



SACRAMENTO - SAN JOAQUIN

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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.