



Executive Officer's Report

October 25, 2023

PROGRAM UPDATE

ETHICS CERTIFICATES DUE UPDATES

California law requires state officials to complete an ethics training course within six months of being hired, and if your service is ongoing, once during each two-year period. Board Members and Liaison Advisors were sent a request to provide a certificate of completion for the 2023 ethics course in September. If you have not provided the certificate to our Board Liaison please do so by December 31, 2023.

DELTA DROUGHT RESPONSE PILOT PROGRAM (DDRPP) UPDATE

Conservancy staff are working to close out the majority of the 2023 DDRPP grants, which have concluded their incentivized water conservation actions at the end of the water year (September 30, 2023). This excludes the six project sites hosting eddy covariance equipment through the Delta Conservancy's interagency agreement with the University of California, Davis. These six project sites, encompassing a total of 395 acres, will continue to carry out water conservation practices through September 2026. The DDRPP 2023 Oversight Committee has started analysis of the water conservation actions taken by the DDRPP grantees during the 2022/2023 water year. This analysis will inform the 2023 DDRPP Program Report and Technical Analysis, which is expected to be released in Spring 2024.

DELTA CONSERVANCY FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024 BUDGET APPROPRIATION UPDATES

The Conservancy received a one-time General Fund allocation of \$6,000,000 for wildfire prevention. Staff are in the initial phase of exploring how best to deploy this funding to reduce wildfire-related water quality impacts to the Delta. We anticipate bringing a solicitation notice to the Board in early 2024. The Nature Based Solutions allocation included in the May revise was eliminated. All baseline funding for facilities and operations remains.

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

Conservancy staff organized two cleanups as part of Coastal Cleanup Day on September 23. More than 50 volunteers participated in the cleanups at Sherman Island and Brannan Island State Recreation Area. In recognition of Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Week, the Conservancy hosted a booth at the Capitol Mall Farmer's Market and did social media outreach, including a social toolkit. Staff completed

training in both Building Awareness/Empathy toward the Disability Community and CRP/First Aid on September 5 and 18 respectively. The annual Contract Activities Report was submitted to the California Department of General Services on October 2 and the fiscal year 22/23 purchases exceeded the small business goal at 32% but did not meet the Disabled Veteran goal of 3%. The FY 22/23 Wildfire and Forest Resilience appropriation has been integrated into the budget. Instagram account [@deltaconservancy](#) was created and shared. As of October 16, the Conservancy has 117 followers. Finally, Brenda Lusk, Administration Manager, had her fourth child, Calvin Lee, on September 2, 2023, and will be out on leave until early next year.

NUTRIA ERADICATION

Please see the most recent update from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife included in this Agenda Item.

DELTA SCIENCE

Fish Friendly Farming:

The Conservancy, supported through a grant from the California State Water Resource Control Board (SWRCB), has contracted the California Land Stewardship Institute (CLSI) to implement the Fish Friendly Farming (FFF) Program in the Delta. A total of 10,752 acres of farmland has been enrolled in the Delta FFF Program. On August 23, 2023, CLSI organized a workshop for growers on Staten Island to highlight the recirculation pump installed on the site to improve water quality by reducing transport of chemicals off-site and into nearby waterways. A short video highlighting the recirculation pump can be found on the Conservancy's YouTube channel (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t_1e5cSrgfE). The workshop also highlighted the other advantages of converting to rice on Delta farmlands and research results from a University of California agricultural adviser. Site visits and FFF enrollment certification will take place over the next six months.

Delta Science Coordination:

Conservancy staff continue to work collaboratively with the broader Delta science community to advance ecological restoration, invasive species management, and regional science coordination in the Delta and Suisun Marsh.

Conservancy staff continue to co-lead the Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee (DPIIC) Restoration Subcommittee with colleagues from the Delta Stewardship Council (Council). Planning has begun for the second Delta Restoration Forum, which will take place on November 2, 2023, at the Ryde Hotel in Walnut Grove. This event will build on the first forum, held in February 2023, by providing additional project-specific information to attendees. Staff from the Conservancy and Council are leading a planning team that includes representatives from the Buena Vista Rancheria of Me-Wuk Indians, environmental consulting groups, and Restore the Delta. Registration for the second forum is currently open and can be found here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/delta-restoration-forum-open-house-tickets-715815542557?aff=oddtcreator>.

The Delta Interagency Invasive Species Coordination (DIISC) Team, facilitated by Conservancy staff and co-led by staff from the Delta Stewardship Council, the Department of Water Resources, and the Department of Fish and Wildlife, continues to plan the fifth biennial Delta Invasive Species Symposium. The theme of the 2023 Symposium is Making Connections: Understanding Connectivity in an Invaded Estuary. The Symposium will take place on November 30, 2023, at the California Natural Resources

building in downtown Sacramento. The save the date for the Symposium can be found on the Conservancy's website and registration will open in October. The DIISC Team is coordinating with the California Invasive Species Advisory Committee (CISAC), which advises the Invasive Species Council of California (ISCC). The ISCC represents the highest level of leadership and authority in state government regarding invasive species. Currently, DIISC Team members are working to have a Delta site highlighted in CISAC's planned invasive species tours for legislators and funders across the state. Conservancy staff worked with staff from DWR and the State Parks Division of Boating and Waterways to submit a proposal to the UC Davis Environmental Policy and Management Policy Clinic to have a graduate student team conduct analyses to improve invasive species control and management in the Delta. The proposal is currently under review, and proposals will be chosen for the student teams to work on by the end of the year.

MEDIA MENTIONS

[Ag Alert](#), the news publication of the California Farm Bureau, published a story about the research being conducted as part of our Delta Drought Response Pilot Program.

[The Vallejo Times-Herald](#) wrote about Sen. Bill Dodd recognizing the last week of September as Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Week.

BOARD DIRECTIVES TO STAFF

- None

DELTA CONSERVANCY BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE UPDATE

Agenda Item 6 (2): Budget and Expenditure Report

CORRESPONDENCE

The Conservancy received communications from a member of the public regarding the Webb Tract Mosaic Landscape project (NBS01). The correspondence requested that Conservancy staff inform Board members of the individual's assertion that islands owned by Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD) are, "an extension of the state and land held in its name is state-owned land; therefore, a member of the public has the right to access and fish from Bouldin Island, Bacon Island, Holland Island and the Webb Tract (section 25 article I California Constitution)." Conservancy staff are working with MWD staff to address this concern on Webb Tract and other MWD-owned islands in the Delta.

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California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Nutria Eradication Program Update

Field Update October 12, 2023

Since March 2018, the nutria eradication efforts in California have:

1. Completed full and/or rapid assessments on over 1.8 M acres
2. Executed entry permits with 4,600 landowners for over 9,800 parcels in 14 counties
3. Set up 9,130 camera stations (1,243 currently active)
 - o Conducted 76,475 camera checks
4. Detected nutria in 835 sites (40-acre cells)
5. Deployed 11,062 trap sets (475 currently active) for a total of 126,626 trap nights
6. Taken or accounted for the take of 3,910 nutria (since March 2017)
 - o Merced - 2,157
 - o Stanislaus - 970
 - o Fresno - 529
 - o San Joaquin - 110
 - o Solano - 107
 - o Sacramento - 24
 - o Mariposa - 12
 - o Madera - 1 (San Joaquin River; Fresno County line)

Of 3,903 necropsies, the data has shown:

- o 1.14 sex ratio (M:F)
- o Of the females captured:
 - 22% of juvenile (2-6 mos.) females have been pregnant
 - 62% of subadult (6-14 mos.) females have been pregnant
 - 66% of adult (>14 months of age) females have been pregnant
- o 4,606 fetal nutria have been removed from the population
- o Litter size ranged from 1-13, with an average of 5.9
 - Average litter size for adult females (> 14 mos.) in California is 6.4

Table 1. The total number of cells with nutria taken, total number of nutria taken, and average number of nutria taken per cell, by year from March 2017 to October 12, 2023.

Year	Total (unique) cells with nutria taken	Total # nutria taken	Average # nutria taken per cell
2017	7	20	2.9
2018	57	348	6.1
2019	73	492	6.7
2020	157	1239	7.9
2021	145	703	4.9
2022	112	579	5.2
2023	92	529	5.7
Total Across Years	468	3910	8.3