



## Overview of Nature Based Solutions and Delta Subsidence/Carbon Management Staff Report

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This agenda item provides an overview of the Conservancy's effort to reduce subsidence in the Delta and related carbon emissions and provides initial expectations for the recently appropriated Nature Based Solutions – Wetlands funding of \$36 million.

### OVERVIEW

For many years the Conservancy has worked with a large partnership to support the development of projects that stop subsidence and related carbon emissions in the deeply subsided region of the Delta. The Program focusses on converting lands that are currently too wet to farm into permanent managed wetlands and converting dry land farming to rice cultivation. Both practices re-wet the currently drained agricultural lands thereby stopping the microbial oxidation of the highly organic peat soils that causes subsidence and emit CO<sub>2</sub> to the atmosphere.

The Conservancy has worked with partners to support the development of a carbon protocol that allows a landowner to convert land to managed wetland or rice and quantify the climate benefit in credits, or tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions avoided, certify those credits through a third party and then market the resulting credits on the Voluntary Carbon Market, thereby generating a revenue stream for "carbon farming." The Conservancy has funded technical assistance for pilot projects to develop the projects and certify carbon credits and has funded planning projects to design managed wetlands. Over the past ten years the Delta has seen an increase of approximately 1,700 acres of managed wetland with an additional 2,000 acres currently in planning, and more recently approximately 1,500 acres of rice has gone into cultivation with that number expected to increase by up to 10,000 acres in the coming years.

Conservancy staff are working with several project partners to develop additional projects in the near term and support planning and implementation with the Nature Based Solutions – Wetlands funding. In January of 2022 the Board approved General Grant Guidelines that provide guidance and the process by which the Conservancy will solicit projects that are funded by General Fund (non-bond funded) appropriations. In the late Fall of 2022, we anticipate developing a solicitation notice that will open a solicitation for projects and provide prospective applicants with additional information about the types of projects that can be funded and the criteria by which they will be evaluated.

### CONTACT

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