



SACRAMENTO - SAN JOAQUIN

DELTA CONSERVANCY

A California State Agency

October 25, 2023 Board Meeting Summary and Action Items

Big Break Visitor Center at Big Break Regional Shoreline, 69 Big Break Road, Oakley, CA 94561

Video and audio of the meeting is available here:

<https://youtu.be/yUeQskdOoh4?si=Vo4S0rZjJgT-2ij>

AGENDA ITEMS

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 9:04 a.m. by Chair Mashburn.

Agenda Item 2 – Welcome, Roll Call, and Introductions

After roll call, agenda items were heard by the Board in the order indicated below.

Board Members Present:

- Mitch Mashburn
- Leo Winternitz
- Pat Hume – arrived at 9:19 after consent calendar vote
- Diane Burgis
- Steven J. Ding – teleconference
- Amanda Martin – teleconference
- Lilliana Udang – teleconference

Ex-Officio Members Present:

- None

Liaison Advisors and Counsel Present:

- Todd Plain
- Bruce Blodgett – teleconference
- James Waters
- Marge Kolar – teleconference
- Nicole Rinke (Counsel) – teleconference

Agenda Item 3 – Public Comment

None

Agenda Item 4 – Consent Calendar

Motion: Supervisor Burgis moved, seconded by Vice Chair Winternitz, that the Board approve the following:

- July 26, 2023 Board Meeting Summary and Action Items

- Consideration of Amendment to Scope of Ecosystem Restoration and Climate Adaptation Grant Program Agreement for the Knightsen Wetland Restoration and Flood Protection Project (Attachment)
- Consideration of Amendment to Term of Ecosystem Restoration and Climate Adaptation Grant Program Agreement for Lower San Joaquin Riparian Corridor Project (Attachment)
- Consideration of Amendment to Term of Ecosystem Restoration and Climate Adaptation Grant Program Agreement for the Oakley Creekside Park Restoration Project (Attachment)

A roll call vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously with 6 ayes.

Agenda Item 5 – Executive Officer’s Report

The Executive Officer briefly highlighted several items in the staff report. The Board discussed Senate Bill 544, which updates the teleconferencing requirements for the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act.

Agenda Item 6 – Ecosystem Restoration and Climate Adaption Grant Program Update

Conservancy staff highlighted items from the staff report, whereas on October 12, 2023, there are 17 active projects, one awarded project with grant development underway, and 18 closed projects. Three amendment requests are on the consent calendar for this meeting.

Agenda Item 7 – Community Enhancement Grant Programs Update

Conservancy staff highlighted items from the staff report, which includes a new table to describe the funding sources within the program. As of October 12, 2023, there are 12 active projects.

Agenda Item 8 – Consideration of Amendment to Budget of Community Enhancement Grant Program Agreement for Asian American Heritage Park

Conservancy staff highlighted key points from the staff report. The project representative addressed various questions from the Board, including need for cost-sharing efforts, need to reduce costs, complications with competitive bid pricing, and term extension.

Motion: Chair Mashburn moved, seconded by Supervisor Hume, to approve additional funding up to \$256,590 to the Delta Educational Cultural Society from the Proposition 68 grant funds for the Asian American Heritage Park.

A roll call vote was taken. The motion passed with 6 ayes and 1 nay.

Agenda Item 9 – Consideration of California Environmental Quality Act Lead Agency Exemption Declaration and Award of Nature Based Solutions: Wetland Restoration Grant Funds for the Delta Rice Conversion Program

The Delta Rice Conversion Program aims to convert 3,000 to 7,500 acres of current agriculture to wildlife-friendly rice for climate and ecosystem benefits. The staff report highlights key details of the project, which supports the community shift to rice cultivation, offsetting conversion costs. The project requires four motions for approval.

Motion 1: Supervisor Hume moved, seconded by Vice Chair Winternitz, that the Board adopt Resolution 2023-01, which finds that the Delta Rice Conversion Program is categorically exempt from

environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to California Code of Regulations Title 14, Chapter 3, Article 19, Section 15313, subsections (a) and (c).

A roll call vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously with 7 ayes.

Motion 2: Supervisor Hume moved, seconded by Vice Chair Winternitz, that the Board approve the Applicant's request to waive the requirement for recording a Landowner Access Agreement against the deed of the property, conditional upon the Conservancy receiving and approving a landowner access agreement for the length of the contract between the Applicant and the landowner of the properties (three to five years).

A roll call vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously with 7 ayes.

Motion 3: Supervisor Hume moved, seconded by Vice Chair Winternitz, to approve the Applicant's request to waive the 15-year maintenance standard of a project.

A roll call vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously with 7 ayes.

Motion 4: Supervisor Hume moved, seconded by Supervisor Burgis, that the Board approve and award funding up to \$4,333,124 to The Nature Conservancy from the Nature Based Solutions: Wetland Restoration Grant Program for the Delta Rice Conversion Program.

A roll call vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously with 7 ayes.

Agenda Item 10 – Consideration of California Environmental Quality Act Lead Agency Exemption Declaration and Award of Nature Based Solutions: Wetland Restoration Grant Funds for Land Acquisition on Bethel Island

The proposed project is to acquire a 600-acre property, Hoover Ranch on Bethel Island, for permanent environmental protection and stewardship. Staff prepared the text below based on staff's best understanding of the information provided in the application and meetings with staff of JMLT. Two separate motions were required for the project to move forward. Two separate motions are required.

Motion 1: Supervisor Burgis moved, seconded by Supervisor Hume, that the Board adopt Resolution 2023-02, which finds that the Land Acquisition of Bethel Island is categorically exempt from environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to California Code of Regulations Title 14, Chapter 3, Article 19, Section 15313, subsections (a) and (c).

A roll call vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously with 7 ayes.

Motion 2: Supervisor Burgis moved, seconded by Supervisor Hume, that the Board approve and award funding up to \$2,202,091 to John Muir Land Trust from the Nature Based Solutions: Wetland Restoration Grant funding for the Land Acquisition on Bethel Island.

A roll call vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously with 7 ayes.

Agenda Item 11 – Consideration of California Environmental Quality Act Lead Agency Exemption Declaration and Award of Nature Based Solutions: Wetland Restoration Grant Funds for the Wetland Restoration Project on Staten Island

The proposed project is seeking grant funding to complete design planning and restore 426 acres of seasonal and semi-permanent wetland on the southeastern corner of Staten Island (Island) in the central Delta. Staff recommends that the Board adopt Resolution 2023-03 declaring that this Project is statutorily exempt from environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to Section 21080.56 and the Project will not have a significant effect on the environment. Two separate motions are required.

Motion 1: Board Member Winternitz moved, seconded by Board Member Udang, that the Board adopt Resolution 2023-03, which finds that the Wetland Restoration Project on Staten Island is statutorily exempt from environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

A roll call vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously with 7 ayes.

Motion 2: Supervisor Burgis moved, seconded by Board Member Martin, that the Board award funding up to \$6,753,396 to The Nature Conservancy from the Nature Based Solutions: Wetland Restoration Grant Funding for the Wetland Restoration Project on Staten Island.

A roll call vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously with 7 ayes.

Agenda Item 12 – Potential Agenda Items for the January 24, 2024 Board Meeting

- Consideration of Award of Nature Based Solutions: Wetland Restoration Grant
- Consideration of Amendment to Community Enhancement Grant Program Agreements
- Consideration of Draft Solicitation Notices for the Wildfire and Forest Resilience Appropriation
- Process and Criteria for Waiving a 15-Year Maintenance Standard
- Delta Conservancy 2023 Implementation Plan Status Update and Consideration of 2024 Implementation plan

Agenda Item 13 – Public Comment

Sydney Chamberlin, Project Director, The Nature Conservancy, expressed gratitude for the award for agenda item 11.

BOARD DIRECTIVES TO STAFF

None

MEETING ADJOURNED by Chair Mashburn at 10:29 a.m.

CONTACT

Jenny Hou, Fiscal and Board Analyst
Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy
Jiantie.Hou@deltaconservancy.ca.gov
(916) 612-4805