



SACRAMENTO - SAN JOAQUIN

**DELTA CONSERVANCY**

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## BOARD MEETING AGENDA

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**November 16, 2022 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**  
**Webinar**

Pursuant to Executive Order N-29-20, which was extended by SB 189 Section 80, this meeting will be conducted in a webinar format. Questions and public comment can be addressed to [contact@deltaconservancy.ca.gov](mailto:contact@deltaconservancy.ca.gov) prior to and during the meeting.

### Join via Microsoft Teams Webinar

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Phone Conference ID: 269 251 455#

1. **Call to Order**
  2. **Welcome, Roll Call, and Introductions**
  3. **Public Comment** (New Business)
  4. **Consideration of Staff Funding Recommendations for the 2023 Delta Drought Response Pilot Program**, Martha Ozonoff (Attachments) **(Action Item)**
  5. **Consideration of Updates to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy General Grant Guidelines**, Campbell Ingram (Attachments) **(Action Item)**
  6. **Consideration of Draft Solicitation Notices for Climate Resilience, Community Access, and Natural Resource Protection (CAR) Funding; and Nature Based Solutions (NBS): Wetland Restoration Funding**, Dr. Sarah Lesmeister (Attachments) **(Action Item)**
  7. **Public Comment**
  8. **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 questions.
- 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 listed expressly for action, may be deliberated upon and subject to action.



## Consideration of Staff Funding Recommendations for the 2023 Delta Drought Response Pilot Program Staff Recommendation

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This agenda item provides an overview of the 2023 Delta Drought Response Pilot Program (DDRPP) and requests Board approval to award funds to the projects listed on the attached table, Agenda Item 4.2, DDRPP Bid Tables, Table 1, Recommended Projects.

### RECOMMENDATION

Conservancy staff recommend that the board award up to \$10,857,862 in 2023 Delta Drought Response Pilot Program funding to the projects listed on the attached Agenda Item 4.2, DDRPP Bid Tables.

### DESCRIPTION

The 2023 Delta Drought Response Pilot Program was developed through a collaborative effort between the Department of Water Resources (DWR), the Office of the Delta Watermaster (ODWM), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and the Delta Conservancy (Conservancy), in coordination with Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Delta) water users. The goals of the 2023 DDRPP are to (1) reduce drought stress in the Delta watershed by incentivizing agricultural water users to incorporate practices into their operations that conserve water on a net basis during the 2023 water year versus “business as usual”, (2) protect Delta water quality by providing an added buffer against salinity intrusion, (3) promote soil health, and (4) mitigate potential drought impacts on fish and migratory birds. The DDRPP is in response to consecutive dry years, low combined storage in State and federal project reservoirs, and drought-constrained water deliveries to project contractors. Water conserved through incentivized actions will be allocated to protecting Delta water quality and will not be available for diversion or export. The 2022 DDRPP funding round used \$10 million in drought relief funding from DWR and resulted in 33 grants to agricultural water users enrolling approximately 8,800 acres. Due to continued drought conditions, DWR funded the continuation of the Program for the 2023 water year with an additional \$11.4 million.

The 2023 DDRPP solicitation incorporated several new practices to maximize program goals and incorporate a more equitable process for selecting grantees. First, incentive payments were offered to water users who opted into actions that would benefit migratory birds that are experiencing severe reduction in available habitat due to drought conditions. Volunteer collaborators from TNC developed guidelines for these bird benefit actions which are shallow flooding of fields in the spring or fall and delaying harvest to provide nesting habitat. Second, water users were asked to submit bids to a reverse auction for the opportunity to participate in the 2023 DDRPP. In the reverse auction, applicants bid a price per acre for implementing specific water conservation practices on their farms between January 1, 2023 and the end of the water year on September 30, 2023. The reverse auction structure was introduced to incentivize bidding that was both competitive and fair. With this approach, all

accepted bids will be offered grants at the highest price accepted for like water conservation practices. This price is called a market clearing price. To increase the chance of getting an accepted bid, the best strategy for bidders was to bid the cost of implementing a water conservation practice into the 2023 farming plan plus any forgone profits.

### **BID SELECTION APPROACH**

A selection committee including representatives from the Conservancy, DWR, ODWM, California Department of Food and Agriculture, University of California Cooperative Extension as well as Davis and Merced campuses, and TNC gathered three times to assess bids. Criteria used to evaluate the bids were estimated water savings at the cost per acre bid, geographic distribution of project sites, and the diversity of proposed water conservation practices. Bidding opened October 3, 2022 and closed at 5:00 p.m. on October 18, 2022. A team from the Conservancy and ODWM reviewed all bid data, followed up with bidders as needed for clarifications, and categorized bids by the type of water saving practice proposed. After removing duplicate bids and bids that did not provide the minimum of 100 contiguous acres (Table 2, Disqualified Bids), 109 bids were considered for the 2023 DDRPP. There were 20 bids to forgo a cash crop (i.e. leaving the field fallow or foregoing a double crop by leaving the fall/winter crop on the field through the summer), 48 bids to shift crop type (i.e. planting low- to no-irrigation crops that were not a part of the original farm plan for 2023), 29 bids to deficit irrigate fields (i.e. forgo a portion of the normal irrigation cycle on the planned crop), four bids for bird benefits only, and eight bids categorized as other.

TNC collaborators developed an optimization model that selected the combination of bids that maximized water savings per dollar and used this model to determine a clearing price for each water conservation practice. The optimization model used water saving estimates for each water conservation practice that were determined by the 2022 DDRPP Oversight Committee. The model took these water savings estimates and multiplied them by the acres bid to estimate potential water savings for each bid. Bids were then ranked by their water savings potential, and the model worked to accept as many bids as possible up to the point where selecting additional bids would exceed the budget. Thus, bidding too high reduced the chances of selection without increasing the amount paid if selected. Bidding too low could lead to being offered a grant that does not provide any incentive for the bidder. For practices under the "other" category, where there were no data from 2022, the selection committee used their expert judgement to evaluate each bid and set a clearing price.

The selection committee also determined that the model should allocate 25% of the budget to bids for shifting crop type, 37.5% of the budget to deficit irrigation bids, and 37.5% of the budget to bids forgoing a cash crop. This budget distribution was based on the preliminary results of the 2022 DDRPP Oversight Committee's analysis, which found that shifting crop type saved much less water than the other two water conservation practices. Less of the budget was allocated to shifting crop type to maximize potential 2023 DDRPP water savings while continuing to gather data on the water savings potential of all water conservation practices.

Because of the constraints on the model, it could not choose enough bids to fully spend the budget without overshooting. To use the remaining budget, the selection committee chose to increase the clearing price for the bid closest to being included, which resulted in increasing the clearing price for deficit irrigation bids by \$50. This resulted in a small overrun of the budget that will be covered by a

combination of unused administrative funds from the 2022 DDRPP and attrition from bidders who are offered grants but do not accept.

**PROJECT TABLES**

Please refer to attachment 4.2, Table of Recommended Projects, Table of Disqualified Projects, and Table of Projects Not Recommended for Funding, which enumerates the projects the Conservancy is recommending to the board for funding.

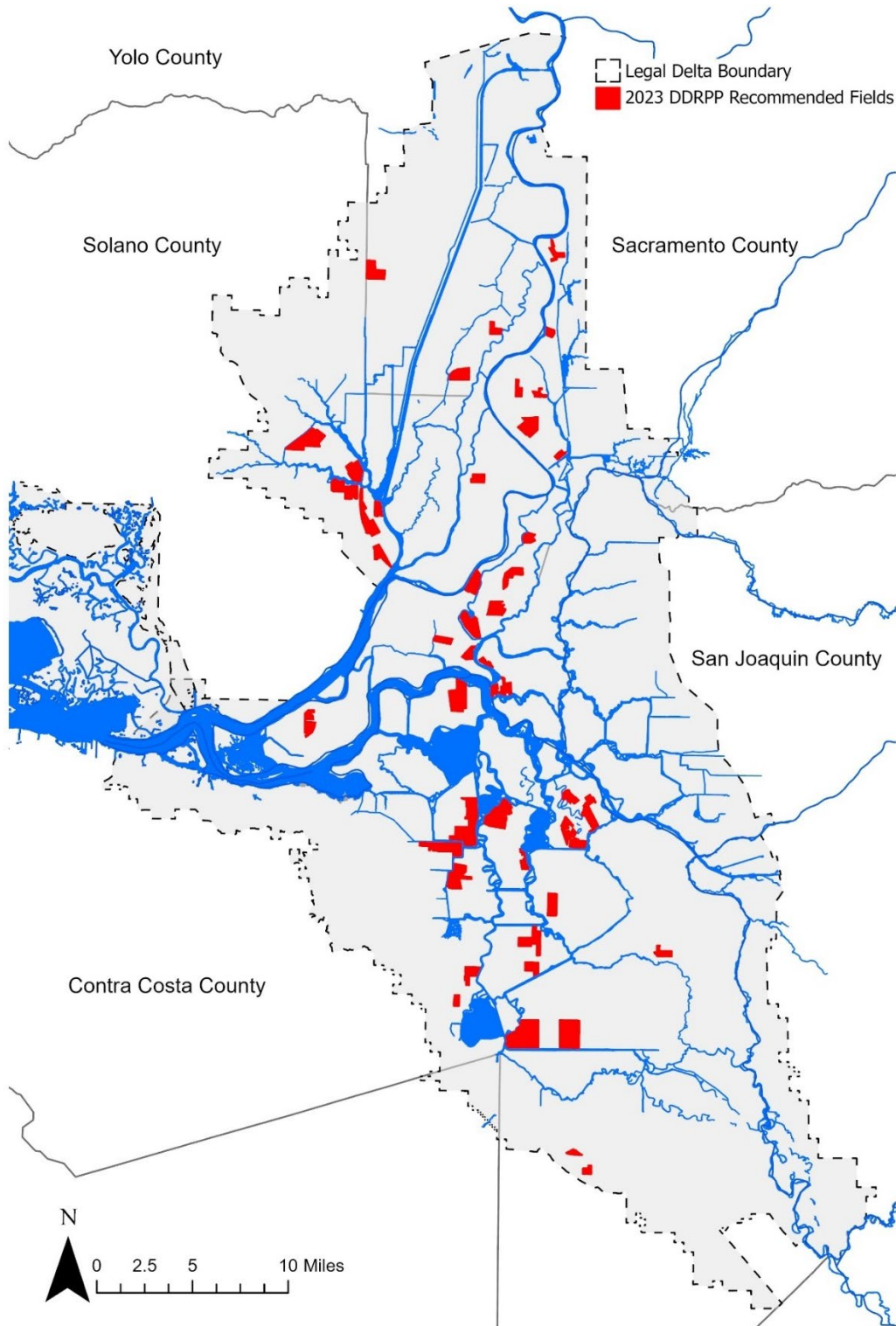
**SUGGESTED MOTION LANGUAGE**

Move to award funding up to \$10,857,862 to the recommended projects from the 2023 Delta Drought Response Pilot Program fund.

**CONTACT**

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FIGURE 1. MAP OF 2023 DELTA DROUGHT RESPONSE PILOT PROGRAM PROJECT AREA



Bids not represented on this map are 10, 25, 45, 51, 52, 53, 76, 91, 92, 94, 95, and 96. All map acreage will be confirmed before grant agreements are fully executed.

Table 1: Recommended Projects

ID	Applicant name	County	Proposed action at the project site	Project Description	Bid Acres	Market Clearing Price (\$)	Water Savings Subtotal (\$)	Bird Benefits*	Bird Benefit Acres	Bird Benefits Subtotal (\$)	Grant Award Up To (\$)
91	Celli Ranches, Inc.	San Joaquin	Birds Benefits Only	spring flooding for bird benefits	-	-	-	75	919	68,925	68,925
92	Celli Ranches, Inc.	San Joaquin	Birds Benefits Only	spring flooding for bird benefits	-	-	-	75	919	68,925	68,925
95	Raymond Lagorio	San Joaquin	Birds Benefits Only	spring flooding for bird benefits	-	-	-	75	900	67,500	67,500
116	Zuckerman Family Farms	San Joaquin	Birds Benefits Only	spring flooding for bird benefits	-	-	-	75	1,066	79,950	79,950
26a	Hubert Denis VanDeMaele	Sacramento	Deficit irrigation	no supplemental watering for grain	246	675	166,050				166,050
26b	Hubert Denis VanDeMaele	Sacramento	Deficit irrigation	no supplemental watering for corn	138	675	93,150				93,150
29	Doug Chan Farms	Sacramento	Deficit irrigation	no supplemental watering for triticale	101	675	68,175				68,175
30	Doug Chan Farms	Sacramento	Deficit irrigation	no supplemental watering	328	675	221,400				221,400
32	Doug Chan Farms	Sacramento	Deficit irrigation	no supplemental watering for corn	246	675	166,050				166,050
41	Richard Silva	Contra Costa	Deficit irrigation	no supplemental watering	815	675	550,125				550,125
45	J & L Mello Farm Equipment Company	Sacramento	Deficit irrigation	no supplemental watering for triticale	469	675	316,575				316,575
46	Steven Dinelli	Sacramento	Deficit irrigation	no supplemental watering for corn	191	675	128,689	75	175	13,125	141,814
48	Steven Dinelli	San Joaquin	Deficit irrigation	no supplemental watering for corn	229	675	154,717				154,717
51	Gardiner Company	Sacramento	Deficit irrigation	deficit irrigate corn	100	675	67,500				67,500

ID	Applicant name	County	Proposed action at the project site	Project Description	Bid Acres	Market Clearing Price	Water Savings Subtotal	Bird Benefits*	Bird Benefit Acres	Bird Benefits Subtotal	Grant Award Up To
52	Gardiner Company	Sacramento	Deficit irrigation	deficit irrigate corn	130	675	87,750				87,750
53	Gardiner Company	Sacramento	Deficit irrigation	deficit irrigate corn	100	675	67,500				67,500
54	Daniel Yarbrough	Sacramento	Deficit irrigation	no supplemental watering	102	675	68,850				68,850
66	John Kisst	Contra Costa	Deficit irrigation	deficit irrigate alfalfa	243	675	164,025				164,025
68	John Kisst	Contra Costa	Deficit irrigation	deficit irrigate alfalfa	146	675	98,213				98,213
78	Steven Dinelli	San Joaquin	Deficit irrigation	no supplemental watering for corn	113	675	76,505	75	113	8,475	84,980
90	Ross Rasmussen	Yolo	Deficit irrigation	fallow field	100	675	67,500				67,500
94	Meirinho Land & Cattle, LP	San Joaquin	Deficit irrigation	deficit irrigate crop	300	675	202,500				202,500
96	LMT Investments	San Joaquin	Deficit irrigation	deficit irrigate crop	547	675	369,225				369,225
113	John C. Backer Estate	Sacramento	Deficit irrigation	deficit irrigate corn	127	675	85,725	40	30	1,200	86,925
122	Knob Hill Mines, Inc.	Solano	Deficit irrigation	deficit irrigate hay	729	675	492,143				492,143
11	Willow Springs Ag	Solano	Forgo a cash crop	forgo corn	149	695	103,555				103,555
12	Willow Springs Ag	Solano	Forgo a cash crop	forgo corn	119	695	82,705				82,705
14	Willow Springs Ag	Solano	Forgo a cash crop	forgo corn	180	695	125,100				125,100
15	Willow Springs Ag	Solano	Forgo a cash crop	forgo corn	262	695	182,090				182,090
18	Willow Springs Ag	Solano	Forgo a cash crop	forgo corn	290	695	201,550				201,550
57	Ernest J Pombo	San Joaquin	Forgo a cash crop	forgo corn	102	695	70,890				70,890
60	Ernest J Pombo	San Joaquin	Forgo a cash crop	forgo corn	117	695	81,315				81,315
65	Lemhi Land & Cattle	Contra Costa	Forgo a cash crop	forgo corn	1,000	695	695,000	150	1,000	150,000	845,000
74	Ewing Farms LP	Sacramento	Forgo a cash crop	forgo corn	128	695	88,821				88,821
76	VKR Farms LLC	Yolo	Forgo a cash crop	forgo hay	150	695	104,250	40	50	2,000	106,250
77	D&L Farms, Inc.	San Joaquin	Forgo a cash crop	forgo corn	135	695	93,922				93,922
84	Jackson Land & Cattle, LP	Contra Costa	Forgo a cash crop	forgo corn	599	695	416,444				416,444
85	Richard Carli	Sacramento	Forgo a cash crop	forgo corn	542	695	376,690	115	100	11,500	388,190



ID	Applicant name	County	Proposed action at the project site	Project Description	Bid Acres	Market Clearing Price	Water Savings Subtotal	Bird Benefits*	Bird Benefit Acres	Bird Benefits Subtotal	Grant Award Up To
103	Coleman M. Foley, Jr.	Contra Costa	Forgo a cash crop	forgo corn	620	695	430,900	40	620	24,800	455,700
118	Victoria Island LP	San Joaquin	Forgo a cash crop	forgo wheat	245	695	170,275				170,275
10	Sycamore Ranch	San Joaquin	Other	drip-irrigated peppers instead of flood irrigated corn	100	300	30,000				30,000
25	Nuss Farms, Inc.	San Joaquin	Other	drip-irrigated tomatoes instead of flood irrigated corn	110	300	33,000				33,000
50	Lund Ranch LLC	San Joaquin	Other	deficit irrigate almonds	1,000	675	675,000				675,000
71	Trincher Family Estates	Yolo	Other	deficit irrigate vineyard	365	675	246,375				246,375
27	DKAG	Sacramento	Shift crop type	shift from corn to triticale	360	500	179,800				179,800
34	Wallace Chan Farms	Sacramento	Shift crop type	shift from corn to wheat	207	500	103,500				103,500
37	Gary Esperson Farms	Solano	Shift crop type	switch to non-irrigated crop	130	500	65,100				65,100
38	Gary Esperson Farms	Solano	Shift crop type	switch to non-irrigated crop	139	500	69,400				69,400
39	Gary Esperson Farms	Solano	Shift crop type	switch to non-irrigated crop	162	500	81,150				81,150
40	Gary Esperson Farms	Solano	Shift crop type	switch to non-irrigated crop	146	500	73,150				73,150
42	Mello Farms Inc.	Sacramento	Shift crop type	shift from corn to triticale	323	500	161,500	40	323	12,920	174,420
43	Mello Locke Ranch	Sacramento	Shift crop type	shift from corn to triticale and non-irrigated summer crop	179	500	89,600				89,600

ID	Applicant name	County	Proposed action at the project site	Project Description	Bid Acres	Market Clearing Price	Water Savings Subtotal	Bird Benefits*	Bird Benefit Acres	Bird Benefits Subtotal	Grant Award Up To
47	Steven Dinelli	San Joaquin	Shift crop type	shift from corn to triticale	100	500	50,000				50,000
49	Wallace Chan Farms	Sacramento	Shift crop type	shift from corn to wheat	127	500	63,500				63,500
55	Dutra Hay & Grain	Yolo	Shift crop type	shift from corn and alfalfa to safflower and wheat	174	500	87,000	40	174	6,960	93,960
81	D&L FARMS, INC.	San Joaquin	Shift crop type	shift from corn to wheat	500	500	250,000				250,000
87	Richard Carli	Sacramento	Shift crop type	shift from corn and rice to winter grain	350	500	175,000	115	50	5,750	180,750
98	Zuckerman Family Farms	San Joaquin	Shift crop type	shift from corn to small grain	168	500	84,000				84,000
104	Louis Biagioni	Sacramento	Shift crop type	shift from irrigated corn to non-irrigated silage corn	175	500	87,500	75	150	11,250	98,750
105	Coleman M. Foley, Jr.	San Joaquin	Shift crop type	shift from corn to wheat	370	500	185,000	40	370	14,800	199,800
109	3D Farms, LLC	San Joaquin	Shift crop type	shift from tomatoes to safflower	203	500	101,735				101,735
110	Wallace Chan Farms	Sacramento	Shift crop type	shift from corn to sorghum Sudan hybrid forage	188	500	94,000				94,000
117	Victoria Island LP	San Joaquin	Shift crop type	shift from tomatoes and alfalfa to wheat	510	500	255,000				255,000
120	Knob Hill Mines, Inc.	Solano	Shift crop type	shift from corn or alfalfa to triticale	267	500	133,600				133,600

\* Bird Benefits: \$75/acre flooding, \$40/acre nesting cover

Table 2: Disqualified Bids

ID	Applicant	Reason for Removal	Water Saving Practice	County
4	Lemhi Land & Cattle	Duplicate Entry	Forgo a cash crop	Contra Costa
31	Doug Chan Farms	Duplicate Entry	Deficit irrigation	Sacramento
36	Joe Sanchez Farms	Duplicate Entry	Other	Sacramento
89	3D Farms LLC	Duplicate Entry	Other	San Joaquin
7	Ernest Pombo	Under 100 Acres	Forgo a cash crop	San Joaquin
21	Burchell Land Co	Under 100 Acres	Shift crop type	San Joaquin
23	Amistad Ranches	Under 100 Acres	Shift crop type	Sacramento
33	Greene and Hemly	Under 100 Acres	Forgo a cash crop	Yolo
35	Joe Sanchez Farms	Under 100 Acres	Other	Sacramento
75	D&L Farms, Inc.	Under 100 Acres	Forgo a cash crop	San Joaquin
80	D&L Farms, Inc.	Under 100 Acres	Forgo a cash crop	San Joaquin
123	Tuscany Research Institute	Under 100 Acres	Forgo a cash crop	San Joaquin

Table 3: Rejected Bids

ID	Applicant name	County	Proposed Action	Project Description	Bid Price	Bid acreage	Total Bid	Bird Benefits
5	Deadhorse LP	Sacramento	Shift crop type	shift from tomatoes or corn to beardless wheat	750	185	138,750	No
6	Deadhorse LP	Yolo	Deficit irrigation	deficit irrigate alfalfa	750	132	99,000	No
8	Venice Island Owners LLC	San Joaquin	Deficit irrigation	no supplemental watering	750	1000	750,000	Yes
9	J.H. Jonson & Sons Inc.	Sacramento	Shift crop type	shift from alfalfa to safflower	889	119	105,791	No
13	Willow Springs Ag LLC	Solano	Shift crop type	shift from corn to safflower	400	138	55,200	Yes
16	Willow Springs Ag LLC	Solano	Forgo a cash crop	forgo corn or sunflower	600	104	62,400	No
17	Willow Springs Ag LLC	Solano	Shift crop type	shift from corn to safflower	400	144	57,600	Yes
19	Willow Springs Ag LLC	Solano	Shift crop type	shift from alfalfa to wheat or oats	600	106	63,600	No
20	Amistad Ranches, Inc.	Sacramento	Shift crop type	shift from tomatoes to reduced-irrigated corn and wheat	750	376	282,000	Yes
22	Amistad Ranches, Inc.	Sacramento	Shift crop type	shift from corn or tomatoes to triticale	750	103	77,250	Yes
24	Amistad Ranches, Inc	Sacramento	Shift crop type	shift from corn and tomatoes to triticale	750	134	100,500	Yes
28	Ryan Katsuki	Sacramento	Shift crop type	shift from corn to triticale and Sudan grass	800	305.25	244,200	No
44	J & L Mello Farm Equipment Company	Sacramento	Shift crop type	shift from corn to triticale	500	117	58,500	No

ID	Applicant name	County	Proposed Action	Project Description	Bid Price	Bid acreage	Total Bid	Bird Benefits
56	Detar Livestock	Solano	Deficit irrigation	deficit irrigate pasture	725	187	135,575	No
58	D & R Livestock	Solano	Deficit irrigation	no supplemental watering July-Oct.	750	127.33	95,498	No
59	D & R Livestock	Solano	Deficit irrigation	deficit irrigate pasture	700	241.23	168,861	No
61	D & R Livestock	Solano	Deficit irrigation	deficit irrigate pasture	700	116	81,200	No
62	D&R livestock	Solano	Deficit irrigation	deficit irrigate pasture	700	111	77,700	No
63	Amistad Ranches, Inc.	Sacramento	Shift crop type	shift from corn and tomatoes to triticale	750	108	81,000	Yes
64	Burchell Land Company	San Joaquin	Shift crop type	shift from tomatoes to triticale	750	101	75,750	Yes
67	John Kisst	Contra Costa	Shift crop type	shift from corn safflower	800	230.9	184,720	No
69	John Kisst	Contra Costa	Shift crop type	shift from corn safflower	800	147.6	118,080	No
70	Vince Chavier	Sacramento	Shift crop type	shift from corn to wheat	550	250	137,500	No
72	Trincherro Family Estates	Sacramento	Other	use of Aquate MAX Soil Surfactant	650	157	102,050	No
73	Trincherro Family Estates	Sacramento	Other	replant vineyard with drip emitters	700	102	71,400	No
79	D&L Farms, Inc.	San Joaquin	Shift crop type	shift from corn to oats	630.11	181.6	114,428	No
82	Richard Carli	Yolo	Shift crop type	shift from grapes to small grain	600	108	64,800	No
83	Aaron Beaver	Sacramento	Shift crop type	shift from corn to non-irrigated crop	1200	114	136,800	No



ID	Applicant name	County	Proposed Action	Project Description	Bid Price	Bid acreage	Total Bid	Bird Benefits
121	Vince Chavier	Sacramento	Shift crop type	shift from corn to cereal grain or safflower	550	243.5	133,925	No
124	Clifton Court, LLC	Contra Costa	Other	Deficit irrigate tomatoes	700	515	360,500	No

# Consideration of Staff Funding Recommendations for the 2023 Delta Drought Response Pilot Program

Delta Conservancy Board Meeting  
November 16, 2022



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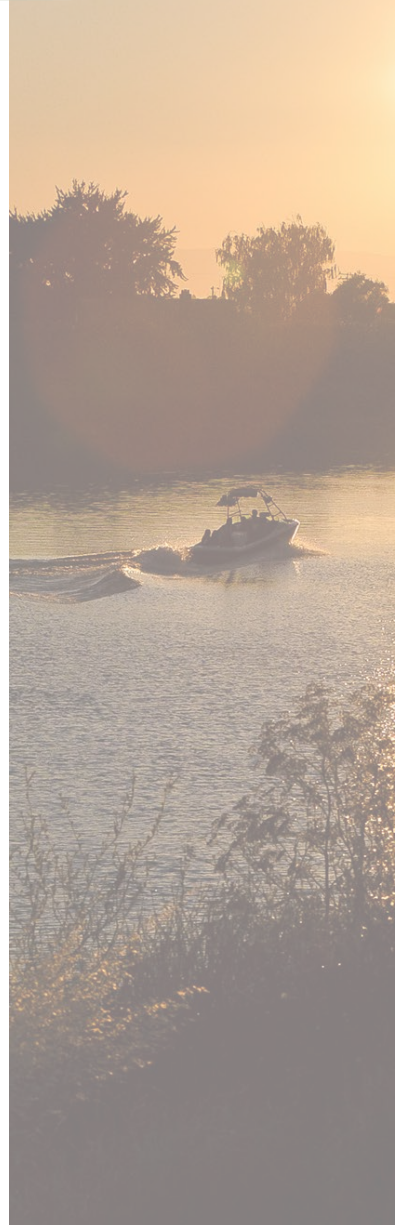
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# 2023 DDRPP Collaborators

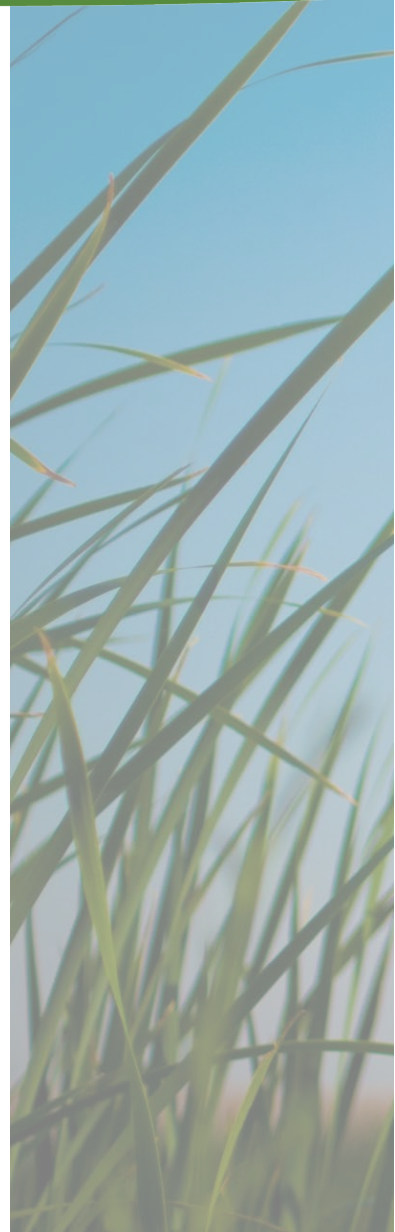
- Department of Water Resources
- Office of the Delta Watermaster
- Delta Water Users
- The Nature Conservancy
- California Department of Food and Agriculture
- University of California Cooperative Extension
- UC Davis and Merced





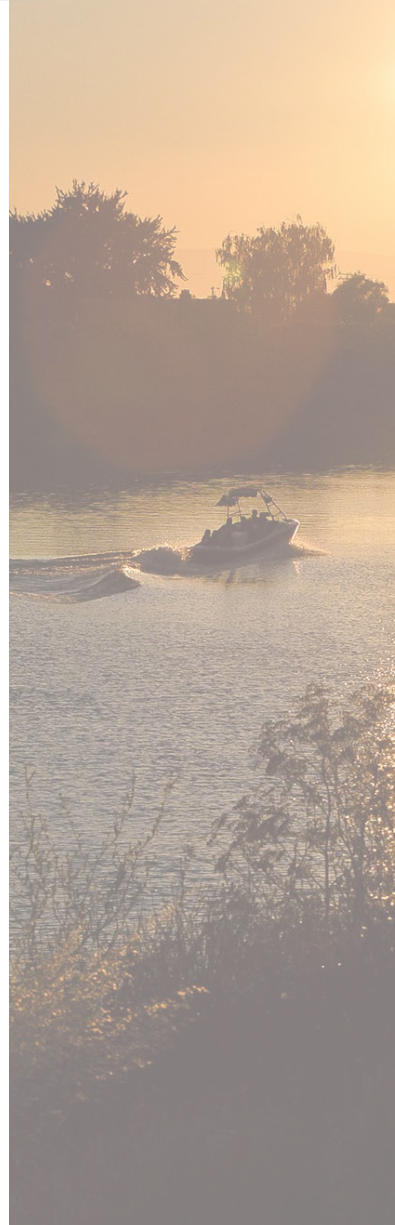
# 2023 Program Goals

- Conserve water on a net basis during the 2023 water year versus “business as usual”
- Protect Delta water quality by providing an added buffer against salinity intrusion
- Promote soil health
- Mitigate potential drought impacts on fish and migratory birds



# Key Features of 2023 DDRPP

- \$10.7 million available for incentive payments
- Reverse auction with market clearing price
- Additional incentive payments for practices benefitting migratory birds
- Selection criteria
  - Estimated water savings at the cost per acre bid, and
  - Diversity of locations
  - Diversity of proposed water conservation practices



# Program Timeline

- October 3, 2022 – Bidding opens
- October 18, 2022 – Bidding closes
- Selection committee meets
  - October 21, 2022
  - October 28, 2022
  - November 2, 2022
- Today – Special meeting of Delta Conservancy Board

# Bid Summary

- 110 qualifying bids for 29,354 acres
- \$15,674,365.10 requested
- 54 unique bidders

Practice	# Bids	Unique Bidders	Area (ac)	Funding Requested (\$)
Deficit Irrigation	30	18	8,414.36	5,026,919.50
Forgo a Cash Crop	20	20	5,531.64	2,872,806.62
Crop Type Shift	48	29	9,909.52	5,964,758.98
Other	9	5	2,063	1,038,550
Bird Benefits	28	20	9,414	771,330



# Bid Review Process

- Bids grouped by proposed water conservation practice
  - Deficit irrigation
  - Forgo a cash crop
  - Shift crop type
  - Other
- Selection aided by optimization model
  - Limits each bidder to no more than 1,000 acres
  - Estimates water savings for each bid using data from 2022 DDRPP oversight analysis
  - Budget divided among water conservation practices
  - Selection committee worked to fully resolve budget
- Other bids analyzed based on expert judgement of selection committee



# Results Summary

- 64 bids recommended for funding to implement water conservation practices on 20,296.01 acres
- \$10,857,862 total recommended

Practice	# Bids	Area (ac)	Market Clearing Price (\$)	Funding Requested (\$)
Deficit Irrigation	21	5,500	675	3,712,365
Forgo a Cash Crop	15	4,638	695	3,223,507
Crop Type Shift	20	4,779	500	2,389,535
Other	4	1,575	Various	984,375
Bird Benefits	16	6,959	Various	548,080





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Questions?





## Consideration of Updates to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy General Grant Guidelines Staff Report

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This agenda item requests Board approval of updates to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy General Grant Guidelines.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends Board approval of the updates to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy General Grant Guidelines.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy has statutory authority to provide grants to state agencies, local public agencies, and nonprofit organizations to further the goals of the Conservancy (Pub. Resources Code, § 32364.5). At the January 26, 2022 meeting, the Board approved the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy General Grant Guidelines (GGG). The General Grant Guidelines guide the Conservancy in granting funds not subject to more specific requirements identified within the funding source.

Since adopting the GGG the Conservancy has used the guidelines in awarding grants from two funding sources: a \$5,250,000 General Fund allocation for Climate Resilience, Community Access, and Natural Resource Protection and \$10,000,000 of General Funds provided to the Conservancy by the Department of Water Resources to support implementation of the 2022 Delta Drought Response Pilot Program.

Chapters on September 6, 2022, the Amended Budget Act of 2022 (Assembly Bill 179, Item 3875-101-0001 of Section 111) provided the Conservancy with a \$6,125,000 General Fund allocation for Climate Resilience, Community Access, and Natural Resource Protection, and a \$36,000,000 General Fund allocation for Nature Based Solutions: Wetland Restoration. Solicitation notices for these two funding sources will be considered under Agenda Items 6.2 and 6.3. Additionally, the Conservancy will receive \$11,480,000 of General Fund, from the Department of Water Resources, to implement the 2023 Delta Drought Response Pilot Program (Agenda Item 4).

**DESCRIPTION**

To effectively manage the funding sources described in the previous section and address recently provided statewide diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, the following edits were made to the General Grant Guidelines:

- Addition of a provision to authorize approval by the Executive Officer, in coordination with Board Chair and/or Vice Chair, of time-sensitive grants less than \$50,000. Edits were made to page 8.
- Addition of language to allow an organization to request advance payments or monthly invoicing in circumstances when standard payment and invoicing practices would prohibit successful completion of the project. Edits were made to page 17.
- Addition of a request for applicants to submit a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan that demonstrates how the project will consider disadvantaged communities, communities of color, Native American tribes and tribal communities, or other underrepresented parts of the community. The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan should also demonstrate how the applicant is part of or working in partnership with identified communities to engage in early, meaningful, and often coordination. Edits were made to page 9 and page 22.
- Addition of language clarifying indirect costs paid by the grantee exceeding twenty percent (maximum allowable for reimbursement) may qualify as cost share during the grant funding term. Edits were made to page 19.

**SUGGESTED MOTION LANGUAGE**

Move that the Board approve the updates to Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy General Grant Guidelines for use in granting funds that are not subject to more specific requirements.

**CONTACT**

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SACRAMENTO - SAN JOAQUIN

**DELTA** CONSERVANCY

*A California State Agency*

# GENERAL GRANT GUIDELINES

## NOVEMBER 16, 2022

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## **A. Introduction**

### **A1. Background**

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy (Conservancy) is a primary state agency in the implementation of ecosystem restoration in the Delta and supports efforts that advance environmental protection and the economic well-being of Delta residents. The Conservancy works collaboratively and in coordination with local communities, leading efforts to protect, enhance, and restore the Delta's economy, agriculture and working landscapes, and environment, for the benefit of the Delta region, its local communities, and the citizens of California.

### **A2. Purpose of Grant Guidelines**

These General Grant Guidelines (General Guidelines) establish the process and criteria that the Conservancy uses to administer grants for which individual grant-specific guidelines have not been adopted. Each grant provided by the Conservancy will specify the governing grant guidelines. More information can be found at: <http://deltaconservancy.ca.gov/grant-program/>.

### **A3. Contact Information**

More information is available on the Conservancy's website at [www.deltaconservancy.ca.gov](http://www.deltaconservancy.ca.gov). For questions or assistance, please contact the Delta Conservancy at (916) 375-2084 or [contact@deltaconservancy.ca.gov](mailto:contact@deltaconservancy.ca.gov).

## **B. What the Conservancy Will Consider Funding**

The Delta Conservancy supports efforts that advance environmental protection and the economic well-being of Delta residents, in accordance with statewide priorities. The Conservancy will not fund activities associated with regulatory compliance responsibilities. The Conservancy may limit any funding opportunity to one or more of the following activities that further the Conservancy's mission.

1. Protect and enhance habitat and habitat restoration.
2. Protect and preserve Delta agriculture and working landscapes.
3. Provide increased opportunities for tourism and recreation in the Delta.
4. Promote Delta legacy communities and economic vitality in the Delta, in coordination with the Delta Protection Commission.
5. Mitigate the impacts of climate change and increase climate change resilience.
6. Increase the resilience of the Delta to the effects of natural disasters such as floods and earthquakes, in coordination with the Delta Protection Commission.

7. Protect and improve water quality.
8. Assist the Delta regional economy through the operation of the conservancy's program.
9. Identify priority projects and initiatives for which funding is needed.
10. Protect, conserve, and restore the region's physical, agricultural, cultural, historical, and living resources.
11. Assist local entities in the implementation of their habitat conservation plans and natural community conservation plans.
12. Promote environmental education.

## B1. Activity Types

The Conservancy may grant funds for the following types of activities.

### Planning

Planning includes activities that prepare for and enable implementation activities. Receipt of a grant for planning activities does not guarantee that a grant will be provided for implementation activities.

Examples of planning activities include, but are not limited to:

- **Project scoping:** Partnership development, outreach to impacted parties, stakeholder coordination, negotiation of site access and land tenure
- **Planning and design:** Engineering design, planting plans, identifying appropriate best management practices
- **Environmental compliance:** Permitting, California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) activities, Delta Plan consistency
- **Science:** Developing adaptive management and monitoring plans, baseline monitoring, biological surveys, and studies that will aid and inform the implementation activities

### Pilot Projects

Pilot projects must be directly related to and inform eligible implementation activities. Pilot projects that are large in scale or duration may be considered implementation activities. The Conservancy recommends that applicants proposing a pilot project consult with Conservancy to determine the most applicable activity type.

### Implementation

Implementation includes activities such as construction or improvement of a capital asset. Planning for implementation must be complete or near completion. Implementation activities that include a construction component must, at a minimum, have design plans completed to at

least 65 percent level of development. Implementation activities that do not have a construction component must have completed plans at a level that the Conservancy determines to be appropriate to the activities to be implemented. Implementation activities may include final design and permitting activities. The Conservancy may require that the outputs of implementation specific to capital assets be maintained for a minimum number of years after conclusion of the Grant Funding Term.

CEQA and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance must be completed prior to grant award. CEQA and NEPA-related activities are not eligible for implementation funding.

### **Land Acquisition or Easement**

Land acquisition is purchase of real property. An easement is a real estate ownership right (and encumbrance on the title) granted to an individual or entity to make a limited, but typically indefinite, use of the land of another. Activities that the Conservancy may choose to fund include, but are not limited to purchase, appraisals (including water rights appraisals), negotiation, due diligence, surveys, escrow fees, title insurance, and closing costs.

### **Research, Analysis, or Support**

Research, analysis, and technical support activities provide information, data, and technical or capacity assistance that contributes to the Conservancy's mission, contributes to problem solving, advances best available science, and enables advancement of high priority initiatives. Research, Analysis, and technical assistance activities may or may not relate to specific grant-related planning or implementation activities.

## **B2. Grant Terms**

**Grant Funding Term:** The period from the Effective Start Date through the Funding End Date listed on the grant agreement during which grantees may incur grant-related expenses. The Funding Term is typically three years.

**Grant Term:** The period, which may extend beyond the end of the Grant Funding Term, during which the outcomes of implementation activities must be maintained. Acquisitions and easements must comply with the Grant Term outlined in the applicable grant agreement.

For implementation, or land acquisition and easement activities, grantees must submit a final report and invoice at the end of the Grant Funding Term but will be held to the terms of the grant agreement until the end of the Grant Term.

**Effective Start Date:** The date that the grant agreement has been fully executed which entails being signed by both parties and completion of all noticing and filing required of the

Conservancy. The Conservancy will provide grantees written confirmation of the Effective Start Date of their grant.

## C. Eligibility Requirements

### C1. Eligible Geography

The Conservancy may fund activities within or benefitting the Delta and Suisun Marsh as defined in Public Resources Code section 85058 (a map can be found at this link: <https://www.deltacouncil.ca.gov/pdf/delta-plan/figure-1-1-delta-boundaries.pdf>).

The Conservancy may fund an action outside the Delta and Suisun Marsh if the Board makes all the findings described in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Reform Act of 2009 (CWC, div. 35, §§ 85000 – 85350). Applicants applying for funds for activities outside of the Delta and Suisun Marsh must address the following:

- How the activities implement the ecosystem goals of the Delta Plan.
- How the activities are consistent with the requirements of any applicable state and federal permits.
- How the activities will provide significant benefits to the Delta.

### C2. Eligible Grant Recipients:

Grants may be awarded to:

- State agencies
- Local public agencies
- Nonprofit organizations

### C3. Ineligible Activities and Expenses

Activities that are not eligible for grant funding include but may not be limited to:

- Design, construction, operation, mitigation, or maintenance of water conveyance facilities.
- Activities dictated by a legal settlement or mandated to address a violation of, or an order (citation) to comply with, a law or regulation.
- Activities that subsidize or decrease the pre-existing mitigation obligations of any party.
- Monetary donations.
- Food or refreshments.
- Fees or expensed related to tours.
- Activities related to eminent domain processes.

- Subsidization or decrease the mitigation obligations of any party.
- Any other activities or expenses that the Conservancy deems inappropriate use of grant funding.

#### C4. Eligible Expenses

To be eligible for grant funding, activities must be conducted, and expenses must be incurred during the Grant Funding Term. Other than land acquisition costs, ~~in all but the most extenuating circumstances,~~ grant funding will be paid in arrears on a reimbursement basis. All expenses require supporting documentation and are subject to audit. ~~With rare exception,~~ Funding for all grant related activities will be dispersed quarterly in arrears for all costs save for the cost of land acquisition, for which funds will be transferred into escrow once all requirements of the Land Acquisition Checklist have been met. Some grant funds may allow for advanced payment of funds rather than reimbursement and payments on a monthly rather than quarterly basis. If reimbursement and quarterly payments are cost prohibitive for your organization, we encourage you to work with Conservancy staff to determine if advanced payments are allowable in your case.

##### *Direct Costs*

Direct costs are for work specified in the scope of work, terms, and conditions of the grant agreement, and that are distinctly related to tasks and expenditures to implement activities as described in the grant agreement. The Conservancy will fund direct costs related to personnel services, operating expenses (general), operating expenses (subcontractor), operating expenses (equipment), land acquisition, and land easement costs.

##### *Indirect Costs*

Indirect costs do not have a specific direct relationship to the project but are required for completion of the grant activities. The Conservancy may elect to include or exclude indirect costs as an eligible expense for a specific funding opportunity.

#### D. Grant Proposal and Determination Process

Funding opportunities, along with instructions and any application forms and templates specific to each opportunity, will be available through the Conservancy's website.

Grants may be competitive or non-competitive in nature. The Conservancy may define a timeframe in which it accepts proposals or accept proposals on a continuous basis. If a timeframe for proposals is specified, only proposals submitted by the submission deadline will be considered.



The Conservancy will post notice of any public workshop opportunities on its website. For competitive grants, the Conservancy will post responses to questions of universal relevance on its website. The Conservancy Board has final decision-making authority regarding grants and grant funding.

The Conservancy may use a two-step process that consists of a concept proposal and a full proposal or a one-step process that requires only a full proposal. If concept proposals are required, full proposals will only be accepted if a concept proposal was submitted.

## D1. Concept Proposal

**Step 1:** Concept Proposal Submittal: The applicant submits a concise proposal that describes at a high level the proposed activities and budget that will form the basis for a full proposal. Applicants may, and are encouraged to, consult with the Conservancy during the drafting of their concept proposal.

**Step 2:** Concept Proposal Review: Conservancy staff will review concept proposals and provide feedback to all applicants to aid them in assembling a complete, clear, and responsive full proposal. Concept proposals will not be scored. All applicants will be provided with written feedback regarding their concept proposals, as well as an opportunity to meet with Conservancy staff to discuss feedback. Feedback is provided on aspects such as:

- Description of Activities
- Project Team
- Budget
- Cost Share and/or Cost Leveraging
- Alignment with State Priorities
- Long Term Benefit
- Readiness
- Local Support
- Scientific Merit

## D2. Full Proposal

**Step 1:** The applicant submits a proposal that comprehensively describes the proposed activities, budget, and applicant and others that will conduct activities through the grant. The full proposal provides the information upon which Conservancy staff and external reviewers, if applicable, base their scoring and/or recommendations for Board consideration. Each application must include the required attachments, in the specified file type (Word or Excel), and use the templates that the Conservancy provides. For more information on components of a full proposal, see Proposal Requirements section below.

**Step 2: Administrative Review:** After the submission deadline, the Conservancy will conduct an administrative review of all full proposals to check for eligibility, consistency with grant requirements, and completeness. Proposals that fail to meet the administrative review requirements may not receive further consideration.

**Step 3: Site Visits:** Conservancy staff will conduct site visits for all implementation, pilot, and land acquisition or easement grants. At its discretion, the Conservancy may conduct site visits for planning, or research, analysis, and support grants. Applicants may be required to accompany Conservancy staff on site visits. Adjustments will be made in consideration of public health as needed.

**Step 4: Full Proposal Evaluation:** Full proposals will be evaluated and may be numerically scored by Conservancy staff. As needed to ensure review and evaluation appropriate to the proposed activities, the Conservancy may utilize independent reviewers from state, federal, or local agencies, academia, non-profit organizations, or other entities or individuals with technical or subject matter expertise.

Proposals that do not provide enough information to allow reviewers to adequately evaluate them may not be considered.

Full proposals will be evaluated using criteria, which may or may not include numerical scoring, specific to the funding opportunity; evaluation criteria will be specified for each funding opportunity. The Conservancy may specify a minimum score that must be obtained in order for staff to consider recommending the Board fund the proposal. Achieving the minimum score does not guarantee that the proposal will be recommended for funding, that a grant award will be made, or that an applicant will receive the requested funding. The Conservancy may specify key evaluation criteria, each of which must be deemed adequate by reviewers, regardless of the adequacy of other components of the proposal, to be considered for funding.

### D3. Board Consideration

All final determinations regarding grant funding will be made the by the Conservancy Board at a public meeting. [The Delta Conservancy Executive Officer, with coordination of the Conservancy Board Chair and/or Vice Chair, may award grant funding for projects less than or equal to \\$50,000 in time-sensitive situations.](#) Staff recommendations regarding grant funding, and final scores, if applicable, will be posted on the Conservancy's website and shared with all applicants **at least** nine **days** in advance of the Board's consideration of grant funding. All applicants and members of the public will have the opportunity to appear before the Board at the public meeting. Any applicant whose proposal was not recommended for funding may contest the recommendations by notifying Conservancy staff in writing by 5:00 p.m. at least five business days prior to the Board meeting at which funding recommendations will be considered. The

notification must describe the specific aspects of the staff recommendation that the applicant wishes to contest and provide information relevant to the grant proposal that they wish the Board to consider.

If proposals for a funding opportunity exceed the funds available, the Conservancy may choose to award partial funding to one or more proposals. The Board may also choose to designate for award proposals that were initially denied funding, should additional funding become available. If a proposal does not demonstrate strong local support or a lack of significant conflict from local interests, the Conservancy reserves the right to not fund activities or to require that the conflict is satisfactorily resolved before awarding funding. The Board may, within its discretion, approve a conditional award of funds.

#### D4. Grant Agreement

If funding for a grant proposal is approved, Conservancy staff will coordinate with the applicant to complete a grant agreement that specifies the scope of work, reporting requirements, specific performance measures, invoicing protocols, funding disbursement, and other terms and conditions of the grant.

### E. Proposal Requirements

Required components of all full proposals includes, but are not limited to:

- Financial Management System Questionnaire and Cost Allocation Plan
- Schedule and List of Deliverables
- Line Item Budget by Task
- Justification of Expenses and How Determined to be Fair and Reasonable
- Funding by Source
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan that shows how the proposed project will benefit disadvantaged communities, people of color, Native American tribes and communities, or other underrepresented part of the community. The plan should also demonstrate how the applicant is part of or working in partnership with that community. (This language has been included in the full proposal template.)

The following attachments are required if relevant to the proposed activities:

- California Conservation Corps Consultation
- Acquisition Table
- Performance Measures Table

The following supplementary materials are required if relevant to the proposed activities:

- Authorization or Resolution to Apply
- Organizational documents
- Acquisition information (see [E12. LAND](#) Acquisition in this document for more information)
- Maps and site plans
- Letter from landowner/water rights holder (if not the applicant)
- Final CEQA documents
- Covered action checklist
- Letters of support and cost share commitment letters
- Resolutions of support from applicable local government agencies

### E1. Conflict of Interest

Applicants are subject to state and federal conflict of interest laws. If an applicant has formerly worked for the Conservancy, presently works with the State of California, or has an existing or previous contract with the Conservancy and is contemplating applying for a grant, the applicant should consult with Conservancy staff to determine eligibility. Applicable statutes include, but are not limited to, Public Contract Code sections 10365.5, 10410, and 10411.

All proposals must identify current and prior relationships of all individuals or entities that will directly or indirectly receive grant funding or be responsible for substantive decision-making responsibility.

### E2. Privacy Rights

Once an applicant has submitted a proposal to the Conservancy, any privacy rights, as well as other confidentiality protections afforded by law with respect to the application package, are waived. All proposals are public records under the California Government Code sections 6250-6276.48 and will be provided to the public upon request.

### E3. California Conservation Corps

Funding opportunities may require applicants to consult with the California Conservation Corps and the California Association of Local Conservation Corps (Corps) to determine the feasibility of using their services to implement activities unless noted exceptions apply. Planning activities and acquisition activities are generally exempt. If an applicant submits a proposal to the Conservancy for activities for which it has been determined that Corps services can be used, the applicant must identify in the proposal the appropriate Corps and the component(s) of the activities in which they will be involved, and include estimated costs for those services, and enter into a contract with the Corps if awarded a grant. Even if not required, applicants are encouraged to consult with the Corps to explore opportunities for collaboration.

## E4. Environmental Compliance

Grant funded activities must comply with applicable state and federal laws and regulations, including the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Delta Plan, and other environmental permitting requirements. Conservancy staff may be able to assist with the compliance process; however, the applicant is solely responsible for compliance. Applicants should be prepared to submit any permits, surveys, or reports that support the status of their environmental compliance.

For projects subject to CEQA, the Conservancy will not serve as a responsible agency unless there is no other public agency responsible for carrying out or approving the project for which the applicant seeks funding, in which case the Conservancy may serve as the lead agency. If the Conservancy is proposed to act as the lead agency for the project, the applicant must coordinate with the Conservancy, beginning at the concept proposal stage if concept proposals are applicable to the funding opportunity.

For proposed activities that include an action that is likely to be deemed a covered action pursuant to the California Water Code section 85057.5, the applicant is responsible for ensuring consistency with the Delta Plan. The Conservancy encourages all applicants to communicate with the Delta Stewardship Council to understand if their activities will need to certify their consistency with the Delta Plan. For all implementation activities, a covered action checklist must be submitted with the full proposal. For those activities that will need to certify consistency, the proposal shall include a description of how consistency will be achieved and may include in its budget the funding necessary to complete related tasks, including the development of an Adaptive Management Plan. The activities must be certified as consistent with the Delta Plan before funds are disbursed for construction or the physical implementation of the activities. If the Conservancy is proposed to act as the covered action lead agency for the proposed activities, the applicant must coordinate with the Conservancy, beginning at the concept proposal stage if concept proposals are applicable to the funding opportunity.

## E5. Water Rights

Funded activities that address stream flows and water use shall comply with the Water Code as well as any applicable state or federal laws or regulations. Any activities that would require a change to water rights, including, but not limited to, bypass flows, point of diversion, location of use, purpose of use, or off-stream storage shall demonstrate in their grant proposal an understanding of the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) processes, timelines, and costs necessary for approvals by SWRCB and the ability to meet those timelines within the grant funding term. In addition, any activities that involve modification of water rights for an adjudicated stream shall identify the required legal process for the change as well as associated

legal costs. Proposals to acquire a permanent dedication of water must be in accordance with section 1707 of the Water Code. Specifically, the SWRCB must specify that the water proposed for acquisition is in addition to the water that is needed to meet regulatory requirements (CWC, § 79709(a)). Applicants may apply for funding from the Conservancy to complete the section 1707 petition process, but the SWRCB must approve the petition prior to the dispersal of funds for any other activities. Prior to its completion, any water right acquisition must be supported by a water rights appraisal approved by the Department of General Services, Real Property Services Section.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to comply with SWRCB regulations regarding the diversion and use of water, including ensuring that the applicant has adequate water rights to complete the activities and that the activities will not reduce or otherwise affect the rights of other water rights holders (CWC, § 79711(d)). For implementation activities and pilot projects that require water application (e.g., restoration, working lands enhancements, etc.), applicants must submit a statement number or application number for the water right they propose to use, as well as a short narrative demonstrating that the activities' water use has been considered, is reasonable, and that there is sufficient water to implement and maintain the activities without causing adverse impacts to downstream users or surrounding landowners. Conservancy staff will consult with the office of the Delta Watermaster regarding activities that propose to use water. The Delta Watermaster will review the water rights affiliated with the proposed activities and will provide an informal opinion as to whether these water rights appear to be subject to challenge. When considering if a proposal should be recommended for funding, Conservancy staff will consider the Watermaster's input and any issues identified during review.

If applicable, applicants must provide a letter of support from the entity providing water for implementation activities. The letter must verify that the water rights holder has the right to deliver water to the property on which the proposed activities will be implemented, and that the water rights holder recognizes its obligation to provide water to that property for the purposes of implementing the proposed activities. The Conservancy may at any time request that an applicant or grantee provide additional proof that it has a legal right to divert water and sufficient documentation regarding actual water availability and use.

## E6. Best Available Science

All proposals with a scientific component will be evaluated on the scientific basis of the proposed activities. Applicants must provide a description of the scientific foundation of their activities, including scientific literature, studies, or expert opinion that they have consulted. Applicants must use the best available science when planning and implementing their proposed

activities. A more complete review of best available science can be found in [Appendix 1A of the Delta Plan](#).

Applicants proposing ecosystem restoration and enhancement activities are encouraged to take into account the landscape considerations and guidelines discussed in *A Delta Renewed: A Guide to Science-Based Ecological Restoration in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta* (A Delta Renewed, SFEI-ASC, 2016) when determining appropriate habitat restoration or enhancement actions. All applicants are encouraged to consult relevant climate change related resources, which include, but are not limited to: [California Natural Resources Agency's Safeguarding California Plan: 2018 Update](#) (particularly the Biodiversity and Habitat Section), [Cal-Adapt](#) (includes climate tools, data, and resources), the [California Climate Commons](#), Point Blue Conservation Science's [Climate-Smart Restoration Toolkit](#), *Adapting to Rising Tides* ([Bay Area](#), [Eastern Contra Costa County](#), and [Contra Costa County](#)), [Delta Adapts](#), and the Ocean Protection Council's [2017 Rising Seas in California: An Update on Sea-Level Rise Science](#).

## E7. Adaptive Management

Adaptive management is a framework and flexible decision-making process that advances scientific understanding and increases the likelihood for activities to achieve desired goals, objectives, outcomes, and outputs in the face of uncertainties such as climate change or ecological response to management decisions. Long-term management is related to adaptive management, and the two terms are frequently conflated. Adaptive management describes the scientific process in which an entire project is embedded, whereas long-term management deals with the ongoing stewardship and maintenance. The process for collecting and analyzing science-based information – a critical component of adaptive management – should be a factor in long-term management planning and decisions. The Conservancy will require all applicants, as relevant, to develop and utilize science-based adaptive management that is consistent with the [Delta Plan's Nine-Step Adaptive Management Framework](#). Resources and support can be found through the [Interagency Adaptive Management Coordination](#) webpage.

Depending on the status and type of proposed activities, adaptive management expectations will vary. Planning, research, analysis, or support activities may not have all nine steps fully developed but are expected to describe how they will be considered and incorporated as the activities progress. Conservation easement proposals must describe the application of an adaptive management framework but may not have much leeway to alter easement terms. Activities that employ well-established best management practices do not carry the same burden of proof as those attempting new, untested approaches. Since the adaptive management approach should be integrated throughout activities, its description will be incorporated into many sections of the proposal. Where relevant, applicants will be asked to

summarize their approach to adaptive management in the Scientific Merit section of the full proposal.

## E8. Performance Measures

Performance measures are used to track progress toward project goals and objectives. They provide a means of reliably measuring and reporting the implementation and effectiveness of a project and how it contributes value to the Delta, Suisun Marsh, and the state. Performance measures will be developed to reflect the unique benefits of individual projects. Conservancy staff may help in development of performance measures. All implementation, land acquisition, land easement, and pilot project proposals must include a performance monitoring and assessment framework that identifies the performance measures that will be used to demonstrate public benefits for the required length of time years following the end of the Grant Funding Term, how they will be monitored and assessed, and how monitoring data will be reported.

## E9. Monitoring and Assessment Framework

In addition to identifying performance measures and long-term management, some funding opportunities may require applicants to describe their approach to monitoring and assessing performance. Applicants should incorporate standardized monitoring approaches, where applicable, into their monitoring and assessment frameworks and evaluate opportunities to coordinate with existing monitoring efforts or produce information that can readily be integrated into such efforts. If an applicant determines that the use of standardized approaches is not appropriate, the proposal must provide a clear justification and a description of the proposed approach. Examples of standardized methods and related data portals for environmental activities include:

- **Wetland and riparian restoration:** [Wetland and Riparian Area Monitoring Program](#) (WRAMP) framework for data collection, [EcoAtlas](#) for data reporting
- **Water quality, toxicity, and bioassessment data:** [Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program](#) (SWAMP) for standardized methods and data collection, [California Environmental Data Exchange Network](#) (CEDEN) for data reporting
- **Coastal salmonids:** [California Coastal Monitoring Program](#) for both methods and reporting

Grantees must add projects into [EcoAtlas Project Tracker](#) as relevant and provide periodic updates.

Environmental data and information collected through Conservancy grants must be made visible, accessible, and independently understandable to general users in a timely manner,



except where limited by law, regulation, policy, or security requirements. All data collected and created is a required deliverable.

## E10. Long-Term Management

The Conservancy may require applicants to describe future management activities, explaining how the activities, once implemented, will be stewarded for a specified timeframe for capital assets. Properties restored, enhanced, or protected, and facilities constructed or enhanced with funds provided by the Conservancy shall be operated, used, and maintained consistent with the purposes of the grant.

## E11. Land Tenure

For activities conducted on land that is not owned by the grantee, the grantee may be required to demonstrate that they have adequate site control prior to the disbursement of grant funds. At the time of application, proposals for activities that require site access may be required to describe the status of site control and provide a letter of support from the landowner(s) of the activities site(s) if the applicant is not the landowner. Once funds are awarded, grantees may be required to submit documentation showing that they have adequate site control to implement the proposed activities. For implementation activities, grantees may be required to submit documentation proving that they have adequate control to improve or restore the site, and to maintain the outputs of the activities for the required timeframe. Grantees may assign the responsibility to implement, monitor, and maintain activities and their outputs, but will still be accountable for any assigned tasks. If the grantee owns the land on which the activities are being conducted, the grantee may be required to record the grant agreement against the deed of the property. At the discretion of the Conservancy, a Notice of Unrecorded Grant Agreement may be substituted for recording the grant agreement against the deed of the property. If the grantee does not own the land on which the activities will be implemented, a landowner access agreement may be required as a condition of the grant agreement and may be required to be executed and recorded before funds are disbursed. Landowner access agreements must be signed by the grantee and the landowner(s) and must include a legal description of the land on which the activities are being conducted; the Conservancy will approve as to form. A landowner access agreement template can be found on the Conservancy's [Grant Program web page](#). Grantees that must submit a landowner access agreement, who opt not to use the template, must submit an alternate agreement that conforms to the terms of the template. Costs associated with the development of land tenure agreements may be included in the grant budget but cannot be reimbursed until the landowner access agreement is approved as to form by the Conservancy. The Conservancy may also require recording of a landowner access agreements before disbursing grant funds. For lands being acquired with Conservancy grant funds, the Land Acquisitions section, below, describes land tenure requirements.

## E12. Land Acquisition

The Conservancy may award grant funds for land acquisition. Land acquisitions must adhere to the following requirements.

- Property must be acquired from a willing seller and in compliance with current laws governing acquisition of real property by public agencies in an amount not to exceed fair market value, as approved by the state.
- If a signed purchase and sale or option agreement is unavailable to be submitted with the application, a Willing Seller Letter is required from each landowner indicating they are a willing participant in the proposed real estate transaction. The letter should clearly identify the parcels to be purchased and state that “if grant funds are awarded, the seller is willing to enter into negotiations for sale of the property at a purchase price not to exceed fair market value.”
- Once a proposal is submitted, another property cannot be substituted for the property specified in the application. Therefore, it is imperative that the applicant demonstrate that the seller is negotiating in good faith, and that discussions have proceeded to a point of confidence.
- The Department of General Services (DGS) must review and approve all appraisals of real property. Appraisals must comply with section 5096.510 of the Public Resources Code. The Conservancy will not directly pay the Department of General Services to review and approve the required appraisal; the grantee must pay DGS directly for this expense and seek reimbursement from the Conservancy.

Land acquisitions are also subject to a specific set of additional requirements that must be met prior to and immediately after closing escrow. The Conservancy will provide a Land Acquisition Checklist to assist applicants and grantees. Note that the Conservancy will do an assessment of mineral rights based on information provided by the applicant. Based on its assessment, the Conservancy will determine whether the risk posed by exercising existing mineral rights and the related consequences for intended conservation purposes is acceptable to the Conservancy. If the Conservancy determines that the risk is not acceptable and the risk cannot be reduced to an acceptable level within a reasonable amount of time, then the Conservancy may rescind the grant award.

In addition to the purchase of real property, applicants may seek reimbursement for costs associated with personnel time, appraisal and appraisal review, due diligence costs, closing costs, and other costs related to the acquisition of real property. In total, other costs related to the acquisition of real property may not exceed 10 percent of the land acquisition cost that is being requested from the Conservancy. The cost of land acquisition may not be factored into the indirect cost calculation. Funding for all grant related activities will be dispersed quarterly in

arrears for all costs save for the cost of land acquisition, for which funds will be transferred into escrow once all requirements of the Land Acquisition Checklist have been met. Some grant funds may allow for advanced payment of funds rather than reimbursement and payments on a monthly rather than quarterly basis. If reimbursement and quarterly payments are cost prohibitive for your organization, work with Conservancy staff to determine if advanced payments are allowable in your case.

Land acquisitions must address all requirements pertinent to implementation activities, including the development of scientific outputs and outcomes and a performance monitoring and assessment framework. The following additional information is required at the time of application:

- A table including parcel numbers, acreage, willing seller name and address, breakdown of how the funds will be budgeted, and an acquisition schedule (a template is available on the Conservancy's web page)
- Copy of the Purchase and Sale or Option Agreement, or Willing Seller Letter(s)
- Appraisal or justification of estimated Fair Market Value
- Map showing lands that will be acquired, including parcel lines and numbers

Proposals for acquisition of real property must also address:

- The intended use of the property
- The manner in which the land will be managed
- How the cost of ongoing operations, maintenance, and management will be provided, including an analysis of the maintaining entity's financial capacity to support those ongoing costs
- How payments will be provided in lieu of taxes, assessments, or charges otherwise due to local government, if applicable

### E13. Budget

Using the Budget Tables provided with the full proposal application materials, applicants must identify all expenses for which Conservancy funds are being requested. **All budget numbers must be demonstrated to be fair and reasonable, consistent across budget tables, and fully explained and justified. Related-party contracts are prohibited.** All expenses must be eligible and be organized by to the following cost categories.

- **Personnel Services:** Personnel rates may only include salary and wages, fringe benefits, and payroll taxes. Compensation for personnel services includes all compensation paid by the organization for services of employees during the Grant Funding Term. The expenditures are allowable to the extent that the total compensation for individual

employees is supported and reasonable for the services rendered. Fringe benefit expenses may include holidays, vacation, sick leave, actual employer contributions or expenses for social security, employee insurance, workmen's compensation insurance, and pension plan costs. Grantees must provide timesheets with 100 percent time accounting to the Conservancy to support invoices.

- **Operating Expenses (General):** General Operating Expenses include all materials and supplies, such as field supplies, office supplies, permits and fees, travel expenses, and other general expenses required to directly implement grant activities. All costs should be allocated according to the most equitable basis practical. During invoicing, all expenses must be supported by receipts or other documentation payment has been made (not just incurred).
- **Operating Expenses (Subcontractor):** Subcontractor expenses, including equipment rentals, are allowable if work to be completed or services to be provided are directly linked to the proposed activities and are consistent with the tasks and schedule provided in the proposal. Note that subcontractor expenses may not be factored into the indirect cost calculation. Grantees must provide copies of all contracts to the Conservancy.
- **Operating Expenses (Equipment):** Equipment includes nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and a unit price of \$5,000 or more, as well as theft-sensitive items of equipment costing less than \$5,000 (such as electronics). All equipment purchased or built by the Grantee is owned by the Grantee during the Funding Term. The Conservancy will only reimburse for a cost proportionate to the usage of the equipment for the activities being funded by the Conservancy. Equipment purchases are allowable, if specified as a requirement for the completion of the activities. However, justification for the purchase of equipment must be provided at the time of application. The Grantee is required to maintain accountability for all property purchased and to keep, and make available to the Grantor, adequate and appropriate records of all equipment purchased with grant funds. Grantees must keep an inventory record including the date acquired, total cost, serial number, model identification, and any other information or description necessary to identify said equipment for the duration of the Grant Funding Term. Note that equipment expenses may not be factored into the indirect cost calculation.
- **Acquisition Cost:** The acquisition cost includes only the purchase of real property or conservation easement. In total, appraisal and appraisal review, personnel time, due diligence costs, closing costs, and other costs related to the acquisition of real property or conservation easement may not exceed 10 percent of the acquisition cost that is being requested from the Conservancy. Note that the acquisition cost may not be factored into the indirect cost calculation.

- **Indirect Costs:** Indirect costs that do not have a specific direct relationship to the grant activities but are a requirement for the completion of the activities may be eligible for reimbursement. If allowed, indirect costs may only be applied as a percentage of personnel services and will be limited to the percentage set by the Conservancy, not to exceed twenty percent of personnel services. Indirect costs over twenty percent that are paid by the grantee may qualify as cost share for the grant. -Indirect costs must be reasonable, allocable, applicable, and must provide benefit to the grant funded activities. Indirect costs may include expenses such as administrative support (e.g., personnel time for accounting, executive, information technology, or other staff who support the implementation of the proposed activities but are not directly billing their time to the grant) and office-related expenses (e.g., insurance, rent, utilities, printing/copying equipment, computer equipment, and janitorial expenses), and other similar expenses that are not direct expenses and are not included in the hourly rate for personnel services that are a direct expense for the grant. Indirect rates are strictly enforced for all applicants. Applicants must provide their indirect cost rate, explain the methodology for calculating it, and describe the cost pool used to calculate the indirect cost rate. Indirect costs are subject to audit and must be documented by the grantee.

Budget Tables should include costs for the tasks described in the full proposal and must demonstrate how grant management and reporting costs will be funded, either by the Conservancy grant funds or by cost share or state-leveraged funds. Applicants should review other Conservancy requirements that may be eligible for Conservancy grant funding (e.g., Delta Plan consistency, developing a landowner access agreement, etc.) and include these in their budgets where applicable.

Applicants must also identify cost share contributions if receiving funding for the activities from a source other than the Conservancy.

#### E14. Cost Share and State-Leveraged Funds

Cost share is the portion of the cost for proposed grant activities borne by private, local, and/or federal funding partners (other state funds may not count toward the cost share). Cost sharing encourages collaboration and cooperation and the Conservancy may require cost share for grant funding opportunities. Even if cost match is not required for a particular funding opportunity, applicants are encouraged to cost share to support their proposed activities. Cost share percent is calculated by dividing the total cost share from federal, local, or private sources by the total dollar amount requested from the Conservancy.

In-kind contribution is defined as all non-cash contributions to the grant activities from private, local, and/or federal funding partners, that have an assigned value; this may include volunteer

time, supplies, and equipment. The Conservancy may require that in-kind contributions be matched with cash cost share at a one-to-one ratio (for example, if a grant has \$25,000 of cash cost share, the maximum qualifying in-kind contribution is \$25,000).

The Conservancy will also consider, and may provide points if scored, for the leveraging of state funds. Leveraged funds do not count toward cost share. Applicants stating that they are leveraging other state funds must include commitment letters from leverage partners when submitting the full proposal, and funds must be spent during the Grant Funding Term. The Conservancy may require that in-kind contributions from state leveraged sources be matched with cash cost share at a one-to-one ratio.

Only commitments made explicitly for the proposed activities may count as cost share, in-kind contribution, or leveraged funds. Applicants stating that they have a cost share, in-kind, or leveraged funds must include commitment letters from partners at the time the full proposal is submitted; the letters must specifically confirm the dollar amount and/or in-kind cash value committed. The Conservancy may require that Cost share, in-kind contributions, and leveraged funds be spent during the Grant Funding Term.

### **E15. Financial Management Systems Questionnaire and Cost Allocation Plan**

A Financial Management Systems Questionnaire and Cost Allocation Plan form is required from all applicants at the time of full proposal (a template will be available through the Conservancy's website). The information provided will be used to assess the applicant's financial capacity for managing the proposed grant.

The Cost Allocation Plan should be tailored to fit the specific policies of the applicant. The plan requires information about how the applicant allocates costs to ensure an equitable distribution of costs to programs. Recipients must have a system in place to equitably charge costs.

### **E16. Demonstration of Local Support**

Applicants are expected to demonstrate local support by describing in their proposals both public and institutional support for the activities, including how the community and stakeholders are engaged in the activities. Letters of support may also be included. It is the applicant's responsibility to contact, seek support from, and coordinate with applicable state agencies, cities, counties, local districts, other public and private stakeholders, and surrounding landowners. If an applicant has a specific resolution of support from the affected city, county, or local district, it should be included with the full proposal to facilitate the overall assessment process. A resolution of support from the Board of Supervisors from the county in which the activities are proposed to be conducted may be required as part of the full proposal.

## E17. Local Notifications

The Conservancy will notify local government agencies – such as counties, cities, and local districts – and tribal organizations about eligible grant activities in their area being considered for funding. The Conservancy will also notify the applicable public water agency, levee, flood control, or drainage agency (when appropriate). The individual Conservancy Board members representing each of the five Delta counties will also be notified and may wish to communicate with the affected entities. For land acquisitions, the Conservancy will coordinate and consult with the Delta Protection Commission and the city or county in which a grant is proposed to be implemented or an interest in real property is proposed to be acquired. The Conservancy will work with the grantee to make all reasonable efforts to address concerns raised by local government entities.

## E18. Consultation and Cooperation with State and Local Agencies

It is the responsibility of grantees to coordinate and cooperate with the appropriate state and local agencies with interests in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. State Departments may include but are not limited to: the Central Valley Flood Protection Board, the Delta Stewardship Council, the California Natural Resources Agency's EcoRestore program, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Delta Protection Commission (grantees are encouraged to utilize their Good Neighbor Checklist as relevant). It also may include applicable Native American tribal governments.

If activities are proposed to be funded by multiple agencies or entities, the Conservancy strongly encourages applicants to contact the applicable agencies or departments prior to applying for funding to discuss options for funding activities. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that proposals submitted to each potential funder describe the specific work that will be funded by all applicable entities. The proposed scope of each proposal must be distinct and without overlap. Applicants must describe the overall project and how the proposals relate.

## E19. Disadvantaged and Severely Disadvantaged Communities

Many communities in the Legal Delta and Suisun Marsh are considered disadvantaged communities (DAC) or severely disadvantaged communities (SDAC). A DAC is a community with a median household income less than 80 percent of the statewide average (based on the U.S. Census). Applicants must identify any disadvantaged communities that overlap with the footprint of the proposed activities or would be served by the proposed activities. Mapping resources available for the purpose of identifying SDACs and DACs by census tract and/or block group are available on the Parks for All Californians website

(<http://www.parksforcalifornia.org/communities>) and the Disadvantaged Communities Mapping Tool (<https://gis.water.ca.gov/app/dacs/>). The Conservancy may consider other means of identifying SDACs and DACs as well.

## E20. Coordination with Tribes, Communities of Color, and other Underrepresented Groups

Applicants are strongly recommended to engage in early, meaningful, and often coordination with Native American tribes and tribal communities, communities of color and other underrepresented groups. If the proposal is citing benefit to one or more community, the applicant must demonstrate how they are working with that community to ensure community support.

## F. Requirements if Funded

### F1. Grant Provisions

For each awarded grant, the Conservancy will develop an individual grant agreement with detailed provisions and requirements specific to approved activities.

- Grant awards are conditional upon funds being available from the state (see Loss of Funding section, below).
- For implementation activities, funds for construction or physical implementation will not be disbursed until all required environmental compliance and permitting documents have been received by the Conservancy, including certification of consistency with the Delta Plan.
- As part of the grant agreement, the grantee is required to certify that it is the grantee's responsibility to comply with all federal, state, and local laws that apply to the activities.
- Grant funds will not be paid if any of the following conditions occur:
  - The grantee has been non-responsive or does not meet the conditions outlined in the grant agreement.
  - The activities have received alternative funding from other sources that duplicates the portion of work or costs funded by a Conservancy grant.
  - The activities have changed and is no longer eligible for funding.
  - Work was conducted outside of the grant funding term.
  - The applicant requests to end the grant.

### F2. Reporting

All grantees must to provide regular progress reports and a final report. The final report must be approved by Conservancy staff prior to the release of the final disbursement of grant funds. Specific reporting requirements will be included in the grant agreement.



### F3. Amendments

Applicants should very carefully consider the Scope of Work and budget for the proposed activities as amendments to grant agreements will generally only be considered by the Conservancy for unavoidable circumstances where no other feasible solution exists. If an unanticipated situation arises which jeopardizes the approved activities, it is imperative that the grantee contact the Conservancy Grant Manager as soon as possible to discuss options.

### F4. Signage and Recognition

Grantees shall inform the public of activities received funds through the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy. Grantees shall recognize the Conservancy on signs, websites, press or promotional materials, advertisements, publications, digital content, or exhibits that they prepare or approve and that reference grant-funded activities. For implementation activities, grantees shall post signs at activity sites acknowledging the source of the funds. Size, location, number of signs, and draft design shall be approved by the Conservancy. Whenever possible, Grantees shall notify the Conservancy at least ten working days prior to any public event or media feature publicizing the accomplishments and/or results of the activities and provide the opportunity for attendance and participation by Conservancy representatives.



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**Consideration of Draft Solicitation Notices for Climate Resilience, Community Access, and Natural Resource Protection (CAR) Funding; and Nature Based Solutions (NBS): Wetland Restoration Funding Staff Report**

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This agenda item presents the draft solicitation notices for Climate Resilience, Community Access, and Natural Resource Protection (CAR); and Nature Based Solutions: Wetland Restoration (NBS: WR) funding for Board Consideration.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Board approve the draft solicitation notices for Climate Resilience, Community Access, and Natural Resource Protection and Nature Based Solutions: Wetland Restoration funding detailed in Agenda Items 6.2 and 6.3, respectively.

**BACKGROUND**

Chaptered on September 6, 2022, the Amended Budget Act of 2022 (Assembly Bill 179, Item 3875-101-0001 of Section 111) provided the Conservancy with \$6,125,000 for projects that support Climate Resilience, Community Access, and Natural Resource Protection and \$36,000,000 for projects that support Nature Based Solutions: Wetland Restoration.

**DESCRIPTION**

The proposed draft solicitation notices for CAR and NBS: WR are detailed in agenda item 6.2 and 6.3, respectively. The Conservancy will use the General Grant Guidelines to administer CAR and NBS:WR grants. The solicitation notices include programmatic goals of the funding source, proposal submission process and timeline, and evaluation criteria.

Both funding opportunities will be administered as non-competitive grant programs without proposal submission deadlines. Proposals will be processed in two steps: concept proposal and full proposal. Conservancy staff will conduct a viability assessment after a concept proposal is submitted and then work with the applicant to develop a full proposal for Board consideration. Proposals will be evaluated using criteria derived from the Conservancy's Proposition 1 and Proposition 68 grant programs and are described in the solicitation notices.

Goals of each funding program are unique to the funding source. Grants funded through CAR funding should be multi-benefit projects that advance the state's initiatives to build climate resilience, expand outdoor access for all, and advance California's 30x30 goal to conserve and protect 30 percent of the state's land and coastal waters by 2030. Grants funded through NBS: WR should support restoration, conservation, and climate resilience for wetlands in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and Suisun Marsh.

Conservancy staff will make grant funding opportunities publicly available by posting the solicitation notices on the Conservancy website and the California Grants Portal ([grants.ca.gov](https://grants.ca.gov)).

**SUGGESTED MOTION LANGUAGE**

Move to approve the solicitation notices for Climate Resilience, Community Access, and Natural Resource Protection; and Nature Based Solutions: Wetland Restoration Funding.

**CONTACT**

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**DELTA** CONSERVANCY

*A California State Agency*

**2022-2023 Climate, Access, and Resource (CAR22)  
Grant Program  
Solicitation Notice**

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## I. Background

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy (Conservancy) is a primary state agency in the implementation of ecosystem restoration in the Delta and Suisun Marsh and supports efforts that advance environmental protection and the economic well-being of Delta residents. The Conservancy works collaboratively and in coordination with local communities, leading efforts to protect, enhance, and restore the Delta's economy, agriculture and working landscapes, and environment, for the benefit of the Delta region, its local communities, and the citizens of California.

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Delta) is a unique natural resource of local, state, and national significance, and has a distinct natural and cultural heritage. The Delta is a 1,300-square mile estuary, the largest on the west coast of North and South America. It is home to more than 500,000 people and is a world-class recreational destination. Despite its large size and economic importance, too many Californians cannot access the Delta's outdoor spaces (e.g., open lands, parks, trails, beaches) or the array of museums and cultural and historical sites. While many Delta residents frequently go outside to experience nature, others never have the opportunity. Given this, the state is working to expand all Californians' access to parks, open space, nature, and cultural amenities. In addition to expanding access to outdoors for all, the State has accelerated its response to build climate resilience to extreme and forecasted climatic events (e.g., drought, flood, wildfire, and sea-level rise). Climate resilience actions should support climate smart land management to achieve carbon neutrality, sustain the economy, protect food and water security, and support the state's biodiversity. To support community access and climate resilience, California is committed to conserving 30 percent of the state's lands and coastal waters by 2030. These initiatives are part of a movement to protect natural resources and elevate the role of natural and working lands against climate change and advance biodiversity conservation. In line with the Conservancy's mission and to advance these statewide initiatives, the Conservancy is soliciting for projects that support public access, build climate resilience, and promote natural resource protection in the Delta region.

Chaptered on September 6, 2022, the Amended Budget Act of 2022 (Assembly Bill 179, Item 3875-101-0001 of Section 111) provided the Conservancy with \$6,125,000 for projects that support climate resilience, community access, and natural resource protection activities (collectively known as Climate, Access, and Resource (CAR22) Funding). Of the total, up to \$5,818,250 is available for projects.

## II. Goals of the Program

The goals of the Climate, Access, and Restoration Program (Program) are to fund multi-benefit projects in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and Suisun Marsh that promote community access to parks, open space, nature or cultural amenities; support climate resiliency to drought, floods, or extreme climatic events; protect food and water security; protect and conserve natural resources; and support biodiversity. Projects funded through

the CAR program should also aim to increase equity, improve public health, and create economic opportunity.

Example projects include, but are not limited to:

- Community Access (e.g., parks, open space, nature, cultural amenities, museums, historical or cultural sites, recreation and tourism, and environmental education)
- Climate resilience
- Natural resource protection

### III. Proposal Submission

The Conservancy's CAR22 Program is a non-competitive program without proposal submission deadlines. The Conservancy will use its [General Grant Guidelines](#) to administer grants using CAR22 funds. Applicants should review the General Grant Guidelines prior to applying for funds. Interested parties should tailor their applications to reflect the funding specific information provided herein. This section provides a summary of the application and review process.

#### **Concept Proposal**

Concept proposals may be submitted at any time to initiate consideration of a project by the Conservancy. Applicants must submit a concept proposal using the Concept Proposal Form (program materials will be available on the Conservancy's website when the program is opened). The Conservancy will review each concept proposal as it is submitted. Once reviewed, the Conservancy will confer with the applicant to discuss the project concept, request additional information as needed, and discuss next steps. An in-person meeting and/or a site visit may also be deemed necessary.

#### **Viability Assessment**

Based on information gathered during the concept proposal stage, along with input from technical experts if needed, Conservancy staff will evaluate the viability of the proposed project by assessing if the proposed project:

- Is technically and financially feasible;
- Is likely to provide locally-supported benefits to the Delta; and
- Will significantly advance the Conservancy's CAR22 priorities.

#### **Full Proposal**

If Conservancy staff determines that a project concept appears to be viable, staff will work with the applicant to develop the concept into a full proposal.

## **Proposal Assessment**

Conservancy staff will continually assess the project based on the program criteria as they work with the applicant to develop the project proposal. Conservancy staff will consult external experts as needed.

Conservancy staff will not recommend that the Conservancy Board fund a proposal unless the above criteria have been addressed to the satisfaction of the Conservancy and the applicant.

## **Board Consideration**

If the above criteria have been addressed to the satisfaction of the Conservancy and the applicant and a proposal is assessed to be complete, Conservancy staff will make a recommendation to the Board for consideration of funding.

**NOTE:** The Conservancy will consider and may prioritize projects based on the geographic distribution, benefits related to disadvantaged and severely disadvantaged communities, reasonableness of costs, availability of funding, and diversity of project types.

## **IV. Evaluation Criteria**

Full proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

### **1. Project Design**

Are the project's purpose, goals, deliverables, and schedule clear? Is the project well designed to meet the needs that the project addresses?

### **2. Public Benefits**

Will the project provide multiple tangible, enduring, public benefits with a high likelihood of being realized? Does the project have reasonable performance measurements and a clear plan for tracking them? Will the project benefit disadvantaged or severely disadvantaged communities?

### **3. Alignment with State and Other Priorities**

Does the project align with priorities identified in the following:

- The Conservancy's mission, governing statute, and strategic plan
- The Delta Plan
- Economic Sustainability Plan for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta
- Other relevant local, regional, State, and federal plans

### **4. Project Readiness**

Is the project ready to proceed promptly if funded? For planning projects, will planning activities advance the project toward implementation in a timely manner? For implementation projects, how complete is project planning, including the status of CEQA and permitting efforts?



**5. Community and Institutional Support**

Does the project have public and relevant institutional support at the local, regional, State, or federal scale? Is the local community, or are other stakeholders, engaged in project planning or delivery? For planning projects, is there a plan to develop community support?

**6. Cost Share**

Is cost share provided for the project?

**7. Project Budget**

Is the budget adequate and reasonable for the project? Are costs clearly identified and justified?

**8. Project Team**

Does the project team have sufficient experience and capacity to implement the project and to manage a state grant? Have necessary partnerships been developed?

**9. Long-Term Management**

For planning projects, are next steps identified for movement towards an implementation project? For implementation projects, is a plan clearly identified for long-term management and sustainability of the project for a minimum of 15 years?

**10. Climate Change Resilience**

Describe the potential vulnerabilities of the project site to climate change effects. How will the project account for and provide adaptation and/or resiliency to potential climate change effects?

**11. Scientific Merit and Performance Measures**

For projects that include a natural resource protection component please answer the following: what is the scientific basis of the proposed project including scientific literature, studies, or expert opinion that has been consulted, and how best available science is being considered and adopted?

V. **Contact**

For more information: <http://deltaconservancy.ca.gov/grant-program/>

If you have questions, please contact the Conservancy at [Contact@DeltaConservancy.ca.gov](mailto:Contact@DeltaConservancy.ca.gov) or (916) 375-2084.



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**DELTA** CONSERVANCY

*A California State Agency*

**Nature Based Solutions: Wetland Restoration  
(NBS:WR)**

**Grant Program**

**Solicitation Notice**

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## I. Background

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy (Conservancy) is a primary state agency in the implementation of ecosystem restoration in the Delta and Suisun Marsh and supports efforts that advance environmental protection and the economic well-being of Delta residents. The Conservancy works collaboratively and in coordination with local communities leading efforts to protect, enhance, and restore the Delta's economy, agriculture and working landscapes, and environment for the benefit of the Delta region, its local communities, and the citizens of California.

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Delta) is a unique natural resource of local, state, and national significance, and has a distinct natural and cultural heritage. The Delta is a 1,300-square mile estuary, the largest on the west coast of North and South America. It is home to more than 500,000 people and is a world-class recreational destination. Lands in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta are critical in California's urgent efforts to build a resilient, equitable, and carbon neutral future. Healthy landscapes can sequester and store carbon; limit future greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere; protect people and nature from the impacts of climate change; and build resilience to future impacts of climate change. To support California's climate change goals, the Delta Conservancy is seeking proposals for projects to restore, conserve, and protect natural and working lands health; and deliver on the State's climate change goals.

Chaptered on September 6, 2022, the Amended Budget Act of 2022 (Assembly Bill 179, Item 3875-101-0001 of Section 111) provided the Conservancy with \$36,000,000 for projects that support Nature Based Solutions: Wetland Restoration (NBS: WR). Of the total up to \$34,200,00 is available for projects.

## II. Goals of the Program

The goals of the Nature Based Solutions: Wetland Restoration funding are to support restoration, conservation, and climate resilience for wetlands in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The Delta region includes over 150,000 acres of highly organic peat soils that are significantly subsided to depths of 20 to 30 feet below sea level. This subsidence threatens the State and Federal water projects, Delta communities and the region's rich agricultural production. Subsidence is the result of oxidation of the peat soils and results in over 1.5 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions annually. Re-wetting the peat soils stops subsidence and resulting carbon emissions.

Example projects include, but are not limited to:

- Managed and tidal wetland restoration
- Crop conversion to rice cultivation
- Technical assistance to access the Voluntary Carbon Market
- Planning to prepare for and support eligible projects (e.g., scoping, design, environmental compliance, science)
- Land acquisition or easement

### III. Proposal Submission

The Conservancy's NBS: WR Program is a noncompetitive grant program without proposal submission deadlines. The Conservancy will use its [General Grant Guidelines](#) to administer grants using NBS: WR funds. Applicants should review the General Grant Guidelines prior to applying for funds. Interested parties should tailor their applications to reflect the funding specific information provided herein. This section provides a summary of the application and review process.

#### **Concept Proposal**

Concept proposals may be submitted at any time to initiate consideration of a project by the Conservancy. Applicants must submit a concept proposal using the Concept Proposal Form (program materials will be available on the Conservancy's website when the program is opened). The Conservancy will review each concept proposal as it is submitted. Once reviewed, the Conservancy will confer with the applicant to discuss the project concept, request additional information as needed, and discuss next steps. An in-person meeting and/or a site visit may also be deemed necessary.

#### **Viability Assessment**

Based on information gathered during the concept proposal stage, along with input from technical experts if needed, Conservancy staff will evaluate the viability of the proposed project by assessing if the proposed project:

- Is technically and financially feasible;
- Is likely to provide locally-supported benefits to the Delta; and
- Will significantly advance the Conservancy's NBS: WR priorities.

#### **Full Proposal**

If Conservancy staff determines that a project concept appears to be viable, staff will work with the applicant to develop the concept into a full proposal.

#### **Proposal Assessment**

Conservancy staff will continually assess the project based on the program criteria as they work with the applicant to develop the project proposal. Conservancy staff will consult external experts as needed.

Conservancy staff will not recommend that the Conservancy Board fund a proposal unless the above criteria have been addressed to the satisfaction of the Conservancy and the applicant.

## Board Consideration

If the above criteria have been addressed to the satisfaction of the Conservancy and the applicant and a proposal is assessed to be complete, Conservancy staff will make a recommendation to the Board for consideration of funding.

**NOTE:** The Conservancy will consider and may prioritize projects based on the geographic distribution, benefits related to disadvantaged and severely disadvantaged communities, reasonableness of costs, availability of funding, and diversity of project types.

## IV. Evaluation Criteria

Full proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

### 1. Project Design

Are the project's purpose, goals, deliverables, and schedule clear? Is the project well designed to meet the needs that the project addresses?

### 2. Public Benefits

Will the project provide multiple tangible, enduring, public benefits with a high likelihood of being realized? Does the project have reasonable performance measurements and a clear plan for tracking them? Will the project benefit disadvantaged or severely disadvantaged communities?

### 3. Alignment with State and Other Priorities

Does the project align with priorities identified in the following:

- The Conservancy's mission, governing statute, and strategic plan
- The Delta Plan
- Economic Sustainability Plan for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta
- Other relevant local, regional, State, and federal plans

### 4. Project Readiness

Is the project ready to proceed promptly if funded? For planning projects, will planning activities advance the project toward implementation in a timely manner? For implementation projects, how complete is project planning, including the status of CEQA and permitting efforts?

### 5. Community and Institutional Support

Does the project have public and relevant institutional support at the local, regional, State, or federal scale? Is the local community or are other stakeholders engaged in project planning or delivery? For planning projects, is there a plan to develop community support?

### 6. Cost Share

Is cost share provided for the project?

**7. Project Budget**

Is the budget adequate and reasonable for the project? Are costs clearly identified and justified?

**8. Project Team**

Does the project team have sufficient experience and capacity to implement the project and to manage a state grant? Have necessary partnerships been developed?

**9. Long-Term Management**

For planning projects, are next steps identified for movement towards an implementation project? For implementation projects, is a plan clearly identified for long-term management and sustainability of the project for a minimum of 15 years?

**10. Climate Change Resilience**

Describe the potential vulnerabilities of the project site to climate change effects. How will the project account for and provide adaptation and/or resiliency to potential climate change effects?

**11. Scientific Merit and Performance Measures**

For projects that include a natural resource protection component please answer the following: what is the scientific basis of the proposed project including scientific literature, studies, or expert opinion that has been consulted, and how is best available science being considered and adopted?

V. Contact

For more information: <http://deltaconservancy.ca.gov/grant-program/>

If you have questions, please contact the Conservancy at [Contact@DeltaConservancy.ca.gov](mailto:Contact@DeltaConservancy.ca.gov) or (916) 375-2084.