



Executive Officer's Report October 23, 2024

PROGRAM UPDATE

DELTA DROUGHT RESPONSE PILOT PROGRAM (DDRPP) UPDATE

The six DDRPP grantees currently hosting micrometeorological equipment on their project sites continue to implement water conservation practices as part of the Delta Conservancy's interagency agreement with the University of California, Davis (UC Davis). Monitoring by the UC Davis research team and collection of micrometeorological and soil data from these six sites will continue through September 2026, and the first annual field water budgets are expected during the November 2024 reporting period. Conservancy staff continued to share the analysis of the DDRPP with interested parties through various forums. On September 25, results from the 2023 Program were presented to members of the Delta Measurement Experimentation Consortium, which is organized by the Office of the Delta Watermaster. Staff presented a poster at the Bay-Delta Science Conference on September 30, which provided an overview of both years of the Program.

DELTA CONSERVANCY FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 BUDGET UPDATES

The California Department of Finance (DOF) Budget Letter 24-24, Government Efficiency Reduction Drill, requests all state agencies to reduce their state operations budgets by 7.95% for the current and future fiscal years. The Conservancy has requested a waiver from the drill due to our limited state operations funds and are currently responding to DOF questions.

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

Staff prepared and submitted the DGS Consolidated Annual Report (CAR) for state contracting that determines if our Small Business (SB) and Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE) participation goals were met. Unfortunately, we only met our DVBE participation goal last fiscal year. We will focus on increasing our SB participation goal this fiscal year. Staff continue to work on the fiscal year 2025/26 budget. The Conservancy migrated all electronic folders from our shared drive to a cloud-based system. Staff processed two grant amendments, closed out one grant agreement, and processed 73 invoices.

DELTA CONSERVANCY REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) UPDATE

On March 21, 2024, the RFP titled “Cost Feasibility Analysis for the Restoration of Franks Tract” closed. The purpose of the contract was to solicit competitive proposals to engage in a collaborative, structured decision-making process to refine the Franks Tract Futures Project and conduct value engineering to refine and prepare new cost estimates. During the contract negotiation stage, there were concerns regarding the contract type. Conservancy staff worked with California Department of Fish and Wildlife to identify a path forward for the project. Conservancy staff are pursuing paths to gain the authority to enter into Architectural and Engineering agreements and anticipate an update in early 2025.

GRANT APPLICATIONS

Since July 2, Conservancy staff submitted five grant proposals and are awaiting funding decisions.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

On July 2, Conservancy staff applied for a \$25 million RCPP grant from the Natural Resources Conservation Service to fund restoration and rice conversion in the highly subsidized areas of the Delta that would expand the current NBS funding. While there is a lot of funding available, the grant program is highly competitive. Staff anticipate hearing back from NRCS by the end of the year.

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) America the Beautiful (ATB)

On July 18, staff submitted an NFWF grant to fund projects that received planning grants from the Conservancy’s Ecosystem Restoration and Climate Adaptation Grant Program. Specific projects include restoration work at Stone Lakes Wildlife Refuge and a project to restore approximately 2.5 miles along the San Joaquin River. The total award would be \$5 million to cover implementation work and the administration by the Conservancy. Staff expect to hear a decision about the proposal by the end of the year.

Clean Vessel Act Program

On August 8, staff submitted a proposal to California State Park’s Division of Boating and Waterways Clean Vessel Act Education and Outreach Grant Program. The \$280,000 annual grant includes education and outreach to boaters about proper sewage disposal and monitoring of pumpout and dump stations in the in the San Francisco Bay-Delta Estuary and Santa Cruz and Monterey counties. Staff expect to hear a decision about the proposal by early fall.

Delta Science Program

On August 26, staff submitted two grant proposals for the Delta Science Program’s Research Award. One proposal is to gain a deeper understanding of pathways to rice in the Delta, and the second proposal is to advance wetland paludiculture in the Delta. Each proposal’s budget was approximately \$550,000. Staff expect to hear a decision about the proposals in early 2025.

NUTRIA ERADICATION

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

DELTA SCIENCE**Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee (DPIIC) Restoration Subcommittee (RSC):**

Conservancy staff continue to co-lead the DPIIC RSC with colleagues from the Delta Stewardship Council (Council). The next RSC meeting will take place on November 13 and consist of a series of site visits to explore restoration potential in the south Delta. This meeting is being facilitated in collaboration with staff from Restore the Delta in an effort to highlight restoration needs supported by the communities in the south Delta.

Delta Interagency Invasive Species Coordination (DIISC) Team

The Delta Interagency Invasive Species Coordination (DIISC) Team, facilitated by Conservancy staff and co-led by staff from the Delta Stewardship Council, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the California Department of Water Resources, had its third quarterly meeting of the year on August 20. The team heard a group of talks focused on identification of species that are potential future invaders of the Delta to help train team members for early detection and shared general work updates with the group. Staff are facilitating a DIISC Team working group to develop general guidance for adaptive management of IAV in tidal wetland restoration sites. Dr. Rachel Wigginton gave a lecture on Early Detection and Rapid Response (EDRR) at the UC Davis Weed Research and Information Center's Aquatic Weed School on September 17. This lecture highlighted the work the DIISC Team has done over the past few years to advance EDRR coordination in the Delta and Suisun Marsh. The Aquatic Weed School is an intensive two-day course focusing on issues associated with developing weed management strategies in a variety of aquatic ecosystems. Drs. Elizabeth Brusati (DSC) and Rachel Wigginton, representing the DIISC Team leadership, on September 19 attended the Suisun Resource Conservation District fall landowner workshop where Dr. Wigginton presented on the role of connectivity and early detection in aquatic weed management. These were the topics of the 2023 and 2021 Delta Invasive Species Symposiums, respectively. This presentation was planned in response to a Board directive from January 2024 to seek opportunities to communicate information from the Symposium to landowners. A poster describing the work of the DIISC Team was also presented at the Bay-Delta Science Conference on September 30.

Delta Science Outreach

Conservancy staff presented at the 2024 Bay-Delta Science Conference held on September 30 through October 2. The poster "Delta Drought Response Pilot Program: A Novel Approach to Building Resiliency to Drought," co-authored by Rachel Lane, Lindsay Kammeier (State Water Resources Control Board), Martha Ozonoff, and Dr. Rachel Wigginton, described the outcomes of the 2023 DDRPP and raised the profile of the final report on the Program. The poster cluster "Advancing Ecosystem Restoration Towards a Resilient Delta," chaired by Dr. Elizabeth Brusati of the Delta Stewardship Council and co-authored by Annie Merrit (Council), Dr. Rachel Wigginton, Dr. Dylan Chappel (Council), and Amanda Bohl (Council), brought together posters about projects that were a part of the 2023 Delta Restoration Forum. One of these posters, "An Overview of the Delta Conservancy's Ecosystem Restoration and Climate Adaptation Grant Program," co-authored by Anjali Shakya and Lauren Damon, showcased several restoration projects funded by the Conservancy's Ecosystem Restoration and Climate Adaptation program. Other posters were authored by the San Francisco Estuary Institute, California Department of Water Resources (DWR), and State Parks Division of Boating and Waterways. The poster, "Developing Guidance for Managing Invasive Aquatic Vegetation in Tidal Wetland Sites," co-

authored by Drs. Rachel Wigginton and Elizabeth Brusati (Council), describes the DIISC Team and seeks feedback on the management guidance a working group of the DIISC Team is developing. Finally, a special oral session titled “Delta Carbon Farming” was facilitated by Lauren Damon and included presentations on long-term monitoring of greenhouse gas budgets in restored wetlands, the development of the CA wetland carbon credit protocol, assessing the carbon market, generating carbon credits from DWR’s multi-benefit wetland restoration projects, and using Staten Island as a living library.

On October 21, Lauren Damon presented about the Delta and the Conservancy's work to students at Whitney High School in Rocklin as part of an environmental club's speaker series. The speaker series aims to help educate high school youth about changes occurring nationwide and how to get involved in their community.

COASTAL CLEANUP DAY

Delta Conservancy staff helped organize and facilitate a cleanup at Sherman Island as part of Coastal Cleanup Day on September 21. Working in collaboration with the Rio Vista Windsports Association, volunteers collected trash along the Sacramento River and filled a 40-yard dumpster, which was generously donated by Waste Management. As part of Coastal Cleanup Day, staff also volunteered at a cleanup in Rio Vista/Sandy Beach.



Figure 5.1. Staff and volunteers pose for a photo at the Sherman Island cleanup on September 21.

MEDIA MENTIONS

[AgNet West](#) published an article about the report released on the Delta Drought Response Pilot Program for water year 2023. [Maven’s Notebook](#) also reposted our press release about the report.

[The Daily Republic](#) and [Maven's Notebook](#) shared information about Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Week. The annual celebration was made official by [Sen. Bill Dodd's Senate Concurrent Resolution 119](#) in 2022.

[The Daily Republic](#) covered new park projects coming to Suisun City. Among them is a public fishing dock, which the Delta Conservancy Board awarded planning funding for in January.

[Maven's Notebook](#) reposted our July announcement that Supervisor Pat Hume was elected Board Chair and that the Board approved planning funding for a historical maritime museum in Stockton.

BOARD DIRECTIVES TO STAFF

- None

DELTA CONSERVANCY BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE UPDATE

Agenda Item 5 (2): Budget and Expenditure Report

CORRESPONDENCE

- On September 19 the Conservancy received a Public Records Act request for information on the RFP 23-0001-3 Cost Feasibility Analysis for the Restoration of Franks Tract. Relevant documentation was provided, and staff informed the requester that the RFP will likely be readvertised this fiscal year since the award was declined.

CONTACT

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California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Nutria Eradication Program Update

Field Update October 8, 2024

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

1. Completed full and/or rapid assessments on over 1.9 M acres
2. Executed entry permits with 4,700 landowners for over 10,500 parcels in 16 counties
3. Set up 11,789 camera stations (1,451 currently active)
 - Conducted 96,092 camera checks
4. Detected nutria in 1,179 sites (40-acre cells)
5. Deployed 14,944 trap sets (740 currently active) for a total of 165,577 trap nights
6. Taken or accounted for the take of 5,208 nutria (since March 2017)
 - Merced - 2,527
 - Stanislaus - 985
 - Fresno - 1,023
 - San Joaquin - 110
 - Solano - 497
 - Sacramento - 34
 - Mariposa - 18
 - Madera - 12 (San Joaquin River; Fresno County line)
 - Contra Costa - 2
 - See Figure 5.3 for distribution of take by county, by year

Of 5,014 necropsies, the data has shown:

- 1.16 sex ratio (M:F)
- Of the females captured:
 - 21% of juvenile (2-6 months) females have been pregnant
 - 63% of subadult (6-14 months) females have been pregnant
 - 68% of adult (greater than 14 months of age) females have been pregnant
- 6,306 fetal nutria have been removed from the population
- Litter size ranged from 1-13, with an average of 6.0
 - Average litter size for adult females (greater than 14 months) in California is 6.6

Table 5.1. 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 8, 2024.

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	1,239	7.9
2021	145	701	4.8
2022	112	580	5.2
2023	120	677	5.6
2024	184	1,150	6.3
Total Across Years	604	5,208	8.2

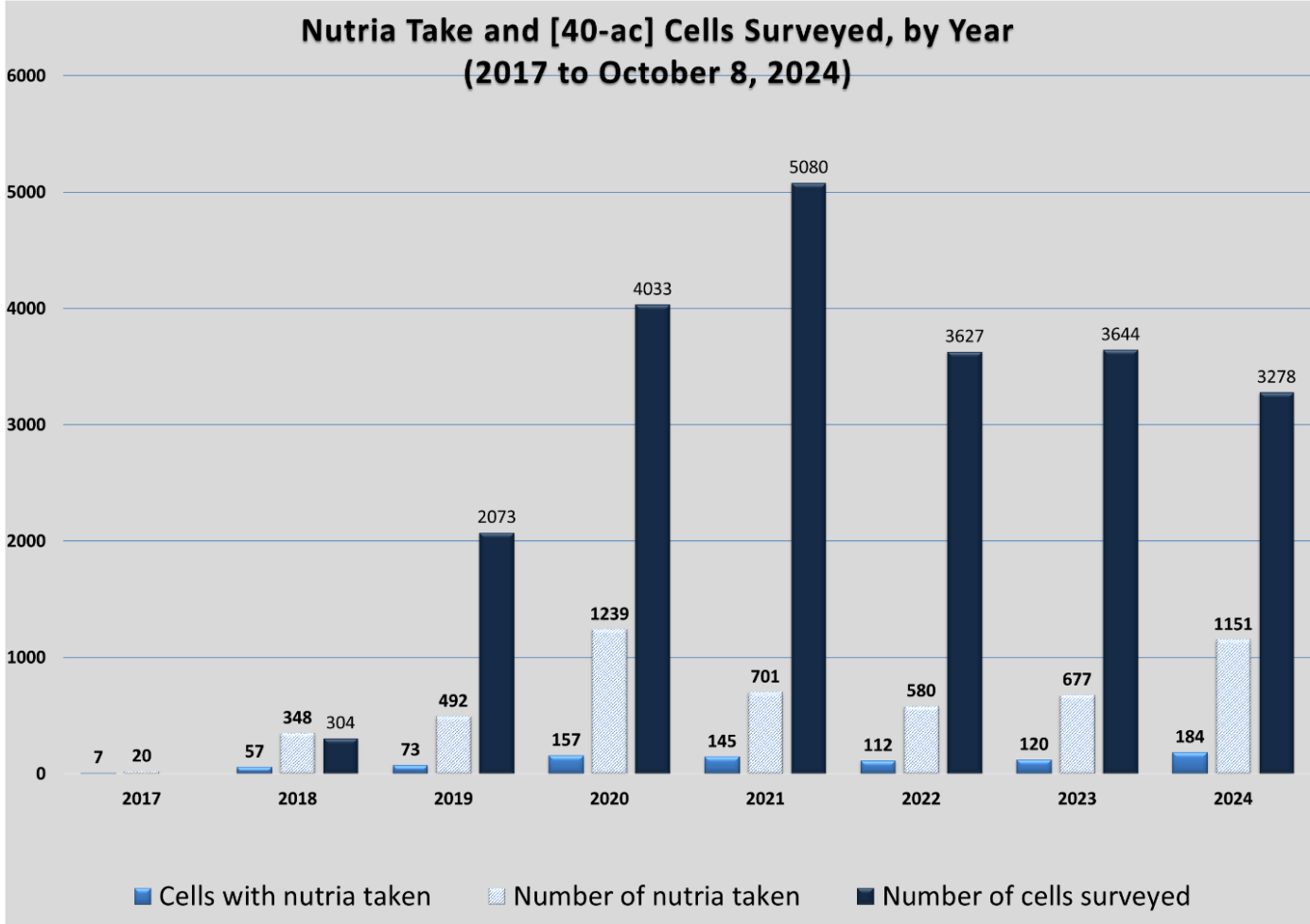


Figure 5.2. The total number of 40-acre cells (sites) with nutria taken (first column), total number of nutria taken (second column), and number of cells surveyed (third column), by year from March 2017 to October 8, 2024.

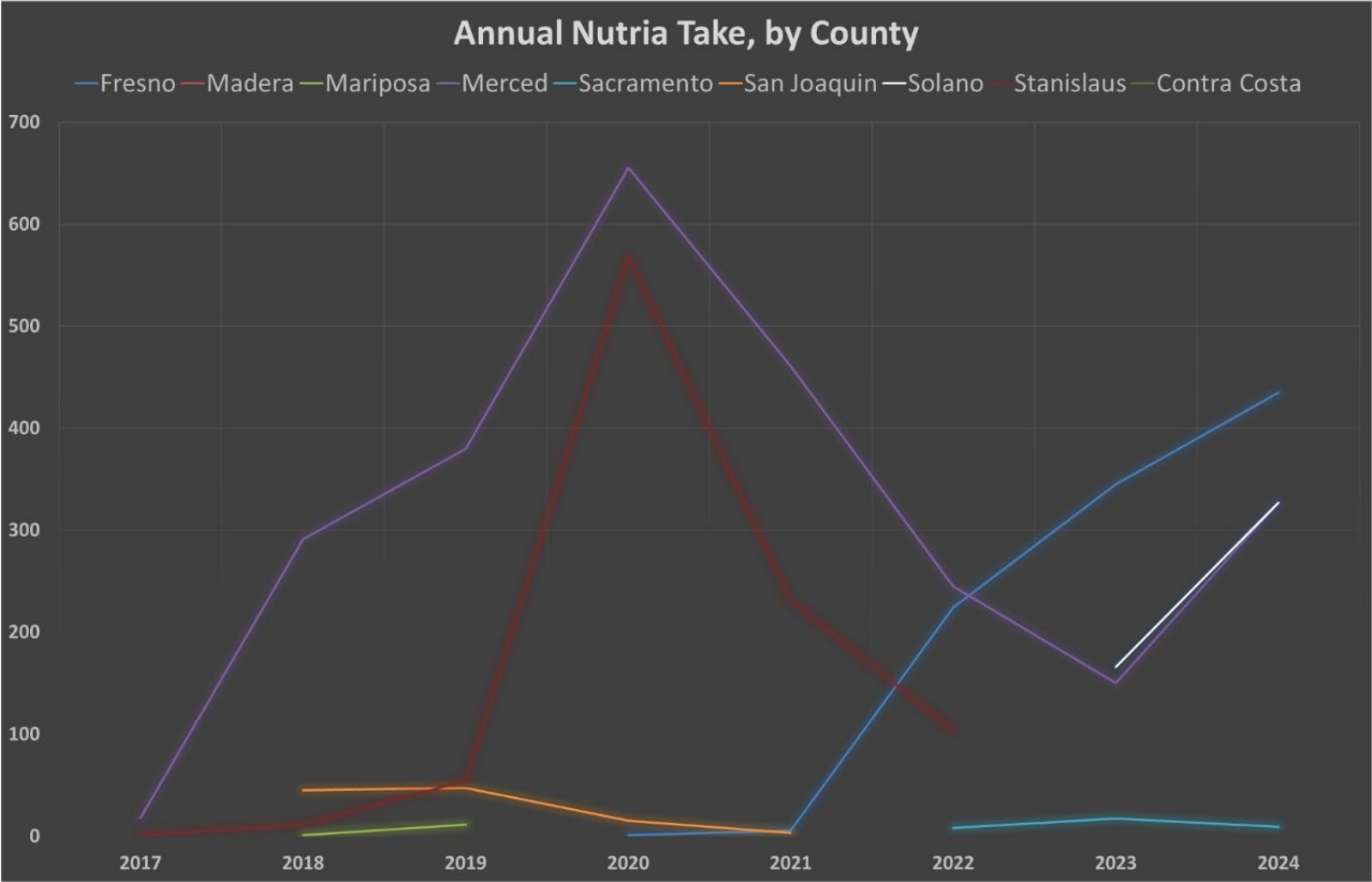


Figure 5.3. The distribution of nutria taken by county, by year, in California from 2017 through October 8, 2024. Madera and Contra Costa counties are not visible due to their low take totals.