number of legacy communities. Staff will continue to evaluate opportunities for outreach and work with new and existing partners to develop potential projects.

**CONCEPT PROPOSALS RECEIVED**

Proposal	Project Name	Applicant	Project Type	Amount Requested	County	Status
P6801	Delta Old Timers	Gene Beley	Implementation	\$25,000	Contra Costa	Ineligible
P6802	Restoration of the 1883 Clarksburg Schoolhouse and Creation of a Delta Welcome Center	Friends of the 1883 Clarksburg Schoolhouse	Implementation	\$1,000,000	Yolo	Viability Assessment in Process
P6803	Southport Levee Recreational Trail	City of West Sacramento	Implementation	\$1,670,000	Yolo	Viability Assessment in Process
P6804	Revitalization of the Pittsburg Boat Launch Facility and Park	City of Pittsburg	Implementation	\$1,304,200	Contra Costa	Viability Assessment in Process
P6805	Converting the Bing Kong Tong Building into a Museum	Isleton Museum	Implementation	\$55,000	Sacramento	Viability Assessment in Process



**BACKGROUND**

Proposition 68 is the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 (Public Resources Code (PRC), Division 45) that was passed by California voters on June 5, 2018. Proposition 68 makes \$12,000,000 available to the Conservancy to use for the purposes specified in its governing statute (Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy Act, Public Resources Codes, Division 22.3). The Conservancy's Proposition 68 funds will be used to fund projects in the Conservancy's Community and Economic Enhancement Grant Program to support community and economic development in the Delta in a manner that is complementary to ecosystem restoration and other Conservancy programs.

**CONTACT**

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Delta Conservancy 2019 Implementation Plan Status Update  
and Consideration of 2020 Implementation Plan

**Staff Report**

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This report provides a year-end status update for the *2019 Implementation Plan* and presents for Board consideration the *2020 Implementation Plan*.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends Board approval of the *2020 Implementation Plan*.

**DESCRIPTION**

The annual Implementation Plan is a companion document to the Conservancy's Strategic Plan. The *2017-2022 Delta Conservancy Strategic Plan* provides a high-level road map and sets objectives and performance measures to achieve them. The annual Implementation Plan provides a more detailed accounting of the tasks the Conservancy will undertake in a given year to implement the Strategic Plan. The Implementation Plan has a summary of each initiative, provides an overview of progress and achievements to date, outlines major program objectives for the year, and notes steps for the future.

Each July, Conservancy staff updates the Board on progress made toward meeting the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan and provides a mid-year update of progress toward the goals in the Implementation Plan. Each January, staff presents a year-end Implementation Plan status update for the year past and requests approval of the Implementation Plan for the upcoming year. Because the January Board meeting was cancelled, this process was delayed to March. Accordingly, there are two documents accompanying this staff report:

- *2019 Implementation Plan, Year-End Status*. This table, presented to the Board for informational purposes, summarizes the Conservancy's progress toward achieving the goals outlined in the *2019 Implementation Plan*.
- *2020 Implementation Plan (Draft)*. This draft plan, presented to the Board for consideration of approval, describes the goals the Conservancy has set for 2020.

Of particular note regarding the *2019 Implementation Plan Year-End Status* is the absence of a goal related to website accessibility. Unknown to the Conservancy at the time the *2019 Implementation Plan* was developed, Assembly Bill 434 (Statutes of 2017) mandated that all State agencies certify that their website is accessible in compliance with Sections 7405 and 11135 of the Government Code and the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0. Conservancy staff dedicated a significant amount of time in 2019 to this effort. On July 1, 2019, the Conservancy certified partial compliance, and on December 31, 2019 the Conservancy was able to certify full compliance with the mandate.

**SUGGESTED MOTION LANGUAGE:**

*Move that the Board approve as final the Draft Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy 2020 Implementation Plan as presented in this item.*

**CONTACT**

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(916) 375-2086

Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy  
2019 Implementation Plan  
DECEMBER 31, 2019 UPDATE

## 2019 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN: YEAR-END STATUS

DELTA MARKETING			
2019 GOALS	TIMELINE	STATUS	NOTES
Recreation map	Qtr 1	Complete	6,000 maps were printed in November. Coordinating with Delta Protection Commission staff to develop distribution plan.
Hire Economic Development Program staff	Qtr 2	Complete	A Staff Services Manager I (Supervisor) was hired in March and an Associate Governmental Program Analyst was hired in October.
Develop guidelines/social media policy for website	Qtr 3	Delayed	Not yet started. The Conservancy is testing different types of posts and content themes on social media to better understand the audience before developing social media guidelines. The Conservancy worked closely with Natural Resources Agency to update the Conservancy website to the new template. The first phase of the website renovation, making the site web accessible, was completed 12/31/2019. The second phase, improving content, functionality, and design, will be completed in 2020, which will help shape website guidelines.
Adopt economic development program guidelines and open solicitation	Qtr 4	Complete	Guidelines were adopted in December. Program opened in January 2020.
Define emerging priorities with Delta Marketing Task Force	Ongoing	On Track	Currently no emerging priorities.
Continue implementation of the Sign Plan	Ongoing	On Track	Continuing to work with the Delta Protection Commission and the Marketing Task Force to place initial Delta Welcome Signs. Working with Caltrans on permits.
Update and develop content for visitCADelta.com	Ongoing	Ongoing	Supporting Delta Protection Commission (DPC), which has taken primary responsibility. Conservancy and DPC staff have limited capacity to maintain the website. Options are being explored for future maintenance of the site.
Potential transition of website management to Delta Marketing Task Force	Ongoing	Inactive	The Task Force members have indicated that their organizations do not have the capacity to take this on. Alternative options are being explored.

AGRICULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY ANALYSIS			
2019 GOALS	TIMELINE	STATUS	NOTES
Cultivate, maintain, and engage a network of interested parties	Ongoing	Inactive	At the July Board meeting, Board members supported setting the status of this goal to inactive due to current lack of an identified need for a specific analysis of the Delta agricultural system which would warrant continued outreach to the Delta agricultural community. However, the Conservancy will engage as appropriate should a need be identified in the future.

ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION & WATER QUALITY GRANT PROGRAM			
2019 GOALS	TIMELINE	STATUS	NOTES
Award Cycle 4 Grants	Qtr 2	Altered	In May, the Board awarded grants to seven proposals and tabled decisions on three others, directing staff to meet with those three applicants to determine if they could address concerns raised by the review panel. In September, the Board awarded a grant for one of those projects; staff continues to work with the other two. The timeline for final determination of awards was altered to accommodate the deferred decision on three of the proposals. Staff anticipates Board determinations on the final two Cycle 4 proposals in March 2020.
Plan Cycle 5 Grants	Qtr 2	Ongoing	Board members supported delaying Cycle 5 to maximize program efficiency and efficacy. Tentative timeframe to release the solicitation is summer 2021.
Cycle 5 Concept Proposal Solicitation	Qtr 3	Ongoing	Board members supported delaying Cycle 5 to maximize program efficiency and efficacy. Tentative timeframe to release the solicitation is summer 2021.
Cycle 5 Full Proposal Solicitation	Qtr 4	Ongoing	Board members supported delaying Cycle 5 to maximize program efficiency and efficacy. Tentative timeframe to release the solicitation is summer 2021.

INVASIVE SPECIES COORDINATION, CONTROL, AND RESTORATION			
2019 GOALS	TIMELINE	STATUS	NOTES
Convene a symposium or workshop to discuss remote sensing techniques for invasive species mapping in the Delta	Qtr 3	Complete	In partnership with the Delta Stewardship Council, the Department of Water Resources, the Department of Fish & Wildlife, and the University of California, Davis, staff planned and executed a Delta Invasive Species Symposium and drafted a detailed outline of a white paper summarizing the symposium. When complete, the white paper will be posted on the Delta Interagency Invasive Species Coordination team's webpage and distributed to appropriate mailing lists.
Continue maintenance of restored sites at Ulatis Creek (Emigh R. Livestock) and the Peterson Ranch drainage corridor	Qtr 4	Delayed	Grant was extended through March 2021 due to site access problems and flood damage from the extremely wet 18/19 winter. The 2019 growing season was spent with site cleanup, replanting of damaged areas, and continuation of site maintenance. Extension into 2020 will help establishment of the new plantings.
Complete Arundo treatments and restoration along Lindsay Slough on Hastings Tract	Q4	Complete	Completed Arundo treatments, plantings, and initial maintenance of planted areas. Transitioned maintenance activities to landowner and technical assistance, including effectiveness monitoring, continues.
Apply integrated chemical treatments at Sacramento River sites (Andrus Island, CDFW fishing access sites, Cliffhouse fishing access site)	Ongoing	Delayed	The opportunity for treatments this season was missed due to the need to execute a new contract with the subcontractor doing the work. The planned chemical treatments are postponed to July and August 2020.
Release biocontrol insects at Tracy Fish Collection Facility (TFCF), Stewart Tract, and the Port of Stockton	Ongoing	Ongoing	Releases began at the Port of Stockton. Staff is working with U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to complete a federally mandated environmental assessment for releases at TFCF. Work is not planned for Stewart Tract; the land owner is no longer interested.
Evaluate and scope integrated chemical treatments and restoration project opportunities at these South Delta sites	Ongoing	Inactive	Chemical treatments are no longer planned because treatments at Sacramento River sites are a higher priority and will use the available funding. Exploring partnership with Port of Stockton for future funding opportunities.
Continue outreach and explore additional opportunities for Arundo control and restoration projects in the Delta	Ongoing	On Track	Staff have initiated discussions with Solano County Regional Parks, State Parks, USDA, and the CA Invasive Plants Council.
Pursue funding for Phase 2	Ongoing	Ongoing	Department of Water Resources funding for Phase 2 is no longer available. Alternative funding sources and partnerships are being explored.

2019 GOALS	TIMELINE	STATUS	NOTES
Facilitate quarterly DIISC meetings	Ongoing	Complete	Convened Delta Interagency Invasive Species Coordination (DIISC) team meetings in March, June, and November. The team decided only 3 meetings were needed.
Develop Delta interagency collaboration strategy for prevention, early detection, and rapid response to invasive species	Ongoing	On Track	Staff convened a DIISC sub-team and initiated groundwork for improving early detection and rapid response coordination in the Delta.

REGIONAL PLANNING			
2019 GOALS	TIMELINE	STATUS	NOTES
Complete final public review and present final draft of the Delta Public Lands Strategy for Board consideration	Qtr 1	Complete	The Public Lands Strategy was completed and presented to the Board in March.
Complete the Restoration Opportunities for Juvenile Salmonids In the Delta analysis	Qtr 4	Delayed	Technical advisory committee meetings and public workshop were held. The draft study was delayed slightly to early January 2020. The project will be completed in March of 2021.

LAND OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT			
2019 GOALS	TIMELINE	STATUS	NOTES
Refine draft ownership/management white paper	Ongoing	On Track	Work on this continues.
Provide updates to the Board	Qtr 2 & Qtr 4	Complete	Discussion of land ownership issues continues at Program and Policy Subcommittee (PPS) meetings. Updates are provided to the Board following each PPS meeting as part of the PPS staff report.

DELTA CARBON PROJECTS			
2019 GOALS	TIMELINE	STATUS	NOTES
Work with Department of Water Resources to develop carbon credit sale agreements for existing managed wetlands on Sherman and Twitchell Islands	Qtr 4	Ongoing	Project validation/verification for the existing wetlands is underway and expected to be completed by March 2020. Credit sales agreements will be developed once verification is complete.
Secure funding to support future projects	Qtr 4	Ongoing	Efforts to secure funds for a Delta subsidence reversal program continue.

PROJECT TRACKING/ REPORTING AND IMPROVED DATA INTEGRATION/ACCESS			
2019 GOALS	TIMELINE	STATUS	NOTES
Develop a synthesis report of user needs, priorities, and desired Delta Science Tracker functions as identified at the workshop	Qtr 2	Complete	Aquatic Science Center submitted final report to the Delta Science Program.
Acquire and compile digital imagery	Qtr 4	Complete	Compiled a matrix of existing datasets (inventory). Continuing review and update of the inventory.
Prepare quality assurance project plan	Qtr 4	Delayed	Preparation of the plan began in Quarter 3; it was due in December, but is taking longer than expected and is now expected to be complete by March 2020.
Work with restoration project managers to enter or update project information in EcoAtlas	Ongoing	Ongoing	Conservancy staff continued to work with project managers to enter and update project information in EcoAtlas.

WATER QUALITY MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT			
2019 GOALS	TIMELINE	STATUS	NOTES
Field water quality monitoring (quarterly)	Ongoing	Complete	Staff conducted water quality monitoring at Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge in April, July, September, and December.
Update the 3-year monitoring plan for Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge	Qtr 4	Complete	Monitoring plan was completed in February.
Continue coordination with watershed organizations: develop monitoring plans for watersheds to increase consistency in data collection and reporting	Ongoing	Ongoing	Produced Monitoring Compendium to provide guidance to project proponents and programs to enhance habitat restoration monitoring and data management and facilitate coordination in approaches among efforts. Conservancy continues as steward of the document, which is being refined as a collaborative product of the Interagency Adaptive Management Implementation Team (IAMIT). Conservancy staff is ensuring the document is ADA-compliant and will post it on the Conservancy website. The IAMIT web site will reference and link to the Compendium and it will be shared with the wider Delta habitat restoration community.
Identify and secure funding for implementation of best management practices	Ongoing	Complete	The State Water Resources Control Board awarded the Conservancy \$399,407 to implement best management practices related to pesticide use and handling.



IMPLEMENTATION OF BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES: COMPREHENSIVE PESTICIDES PROJECT			
2019 GOALS	TIMELINE	STATUS	NOTES
Execute contract for implementation of Fish Friendly Farming Program	Qtr 1	Delayed	Contract execution delayed due to concerns, which have been resolved to a level sufficient to allow the Conservancy to move forward with executing the contract in the first quarter of 2020.
Develop a list of high priority outreach areas	Ongoing	Delayed	State Water Board granted a 4-month extension to complete this deliverable to accommodate the delay in executing the contract.
Develop a mailing list and outreach letters	Ongoing	Delayed	State Water Board granted a 4-month extension to complete this deliverable to accommodate the delay in executing the contract.

DELTA WATERWAY CLEANUPS			
2019 GOALS	TIMELINE	STATUS	NOTES
Track litter trends over time at specific sites	Ongoing	On Track	Staff is participating in the State Water Board Trash Monitoring Workgroup that is helping to develop protocols for community-based science groups to monitor trash across the state. Once developed, protocols can be used at waterway clean-ups.
Biannual cleanups and environmental education at three sites	Q2 & Q3	Complete	Removed approximately 3,200 lbs. of trash with help of approximately 85 volunteers at four sites at the April clean-up events. Developed Impressions Report to track outreach impact of the Conservancy's participation in the cleanup - Conservancy's top media tweet in March had 782 impressions and the top media tweet in April had 1,435 impressions.
Assist Yolo Resource Conservation District (RCD) to secure landowner access affidavits for tire removal	Qtr 4	Complete	Phase 2 is complete. The California Conservation Corps, under direction of the Yolo RCD, removed two cubic yards of household waste, 57 tires, and 0.65 tons of other materials from Babel Slough.
Expand number of cleanup sites and number of volunteers	Ongoing	Complete	A new site for the spring cleanup was added in Locke. A new partnership was formed with Trinity Consultants, who volunteered to independently manage the cleanup site at Grizzly Island Trail and provided 16 volunteers for the cleanup.

# ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

2019 GOALS	TIMELINE	STATUS	NOTES
Conduct education and outreach for Watershed Protection Week	Qtr 3	Complete	In 2019, Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Week was September 21-28, as designated by the Legislature after passing a resolution authored by Senator Bill Dodd. Promotion of the 2019 Delta Week was coordinated with the Senator's office and included social media posts and a press release.
Conduct Project WET (Water Education for Teachers) educational workshop	Qtr 3	Complete	Using grant funds from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, the Conservancy provided the Water Education Foundation funding through June to conduct numerous Project WET workshops.
Support Delta water tours and water summit	Qtr 4	Complete	Using U.S. Bureau of Reclamation grant funds, the Conservancy contracted with the Water Education Foundation to conduct two water tours - the Delta tour in June and a Central Valley tour in April. The Water Summit was held in October, after the end of the contract, using funding from sources other than the Conservancy.
Water Education Foundation workshop and related white paper	Qtr 4	Inactive	In the time between completion of the prior workshop and the end of the grant that provided the funding for this, no topic emerged, that was of immediate importance and within the scope of the Conservancy's mission and authority, to merit a workshop.
Develop fact sheets for Conservancy programs	Ongoing	Delayed	An Ecosystem Restoration flyer was developed and is being updated with Proposition 1 Grant Cycle 4 information. A general outreach flyer and brochure are also being developed. These general collateral pieces, as well as fact sheets for various Conservancy programs, will be shaped by the website renovation and web accessibility work being done.
Educational outreach in schools	Ongoing	On Track	Staff is participating in the Students and Landowners Education and Watershed Stewardship program. In March, Conservancy staff helped mentor students from Florin High School as they installed native habitat along 3/4 mile of a slough at River Garden Farms in Yolo County. Staff is scheduled to continue participating in 2020 with students from Davis High School at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area.

MERCURY EXPOSURE REDUCTION PROGRAM (MERP)			
2019 GOALS	TIMELINE	STATUS	NOTES
Create and convene stakeholder meeting	Qtr 1	Complete	A stakeholder meeting was held in February.
Complete Community Grant Program	Qtr 2	Complete	The Community Grant Program provided education to more than 3,900 families.
Coordinate and post advisories	Ongoing	On Track	Approximately 35 fish consumption advisory signs were posted through the Mercury Exposure Reduction Program (MERP), bringing the total number of signs posted since 2015 to 85 at 69 sites. Sign posting will continue in the first half of 2020.
Implement exposure reduction activities	Ongoing	On Track	Completed three grants through the MERP Community Grant Program, worked with Tribal Liaisons to share MERP messages with Delta Tribe communities, and conducted outreach at seven community events (including three tribal events). Staff is working with the Southeast Asian Assistance Center to evaluate sign effectiveness and to integrate MERP messaging into the organization's activities.

ADMINISTRATION			
2019 GOALS	TIMELINE	STATUS	NOTES
Proposition 1 grants acquisitions process and template	Qtr 2	Delayed	In progress. Delayed due to resource constraints.
Transition to primary reliance upon Fi\$Cal for in-house accounting	Qtr 4	Complete	The Fiscal and Board Analyst was hired in April. While internal accounting is still necessary and used for reconciliation, primary reliance is now upon Fi\$CAL reports.
Expand office space into adjacent suite	Qtr 3	Complete	Staff moved into the expanded office space in August.
Implement State Leadership Accountability Act (SLAA) Implementation Plan to minimize organizational risk	Qtr 4	Complete	The SLAA Implementation Plan was submitted in June and the Biannual Report was submitted in December.
Prioritize and develop new/update existing policies and procedures	Qtr 4	Delayed	In progress, but delayed due to resource constraints. Drafts are expected to be completed in the second quarter of 2020.
Analyze and streamline accounting practices	Qtr 4	Complete	The Fiscal and Board Analyst was hired in April. Initial streamlining of accounting practices has been completed, but opportunities for future efficiencies will be explored on an ongoing basis.
Submit Indirect Cost Rate Proposals (ICRP)	Qtr 4	Complete	Submitted January 7, 2020.
Develop Workforce Plan and Succession Plan	Qtr 4	Delayed	Deferred due to resource constraints. The Conservancy anticipates completing this goal in 2020.
Identify critical processes, knowledge, and expertise and develop risk management plan	Qtr 3	Delayed	Some critical processes have been identified and some mitigation measures have been implemented. Work continues on this process which has taken longer than anticipated due to competing priorities.
Financial Reporting (such as Governor's budget building, bond accountability reporting, update System for Award Management)	Ongoing	On Track	Reporting has been completed on time.
Human resource related mandates (such as establishing a Disability Advisory Committee, Job Action Contingency Plan, Upward Mobility Program)	Ongoing	Delayed	Some efforts have been delayed due to resource constraints. The Disability Advisory Committee has been meeting quarterly.
Various requirements (Such as State Agency Recycle Campaign and State Agency Reporting System reports, Contracting Activity Report and Improvement Plans)	Ongoing	On Track	Reporting mandates were met. Routine audits of the Proposition 1 grant program and of human resources practices were initiated and will continue into 2020.



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**DELTA** CONSERVANCY

*A California State Agency*

## 2020 Implementation Plan

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## INTRODUCTION

This Implementation Plan (Plan) articulates goals which the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy (Conservancy) has established for 2020 to implement the goals, objectives, performance measures, and metrics included in the Conservancy's 2017-2022 Strategic Plan.

The activities reflected herein are funded by the California General Fund; the California Environmental License Plate Fund; state and federal government grants; the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (Proposition 1), and the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68). The Conservancy continuously seeks funding to expand efforts in furtherance of its mission. Staff is discussing with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation the potential to receive a grant to expand education and outreach efforts. The Governor and the Secretary of the California Natural Resources Agency have prioritized initiatives that address climate resilience activities. Should a bond measure be presented to and approved by voters in November, the Conservancy could realize funding to increase and expand initiatives.

The Conservancy approaches all aspects of its mission with a mindset of collaboration and local engagement. In 2019, the Conservancy finalized an extensive collaborative effort among scientists, policy makers, local governments, land owners, and other stakeholders to publish the *Delta Public Lands Strategy*. The Delta Mercury Exposure Program worked directly with community organizations throughout 2019 to educate them about health hazards presented from consumption of mercury contaminated fish and provided them with small grants so they could share important information with those most at risk in their communities. Other examples include extensive efforts in 2019 to connect with Delta stakeholders in shaping the new Community and Economic Enhancement Grant Program to ensure the needs of the community were reflected in the program's design. The Ecosystem Restoration and Water Quality Grant Program remains a highlight of the ability of the Conservancy, its board, and local interests to work in partnership; to date the program has advanced projects with positive impacts to 4,700 acres of the Delta ecosystem.

Goals for 2020 reflect the continuation of established programs such as arundo control, Delta marketing, and the Ecosystem Restoration and Water Quality Grant Program which will enter a new phase as the project stage of grants conclude and monitoring work begins. With its launch, the Community and Economic Enhancement Grant Program will contribute to a robust Delta economy through grant funding for projects that will increase public access to the Delta through recreation and tourism opportunities, historic and cultural preservation, and environmental education. Support for carbon emission reduction and land subsidence related efforts is increasing – the Conservancy will continue work to ally interests to realize funding to incentivize landscape scale land-use changes, develop pilot projects to verify greenhouse gas reductions, and develop carbon credit sale agreements. All Conservancy efforts in 2020 will benefit from expanded outreach and communications.

Internally focused, succession planning remains a priority into 2020, with comprehensive updates to policies and procedures or creation of them anew, focused recruitment to fill all positions, and workplan development supporting that objective.



## AGRICULTURAL AND ECONOMIC ENHANCEMENT

The Delta is a unique natural resource of local, state, and national significance. Intertwined with this important ecological system are a rich agricultural and cultural heritage, a distinguishing history, and an abundance of recreational opportunities. Preserving and enhancing the Delta's agricultural, cultural, historic, and recreational assets can play a valuable role in enhancing Delta communities and economies.

The Conservancy has worked closely with the Delta Protection Commission over the years to synergistically advance the priorities of both agencies in support of Delta communities and economies; that partnership will continue in 2020. The Conservancy will significantly increase its support in 2020 as it initiates the Community and Economic Enhancement Grant Program.

### Community and Economic Enhancement Grant Program

Beginning in January, the Conservancy will accept concept proposals on an ongoing basis for the Community and Economic Enhancement Grant Program. This new, noncompetitive, grant program is made possible by funding allocated by the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68). The Conservancy will assist project proponents as needed to develop viable concepts into comprehensive proposals that may be considered for funding by the Board.

*Table 1: Community and Economic Enhancement Grant Program*

2020 Project Goals	Timeline
Begin accepting concept proposals	Qtr 1
Assist project proponents to develop comprehensive proposals	Ongoing
Manage awarded grants	Ongoing
<b>Funding:</b> \$12,000,000 from Proposition 68 for duration of the program	

### Delta Marketing

The Conservancy and the Delta Protection Commission (DPC) partner in assisting Delta residents and businesses to develop sustainable recreation and tourism opportunities in the Delta. The Conservancy and DPC created and worked with the Delta Marketing Task Force to create a *Delta Tourism Awareness 5-year Marketing Plan* in 2017, the *Delta Sign Plan* in 2018, and the Delta recreation and tourism website VisitCADelta.com. The Conservancy contracted with DPC to implement components of the marketing and sign plans. In 2019, DPC worked with the task force to design and produce 11 welcome and wayfaring signs. In 2020, the agencies will coordinate with Caltrans, local jurisdictions, and the California Conservation Corps to obtain permits and install signs at locations identified in the plan. Complimenting the signs will be distribution of a map, 6,000 copies of which were printed in 2019, that shows recreational opportunities in the Delta and provides heritage and cultural facts.

The website VisitCADelta.com highlights businesses and recreational opportunities; it is a key strategy of the Marketing Plan and is noted on the aforementioned map. While the DPC, with support from the Conservancy, has managed the website thus far, management was intended to rest with a Delta entity. However, an entity with capacity to take this on has yet to be identified. In 2020, the Conservancy and DPC will collaborate to create a sustainable management plan for the site.

Table 2: Delta Marketing

2020 Project Goals	Timeline
Distribute recreation maps	Ongoing
Pursue sustainable management plan for visitCADelta.com	Ongoing
Install 11 signs per Delta Sign Plan	Qtr 4
<b>Funding:</b> Maps, sign plan and installation: \$ 45,000	

## ECOSYSTEM VIABILITY

The Conservancy, in collaboration with myriad partners, is working on the following initiatives to protect, enhance, and restore the Delta ecosystem.

### Ecosystem Restoration and Water Quality Grant Program

This competitive grant program focuses on multi-benefit ecosystem and watershed protection and restoration projects that address at least one of the following.

- Ecosystem Protection, Restoration, and Enhancement
- Water Quality
- Water-related Agricultural Sustainability

Through this program, the Conservancy has demonstrated its capacity to align state and local interests to make great progress – this is the hallmark of the Conservancy’s mission. As of January 1, 2020, the Conservancy has implemented four grant cycles and awarded almost \$36.3 million for 27 projects that collectively increase ecosystem resilience of approximately 4,700 acres. The Conservancy anticipates opening the fifth, and possibly last solicitation in the summer of 2021, with approximately \$5 million in available funding. As grants for implementation projects are closed, Conservancy staff will continue to work with the grantees as they conduct post-project management and monitoring of the projects for at least 15 years.

In the first half of 2020, the Department of Finance will complete a routine audit of the Conservancy’s Proposition 1 program. The Conservancy will consider the audit results and adjust its granting process as needed.

Table 3: Ecosystem Restoration and Water Quality Grant Program

2020 Project Goals	Timeline
Manage active and closed grants	Ongoing
Plan Cycle 5 solicitation	Ongoing
Adjust granting processes based on audit results	As Required
<b>Funding:</b> \$50,000,000 from Proposition 1 for the duration of the program	

## Invasive Species Coordination, Control, and Restoration

### Arundo Control and Restoration

*Arundo donax* is an invasive riparian plant that damages levees and waterway banks, utilizes more water than native vegetation, and displaces native plants and wildlife. Phase 1 of this project was initiated in 2014. Through its partners, Solano Resource Conservation District and Sonoma Ecology Center, the Conservancy completed maps and prioritization for control of *Arundo* sites and initiated a control and restoration pilot project in the Cache Slough Complex. The Delta Conservancy is also collaborating with the U.S. Department of Agriculture – Agricultural Research Service on biocontrol agent release trials and

integrated biological/chemical control at three Delta sites. The Conservancy is seeking additional funding for Phase 2 to expand Arundo control and restoration activities within the Delta.

#### *Delta Inter-Agency Invasive Species Coordination (DIISC) Team*

The Conservancy leads this forum for state and federal agency participants to exchange information, coordinate activities, and identify research needs and funding sources. The DIISC Team holds quarterly coordination meetings and organizes a biennial Delta Invasive Species Symposium. The Conservancy is in the early stages of coordinating with the DIISC team and other stakeholders to explore the development of a strategy for early detection and rapid response to invasive species.

*Table 4: Invasive Species Coordination, Control, and Restoration*

<b>2020 Project Goals</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Write white paper summarizing 2019 Delta Invasive Species Symposium	Qtr 2
Coordinate arundo control and restoration activities at Phase 1 sites	Ongoing
Develop funding and implementation strategy for Phase 2	Ongoing
Facilitate quarterly DIISC meetings	Ongoing
Develop Delta interagency collaboration strategy for early detection and rapid response to invasive species	Ongoing
<b>Funding:</b> Phase 1 Arundo: ~\$1 million Department of Water Resources grant and ~\$91,000 U.S. Department of Agriculture grant	

#### **Land Ownership and Management**

The Conservancy's enabling legislation authorizes the organization to hold title and easements for lands within the Delta. During outreach for the development of the Strategic Plan, staff heard repeated requests from agencies and community members to explore and define the Conservancy's potential role in future land ownership and management. Staff began exploring the issue in 2019 by developing a draft white paper and having discussions with the Conservancy Board's Program and Policy Subcommittee (PPS). In 2020, staff will continue to refine the white paper based on research and engagement with the PPS and will provide updates at publicly noticed Board meetings. A land ownership and management policy or strategy may result from this effort.

*Table 5: Land Ownership and Management*

<b>2020 Project Goals</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Refine draft ownership/management white paper	Ongoing
Provide updates to the Board	Ongoing
<b>Funding:</b> General operating budget	

#### **Project Tracking, Reporting, and Improved Data Integration and Access**

For the past several years, the Conservancy has worked with many partners to identify needs, secure funding, and implement multiple projects to facilitate project tracking, reporting, and improved data integration and access to support habitat restoration and water quality management in the Delta.

With funding from U.S. EPA, the Conservancy is implementing the Delta Aquatic Resources Inventory (DARI) project. DARI will result in a standardized mapping system and base map of aquatic resources for the Delta. Activities planned for 2020 include integrating DARI into EcoAtlas and a training for regional data stewards from state and local agencies to teach them DARI mapping standard operating procedures (SOP).

*Table 6: Project Tracking/Reporting and Improved Data Integration/Access*

<b>2020 Project Goals</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Work with restoration project managers to enter or update project information in EcoAtlas	Ongoing
Update the DARI mapping SOP and develop protocols for submitting data and maintaining the DARI base map	Qtr 3
Integrate DARI into EcoAtlas	Qtr 3
Training for regional data stewards	Qtr 3
<b>Funding:</b> DARI: \$300,000 U.S. EPA grant	

### **Pesticides Management Best Management Practices**

The Conservancy, in coordination with the Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition and the San Joaquin and Delta Water Quality Coalition, will implement a suite of best management practices to reduce non-point source pollution and improve water quality in the Delta. The goal of this project is to develop, certify, and implement Farm Water Quality Improvement Plans (Farm Plans) through the Fish Friendly Farming (FFF) Program to reduce the generation and transport to waterbodies of agricultural chemicals, sediment, and nutrients from sites within the Delta. These efforts utilize tools and build upon outreach funded by the Conservancy's Ecosystem Restoration and Water Quality Grant Program.

*Table 7: Best Management Practices*

<b>2020 Project Goals</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Develop a list of high priority outreach areas	Qtr 2
Send introductory letters and enrollment information to landowners and operators in/near high priority outreach areas	Qtr 2
Establish a Technical Advisory Committee	Qtr 3
Conduct workshop with enrolled properties	Qtr 4
<b>Funding:</b> \$399,400 State Water Resources Control Board grant	

### **Waterway Cleanups**

The Conservancy participates in two annual waterway cleanup events: the Delta Waterway Cleanup and the Sacramento Area Creeks Council Creek Week Cleanup. The Conservancy partners with the Delta Protection Commission, the Sacramento Area Creeks Council, the California Coastal Commission, Sacramento County Parks, Sacramento Regional Sanitation District, California State Parks, and corporate and non-profit volunteer groups. The goals of the cleanups are to: (1) protect and improve water quality; (2) raise awareness and understanding of good stewardship practices; (3) provide the community with environmental stewardship opportunities; and (4) collect data on types and amounts of trash in the Delta. Data collection contributes to the development of community-based science efforts across the state and provides a snapshot of the trash moving through the Delta.

The Conservancy will continue to participate in organizing and conducting these events and leverage them to provide community outreach and environmental education related to previously noted goals, building on the success of 2019 in which the Conservancy's involvement in the Creek Week Cleanup resulted in 43 new subscribers to the Conservancy's email list, more than 12,000 impressions on Twitter in one month alone, and distribution of nearly 8,000 pieces of collateral that included the Conservancy's logo.

*Table 8: Delta Waterway Cleanups*

2020 Project Goals	Timeline
Clean-up and community outreach and environmental education events	Qtr 2 & Qtr 3
Collect data on types and amounts of trash in the Delta	Ongoing
<b>Funding:</b> General operating budget	

## DELTA CARBON MANAGEMENT

The Conservancy Board adopted an updated climate change policy in 2017. The policy guides the Conservancy in developing, establishing, and supporting projects that mitigate climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and that can increase the system's capacity to adapt to climate change effects. For the past several years, the Conservancy has worked with a large partnership to address the ongoing subsidence that threatens western Delta communities, agriculture, and the state and federal water projects, and that produces more than 2,000,000 tons of carbon emissions per year. The partnership developed a California Wetland Protocol which was adopted by the American Carbon Registry (ACR) in the spring of 2017. The partnership is now working with public and private landowners and project developers to develop pilot projects to verify greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions. Verifying GHG reductions will allow landowners and developers to realize revenue by trading credits on the voluntary carbon market.

The Conservancy continues to work with the California Air Resources Board to encourage their consideration of adopting the ACR protocol under the Cap-and-Trade compliance market, thereby more than doubling the value of the credits, which further incentivizes change. Staff continues to create a coalition of interested organizations to develop appropriate messages and strategies to realize additional funding that can incentivize landscape scale land-use changes that will stop ongoing subsidence and resulting emissions. In early 2020, the Conservancy will receive results of the 2019 third party validation/verification of three Department of Water Resources (DWR) wetland projects, certifying the first carbon credits for market. Additionally, the partnership has been instrumental in pursuing funding for planning and implementation of several managed wetland and rice cultivation pilot efforts.

These activities will continue in 2020 by partnering with DWR to develop carbon credit sale agreements for existing wetlands on Sherman and Twitchell Islands. That effort notwithstanding, effecting meaningful change requires significant investment in subsidence and related carbon emissions actions in the Delta. The Conservancy is seeking funding up to \$100 million to implement actions that will allow significant progress.

*Table 9: Delta Carbon Management*

2020 Project Goals	Timeline
Develop, in coordination with DWR, carbon credit sale agreements for existing managed wetlands on Sherman and Twitchell Islands	Qtr 2
Seek funding to support future projects	Ongoing
<b>Funding:</b> \$ 45,000 General operating budget	

## ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Environmental education and outreach is an important component of the Delta Conservancy programs, which is reflected throughout the Conservancy's initiatives. Current outreach strategies include posts on social media (Facebook and Twitter), flyers and other collateral about Conservancy projects, and promotions of campaigns such as Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Week and Creek Week. In 2020, the Conservancy will continue to maintain and enhance its website; expand social media profiles; develop new educational materials, including fact sheets for Conservancy programs; increase participation in events in and of relevance to the Delta, and otherwise broaden outreach as resources allow.

### Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Week

For the past two years, the Legislature designated a week in September as Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Week. The designated week is a focus of Conservancy education and outreach initiatives; past promotion included social media posts and a press release coordinated with Senator Bill Dodd's office. In 2020, the Conservancy looks to expand those efforts to potentially include a community activity, Delta Week-specific collateral, features in online and print publications, and possible media opportunities.

*Table 10: Environmental Education and Outreach*

2020 Project Goals	Timeline
Conduct education and outreach for Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Week	Qtr 3
Education and outreach via social media, events, and other opportunities	Ongoing
Develop fact sheets for Conservancy programs	Ongoing
<b>Funding:</b> General operating budget	

### Delta Mercury Exposure Reduction Program

The Conservancy takes an active role in educating the public about potential health hazards through the Delta Mercury Exposure Reduction Program (Delta MERP). Delta MERP is a collaborative effort among federal and State agencies, local governments, tribes, and community organizations to conduct exposure reduction activities to address the health risks to consumers of Delta fish. This is a multi-year program, coordinated with the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, that is funded through June 2020. Through then, the Conservancy will continue to coordinate and post fish consumption advisory signs, provide training and educational messaging to the Delta community, and oversee the Southeast Asian Assistance Center's (SAAC) evaluation of the efficacy of previously posted fish consumption advisory signs. The Conservancy will provide final program results at a stakeholder meeting. After funding expires, the Conservancy will continue to maintain information on its web page and conduct outreach as resources allow.

*Table 11: Mercury Exposure Reduction Program*

2020 Project Goals	Timeline
Evaluate effectiveness of posted advisory signs	Qtr 1
Convene stakeholder meeting	Qtr 2
Coordinate and post advisory signs	Ongoing
Conduct outreach to Delta communities	Ongoing
<b>Funding:</b> \$170,000 from the State Water Resources Control Board	

*Timeline items listed as ongoing will continue until funding for the program expires in June 2020.*

## ADMINISTRATION

In 2019, the Conservancy focused on identifying critical functions and continued succession planning by designating secondary personnel for key functions, cross training to ensure proficiency, and documenting processes and procedures. This work will continue into 2020 as the Conservancy aims to have all positions filled.

While the Conservancy cannot avoid turnover due to staff seeking advancement, it can engage and empower staff and create an environment to help attract and retain quality staff. The Conservancy will continue to monitor staff engagement and make continuous improvement efforts toward maintaining high morale and employee satisfaction.

In 2020, Conservancy staff and management will develop work plans as an internal planning tool to aid in tracking annual workload and accomplishments, optimizing use of resources, analyzing budget to task balance, and assist with strategic planning to meet priorities. Included in those plans will be creating and maintaining accessibility of the Conservancy's web content, a new and significant workload.

*Table 12: Administration*

2020 Project Goals	Timeline
Proposition 1 Grant Program acquisition process and template	Qtr 2
Submit and update State Leadership Accountability Act Implementation plan	Qtr 2 & Qtr 4
Develop internal work plans	Qtr 2
Develop records retention schedule	Qtr 3
Submit indirect cost rate proposal	Qtr 4
Develop Workforce Plan and Succession Plan	Qtr 4
Develop new/update existing policies and procedures	Qtr 4
Ensure accessibility of conservancy web content	Ongoing
Submit financial reports and information (such as Governor's budget building, bond accountability reporting, update System for Award Management)	As Required
Fulfill human resource related mandates (such as Disability Advisory Committee)	As Required
Various administrative and operational requirements (e.g. State Agency Recycle Campaign and State Agency Reporting System reports, Contracting Activity Report and Improvement Plans, Continuity Plan)	As Required
Participate in Audits (e.g. Dept. of Finance audits of bond funded grant programs, State Personnel Board audit of human resources practices, General Services audit of purchasing and procurement)	As Required
<b>Funding:</b> General operating budget with proportional support from Proposition 1 and Proposition 68 funds	

## **DELTA CONSERVANCY 2017 – 2022 STRATEGIC PLAN – GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

### **GOAL 1: Delta Agricultural and Economic Enhancement**

#### *Delta Economic and Agricultural Enhancement*

1. Work directly with local land owners, farmers, and others to analyze the state of Delta agriculture and identify priority agricultural investments and economic offset strategies for agricultural land conversions
2. Establish an agricultural stakeholder group to consult on agricultural sustainability strategy identification and evaluation; and on agricultural sustainability project planning, prioritization, and implementation
3. Support the Delta Marketing Task Force and Delta Protection Commission in identifying and securing funding to implement priority objectives in the Five-Year Delta Marketing Plan in cooperation with local business stakeholders

#### *Ecosystem Restoration and Protection*

4. Support water quality improvements on working lands by coordinating with agencies and local interests to identify and implement best management practices
5. Increase accessibility and utility of regional water quality data

#### *Grants and Funding*

6. Fund Proposition 1-eligible agricultural sustainability projects that provide ecosystem and/or watershed protection and/or restoration benefits
7. Identify, track, and pursue funding opportunities to support implementation of agricultural analysis-identified priority investments
8. Identify, track, and pursue funding to support implementation of priority objectives in the Five-Year Delta Marketing Plan, recreation and tourism projects, and historical preservation projects

### **GOAL 2: Delta Ecosystem Viability**

#### *Ecosystem Restoration and Protection*

1. Protect, restore, or enhance habitat and improve water quality through implementation of grant-funded projects
2. Strengthen the coordination of water quality monitoring, data integration, implementation of best management practices, and environmental education efforts in partnership with existing Delta watershed efforts



3. Complete regional restoration strategies and priorities for the Cache Slough Complex and for additional region(s) in coordination with Delta stakeholders; collaborate with partners to implement high priority projects identified in regional plans
4. Determine appropriate conditions under which the Conservancy would consider land ownership/management
5. Continue to implement an invasive species control program and implement other on-the-ground projects to protect, restore, or enhance Delta habitat

#### *Delta Economic and Agricultural Enhancement*

6. Collaborate with Delta interests and agencies to develop programs and promote incentives for land management projects that reduce carbon emissions
7. Evaluate public use opportunities on public land in the Delta and make recommendations on how to improve opportunities for recreation and education

#### *Grants and Funding*

8. Fund Proposition 1-eligible projects that provide ecosystem protection, restoration, and enhancement; water quality; and/or water-related agricultural sustainability benefits
9. Seek funding and project development resources for high priority restoration projects identified through regional planning efforts

### **GOAL 3: Conservancy Organizational Strength and Sustainability**

#### *Administration*

1. Provide a safe, creative, inspiring, and equitable working environment for staff and management consistent with state standards
2. Employ management practices to empower staff creativity, increase staff retention, and promote organizational capabilities to match the diverse needs of the Delta community
3. Develop a staff succession plan to ensure the efficient transfer of institutional knowledge
4. Continuously evaluate and improve organizational efficiency, programmatic structure, and workplace environment
5. Enable effective and sustainable Conservancy operation within the Delta community by strengthening existing partnerships and developing lasting new partnerships with Delta agencies and local interests
6. Increase awareness of the Conservancy's achievements among funders, partners, and the public through in-person outreach, social media, and other methods

### *Grants and Funding*

7. Diversify and expand funding sources to adequately support program work, sustain current staff, and grow staff as needed to meet program needs and Conservancy goals
8. Identify and plan for potential long-term funding scenarios to position the Conservancy to sustain and grow its programs via future bonds or other funding sources
9. Promote Conservancy goals and objectives through Board engagement to constructively support Conservancy funding efforts including the pursuit of bond funding



### ***Consideration of Grant Award for the Mello/Jensen Heirs Sandhill Crane Preserve Project Staff Report***

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This agenda item presents for Board consideration a recommendation to award Proposition 1 Ecosystem Restoration and Water Quality Grant Program for the Mello/Jensen Heirs Sandhill Crane Preserve Conservation Easement project.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Board find this project is categorically exempt from environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to California Code of Regulations Title 14, Chapter 3, Article 19 Section 15313, subsection (a), and Section 15325, subsections (a) and (b).

Staff further recommends the Board approve funding for the project, not to exceed \$2,273,469, conditional upon the applicant submitting and Conservancy staff approving:

- A revised budget narrative that clarifies indirect costs and selected subcontractors and justifies the need for a hazardous materials assessment and direct charges for audit expenses.
- Revised task descriptions that include a baseline report and easement monitoring plan description and due dates.
- Audited financials from current audit.

#### **DESCRIPTION**

At the May 22, 2019 Board meeting, staff did not recommend that the Board approve funding for funding for the following reasons.

- The proposal did not include enough information about the project's tasks and budget, including an estimate of the easement's fair market value, to evaluate the eligibility and reasonableness of the proposed expenses.
- The proposal did not demonstrate that the project team has sufficient ornithological expertise to implement a scientifically-robust project.

The Board directed Conservancy staff to work the applicant and present a recommendation for consideration at a future Board meeting. In the intervening time, staff has worked with the applicant to address these issues. Staff met with the applicant on June 6, 2019 to discuss a timeframe for addressing the identified issues. During July and August, Conservancy staff received from the applicant and provided comments on a partial set of draft materials. The applicant submitted a full set of materials on October 15, 2019. Staff met with the applicant on December 12, 2019 to provide feedback and guidance on the materials. The applicant submitted the final materials on February 19, 2020. Staff reviewed the materials and have found:

**Tasks and Budget.** The information provided is sufficient to evaluate the eligibility and reasonableness of the proposed expenses. Staff finds that, overall, expenses are eligible and reasonable. However, additional information is still necessary, as reflected in conditions included in the recommendation for approval.

**Science.** The information provided demonstrates that the project team has sufficient ornithological expertise to implement a scientifically-robust project. The applicant has cultivated partnerships with crane experts and relevant partners, and the revised science effort meets the objectives of the project.

The Delta Conservancy is the lead agency for this project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This project is categorically exempt from environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to California Code of Regulations Title 14, Chapter 3, Article 19 Section 15313, subsection (a), and Section 15325, subsections (a) and (b), which exempts acquisition of lands for fish and wildlife conservation purposes, including preservation of fish and wildlife habitat; acquisition, sale, or other transfer of areas to preserve the existing natural conditions, including plant or animal habitats; and acquisition, sale, or other transfer of areas to allow continued agricultural use of the areas; none of the exceptions to the exemptions identified in California Code of Regulations Title 14, Chapter 3, Article 19 Section 15300.2 apply.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Mello/Jensen Heirs Sandhill Crane Preserve and Conservation Easement project is proposed to preserve Sandhill Crane habitat by placing a conservation easement on 275 acres of farmland. The easement will allow the land to continue to be farmed while ensuring that it remains managed to benefit crane populations. This project is located in Sacramento County on Tyler Island.

## **SUGGESTED MOTION LANGUAGE:**

Two separate motions are required.

*Move that the Board find that the Mello/Jensen Heirs Sandhill Crane Preserve Conservation Easement project is categorically exempt from environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to California Code of Regulations Title 14, Chapter 3, Article 19 Section 15313, subsection (a), and Section 15325, subsections (a) and (b).*

*Move that the Board approve a grant not to exceed \$2,273,469 to the Agricultural-Natural Resources Trust for the Mello/Jensen Heirs Sandhill Crane Preserve Conservation Easement project.*

## **CONTACT**

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SACRAMENTO - SAN JOAQUIN

**DELTA CONSERVANCY**

*A California State Agency*

**RESOLUTION NO. 2020-01**

**RESOLUTION OF THE SACRAMENTO-SAN JOAQUIN DELTA CONSERVANCY**

**FINDING THE MELLO/JENSEN HEIRS SANDHILL CRANE PRESERVATION PRESERVE CONSERVATION  
EASEMENT PROJECT EXEMPT UNDER CEQA**

**WHEREAS**, the Mello/Jensen Heirs Sandhill Crane Preserve Conservation Easement project (Project) will preserve Sandhill Crane habitat by placing a conservation easement on 275 acres of farmland on Tyler Island in Sacramento County; and

**WHEREAS**, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) categorically exempts certain projects from environmental review, including acquisition of lands for fish and wildlife conservation purposes, including preservation of fish and wildlife habitat; acquisition, sale, or other transfer of areas to preserve the existing natural conditions, including plant or animal habitats; and acquisition, sale, or other transfer of areas to allow continued agricultural use of the areas, pursuant to California Code of Regulations Title 14, Chapter 3, Article 19 Section 15313, subsection (a), and Section 15325, subsections (a) and (b); and

**WHEREAS**, CEQA provides that if a project is categorically exempt, environmental review is not required, provided that certain identified exceptions to the exemption are not triggered (California Code of Regulations Title 14, Section 15300.2).

**WHEREAS**, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy is the lead agency on the Project, and its governing board is the decision-making body for the proposed Project; and

**WHEREAS**, consistent with Public Resources Code Section 21081.6(a)(2), the documents which constitute the record for the Project are located at the offices and the website of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy and may be inspected by any person.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy finds, based on the whole record before it in its independent judgment, that the Project is exempt pursuant to California Code of Regulations Title 14, Chapter 3, Article 19 Section 15313, subsection (a),

**Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy Resolution 2020-01, March 25, 2020**

and Section 15325, subsections (a) and (b) and that there are no exceptions, including unusual circumstances, that apply to the Project nor any evidence to suggest that the Project will have a significant effect on the environment; and

**PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED BY THE SACRAMENTO-SAN JOAQUIN DELTA CONSERVANCY BOARD THIS March 25, 2020.**

**VOTE**

Ayes:

Noes:

Abstentions:

Absent:

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Leo Winternitz, Board Vice-Chair



***Consideration of Grant Award for the Phase 1 San Joaquin River Floodplain Restoration and Floodway Enhancement at Banta-Carbona Project***  
**Staff Report**

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This agenda item presents for Board consideration a recommendation to award Proposition 1 Ecosystem Restoration and Water Quality Grant Program funding for the Phase 1 San Joaquin River Floodplain Restoration and Floodway Enhancement at Banta-Carbona Project.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends the Board approve funding not to exceed \$750,931 for the project.

**DESCRIPTION**

At the May 22, 2019 Board meeting, staff did not recommend that the Board approve funding for this project for the following reason.

- The habitat benefits are not clear: it is not clear from the proposal what steps will be taken to ensure that high quality habitat is created and how much of the project would focus on fisheries improvements versus upgrading diversion facilities.

This issue was raised during the technical review process and was also separately raised by the Delta Stewardship Council during the process of seeking high-level feedback from Delta agencies. In addition, the application was missing information related to the project budget. The Board directed Conservancy staff to work with the applicant and present a recommendation for consideration at a future Board meeting.

In the intervening time period, Conservancy staff worked with the project team to acquire additional information and address the concern raised at the May Board meeting. The requested materials included:

- A technical memo that addresses habitat benefits, detailing how habitat considerations will be incorporated into project design, describing the components of the floodplain habitat that will ensure that the project yields the intended benefits, and clarifying what the overall ecosystem impact of the project will be.
- A budget memo justifying the reasonableness for modeling, design, and permitting costs.
- The missing components of the application:
  - A complete Financial Management Questionnaire and Cost Allocation.
  - Information regarding the project's proximity to disadvantaged communities.



Upon review of the materials submitted, Conservancy staff concluded that the explanations of specific habitat improvements and anticipated benefits to fisheries are satisfactorily described in the technical memo and concerns regarding the significance of habitat benefits and potential entrainment are adequately addressed. The memo provides detail about existing and future site conditions, proposed recontouring of the existing floodplain, and proposed increases in the frequency and duration of inundation of the site during the salmonid fry rearing period. The memo further explains that the proposed sediment transport modeling will inform project designs that will address current sedimentation issues in front of the fish screens and result in improved efficiency of the fish screens. It also clarifies that these improvements do not constitute an upgrading of diversion facilities.

Staff found the justification of costs, to be acceptable. The final version of the budget memo provides an adequate justification of costs, including explanation for why contracted services are restricted/unique and the consequences if these services are not purchased from the specified contractors.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Phase 1 San Joaquin River Floodplain Restoration and Floodway Enhancement at Banta-Carbena project is proposed to design and permit a multi-benefit habitat restoration project to advance planning for restoration of 30 acres of seasonally-inundated floodplain and for improved water supply reliability. The project will improve rearing habitat for juvenile salmon, reduce flood risk, and address sedimentation at the applicant's intake fish screen. This project is located in San Joaquin County near Manteca.

#### **SUGGESTED MOTION LANGUAGE**

*Move that the Board approve a grant not to exceed \$750,931 to Banta-Carbena Irrigation District for the Phase 1 San Joaquin River Floodplain Restoration and Floodway Enhancement at Banta-Carbena Project.*

#### **CONTACT**

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***Consideration of Amendment to the Budget and Scope of Work for the Wildlife Corridors for Flood Escape on the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Project***

**Staff Report**

<b>Project Title</b>	Wildlife Corridors for Flood Escape on the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area
<b>Grantee</b>	Yolo County Resource Conservation District
<b>Project Number</b>	Prop 1-1516
<b>Award Year</b>	2016
<b>County</b>	Yolo
<b>Category</b>	Implementation
<b>Current Agreement Budget</b>	\$693,195.64
<b>Budget If Amended</b>	\$836,234.00
<b>Amendment Request (Term, Scope or Budget)</b>	Scope and budget

This agenda item presents for Board consideration a request to amend the scope of work and budget for the Wildlife Corridors for Flood Escape on the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area project.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Board approve an amendment to the scope of work to allow for a new planting plan and approve an additional \$143,038.36 to increase the total award to \$836,234.00.

**DESCRIPTION**

The grantee requested amendments due to several environmental factors that have had significant negative effects on the project. In November of 2017, the grantee seeded half of the project footprint with native grass species. Due to a prolonged period with no rain and severe frosts, the seedlings matured more slowly than expected. In winter of 2019, water flowed over the Fremont Weir and the entire project site was under water for three consecutive months. The planned 2018-2019 seeding could not take place, and the existing, immature seedlings had not built up enough root mass to withstand the long flood event. The grantee estimates that the percent coverage of native grass which survived from the original planting is less than ten (10) percent.

To adaptively manage the project in response to these environmental factors, the grantee developed a new planting plan. The plan calls for seeding in the spring/summer of 2020, accompanied by the installation of an irrigation system to provide consistent water for the plants until the winter rains begin. This planting timeframe and irrigation system should allow the plants to grow to a size sufficient to withstand flooding if the 2020-2021 winter has large amounts of precipitation, or to provide supplemental water if there is below average precipitation.

Specifically, the requested amendments include:

1. Increase of award by \$143,038.36, as follows.
  - a. Increase Operating Expenses (General) cost category by \$7,527.00 for purchase of plants, seeds, and irrigation supplemental parts
  - b. Increase Operating Expenses (Subcontractor) cost category by \$120,000.00 for rental of an irrigation system
  - c. Increase Operating Expenses (Equipment) cost category by \$8,700.00 for additional costs for tractor rentals and other planting equipment.
  - d. Increase the Indirect Cost category by \$6,811.35 correspondingly with the increases to the Operating Expenses (General), Operating Expenses (Subcontractor), and Operating Expenses (Equipment) budgets.
2. Addition to the Scope of Work to add rental and operation of a summer irrigation system.

The Conservancy will also update the budget cost categories to better align them with the budget cost categories used in more recent grant agreements. According to the Board-approved process for amendments, the budget cost category changes do not require Board approval; Conservancy staff will process the cost category changes if the Board approves the proposed budget augmentation.

Augmenting the budget will provide funds sufficient to re-seed and establish native vegetation and complete the project, delivering on all the outputs originally proposed and approved by the Board. If this amendment request is not approved, the grantee likely will be unable to establish 22 acres of grassland vegetation as specified in the grant agreement.

#### **BACKGROUND**

In May of 2016, as part of the Cycle 1 Proposition 1 grant program solicitation, the Board approved an award of \$688,195.65 for this project. This project was amended in December of 2018 to add \$5,000 to the budget to cover the increased costs of obtaining a Central Valley Flood Protection Board encroachment permit. This project is restoring up to 5 miles (22 acres) of floodway-compatible wildlife and pollinator habitat in the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area, providing a transit corridor for wildlife during floods.

#### **SUGGESTED MOTION LANGUAGE:**

*Move that, for the Wildlife Corridors for Flood Escape on the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area project, the Board approve an additional award of \$143,038.36 and an amendment to the Scope of Work to include rental and operation of a summer irrigation system.*

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### Potential Agenda Items for the May 27, 2020 Board Meeting

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Staff is seeking input from the Board regarding additional agenda items for the May 27, 2020 Board meeting. This meeting is tentatively planned to be held at the Big Break Delta Science Center in Oakley.

A tentative list of agenda items beyond the normal standing items include:

- Tour of the Bay Point Habitat Restoration Project
- Nutria Eradication Program Overview by the Department of Fish and Wildlife

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