



SACRAMENTO - SAN JOAQUIN

DELTA CONSERVANCY

A California State Agency

BOARD MEETING AGENDA

March 25, 2026, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Delta Conservancy Conference Room

1450 Halyard Drive, Suite 6, West Sacramento, CA 95691

This meeting will be conducted in a hybrid format. To maximize transparency and public access, members of the public can choose to participate either via Microsoft Teams or in person at the location listed above.

Board Members will be participating remotely from the following publicly accessible locations, where members of the public may join and participate:

- 44 N. San Joaquin Street, Suite 627, Stockton, CA 95202
- 675 Texas Street, Fairfield, CA 94533

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Questions and public comment can be addressed to contact@deltaconservancy.ca.gov prior to, and during the meeting.

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Welcome, Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call, and Introductions**
3. **Public Comment** (New Business)
4. **Consent Calendar** (**Action Item**)
 - Approval of January 28, 2026 Board Meeting Summary and Action Items (Attachment)
5. **Executive Officer's Report**, Campbell Ingram
 - Program Update (Attachment)
 - Budget and Expenditure Report (Attachment)
6. **Ecosystem Restoration and Climate Adaptation Program Update**, Anji Shakya (Attachment)
7. **Community Enhancement Program Update**, Maya Garrett (Attachment)
8. **Delta Carbon Program Update**, Lauren Damon (Attachment)
9. **Consideration of Draft Solicitation Notice for Climate Bond (Proposition 4) and Nature Based Solutions Funding of the Rice Incentive Program**, Lauren Damon (Attachments) (**Action Item**)

10. **Consideration of Updates to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy General Grant Guidelines,** Karen Buhr (Attachments) (Action Item)
11. **Update on Nutria Control Activities in the Delta and Suisun Marsh,** Valerie Cook
12. **California Department of Water Resources Multibenefit Restoration Program Update,** Charlotte Biggs
13. **Delta Stewardship Council Update,** Dr. Rachel Wigginton
14. **Delta Protection Commission Update,** Amanda Bohl
15. **Delta Conveyance Update,** Janet Barbieri
16. **Public Comment**
17. **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. 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 at the discretion of the Delta Conservancy Board.



January 28, 2026 Board Meeting Summary and Action Items
1450 Halyard Drive, Suite 6, West Sacramento, CA 95691

Video and audio of the meeting are available here: [January 28, 2026 Board Meeting Recording](#)

AGENDA ITEMS

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 9:15 a.m. by Chair Hume.

Agenda Item 2 – Welcome, Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call, and Introductions

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

Board Members Present:

- Chair Pat Hume
- Vice Chair Sheila Allen
- Stephen Benson
- Sandi Matsumoto
- Gloria Sandoval – teleconference
- Wanda Williams – Oath of Office administered at 9:47 a.m. after Consent Calendar vote
- Leo Winternitz

Ex-Officio Members Present:

- Nicole Cuellar-Nelson – Senator Cabaldon Representative

Liaison Advisors and Counsel Present:

- Amanda Bohl
- Marge Kolar
- Todd Plain
- Nicole Rinke (Counsel)
- Jessica Bonitz (Counsel)

Agenda Item 3 – Public Comment

- None

Agenda Item 4 – Consent Calendar

Motion: Vice Chair Allen moved, seconded by Board Member Winternitz, that the Board approve the following:

- Approval of July 23, 2025 Board Meeting Summary and Action Items

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

9:47 a.m. The meeting was briefly paused to administer the Oath of Office to Supervisor Williams.

Agenda Item 5 – Executive Officer’s Report

The Executive Officer highlighted several items in the staff report.

Agenda Item 6 – Ecosystem Restoration and Climate Adaption Program Update

As of January 16, 2026, there are 12 active projects and 22 closed projects. Conservancy staff highlighted significant project milestones from the staff report for the Improving Hydrological Resiliency of Managed Wetlands in Suisun Marsh implementation project and the Nutria Eradication Program Update.

Agenda Item 7 – Consideration of California Environmental Quality Act Responsible Agency Findings and Amendment to Budget and Scope of Ecosystem Restoration and Climate Adaptation Program Agreement for Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Habitat and Drainage Improvement Project, Phase Two

Conservancy staff highlighted the project for consideration. Two separate motions were required.

Motion: Board Member Winternitz moved, seconded by Board Member Benson, that the Board adopt Resolution 2026-01, which makes California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Responsible Agency Findings that all necessary mitigation measures have been included in the Initial Study, Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND), and that the Addendum to the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Habitat and Drainage Improvement Project does not require changes to the previously approved MND.

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

Motion: Chair Hume moved, seconded by Vice Chair Allen, that the Board approve a budget modification to shift funds across budget line items, and a change to the scope of work to modify the construction task, replacing the construction of a new pump station with alternative plans to improve habitat and drainage at the project site.

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

Agenda Item 8 – Community Enhancement Program Update

As of January 12, 2026, there are 12 active projects, two approved projects, and four closed projects. Conservancy staff highlighted significant project milestones from the staff report for the Pacific Flyway Center: Walk in the Marsh and Isleton Museum in the Bing Kong Tong Building Phase 2 projects.

Agenda Item 9 – Delta Conservancy 2025 Annual Report

Conservancy staff shared an overview of the Delta Conservancy 2025 Annual Report.

Agenda Item 10 – Delta Conservancy 2025 Implementation Plan Status Update and Consideration of 2026 Implementation Plan

The Deputy Executive Officer presented the 2026 Implementation Plan for Board consideration.

Motion: Board Member Matsumoto moved, seconded by Board Member Winternitz, that the Board approve as final the Draft Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy 2026 Implementation Plan as presented in this item.

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

Agenda Item 11 – Delta Carbon Program Update

As of January 16, 2026, there are three active projects and one closed project. Conservancy staff highlighted significant project milestones from the staff report for the Wetland Mosaic Landscape on Webb Tract Project and Delta Rice Incentive Program.

Agenda Item 12 – Delta Interagency Invasive Species Coordination Team Update

Conservancy staff highlighted several items in the staff report.

Agenda Item 13 – California Department of Water Resources Multibenefit Restoration Program Update

Charlotte Biggs, Assistant Deputy Director of the California Department of Water Resources, presented an update.

Agenda Item 14 – Delta Stewardship Council Update

Audrey Cho, Legislative and Policy Advisor of the Delta Stewardship Council, presented an update.

Agenda Item 15 – Delta Protection Commission Update

Amanda Bohl, Executive Officer of the Delta Protection Commission, presented an update.

Agenda Item 16 – Public Comment

- None

Agenda Item 17 – ADJOURN

BOARD DIRECTIVES TO STAFF

- Email California Natural Resources Agency's [Prop 4 Climate Bond webpage](#) to Board Members. Board Member Sandoval mentioned the link during the Executive Officer Report, and Board Members requested that it be shared. The link was shared in the meeting chat, and the Conservancy emailed it to Board Members on February 5.

MEETING ADJOURNED at 10:56 a.m. by Chair Hume.

CONTACT

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Executive Officer's Report

March 25, 2026

PROGRAM UPDATE

STAFFING UPDATE

Recruitment is underway to backfill the Administration Manager and Senior Environmental Scientist positions.

FORM 700 COMPLIANCE

The Notices from the Fair Political Practices Commission to complete Form 700, Statement of Economic Interests, have been sent to Conservancy Board Members, alternate Board Members, and Liaison Advisors. The final filing deadline is April 1, 2026. Forms are completed on the Fair Political Practices Commission [online portal](#). If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact Chelsea Martinez at chelsea.martinez@deltaconservancy.ca.gov.

INTRODUCED LEGISLATION

Please note that the Conservancy does not have a position on the following legislation. It is presented for informational purposes.

Assemblymember Aguiar-Curry introduced [Assembly Bill \(AB\) 2216](#) would expand the Delta Conservancy boundary to include the areas of San Joaquin, Sacramento, Yolo, and Solano counties that are not currently covered by the Legal Delta and Suisun Marsh boundaries. The bill would allow the Conservancy to support more of the upper watershed with future funding sources.

Senator McNerney introduced [Senate Bill \(SB\) 872](#), which would allocate \$150 million per year for 20 years from the Greenhouse Gass Reduction Fund to the Delta Conservancy to improve existing levees, and improve instream, riparian, floodplain, and wetland habitat.

CLIMATE BOND SOLICIATION (PROPOSITION 4)

AB 107 authorizes the Conservancy to proceed with the Climate Bond funds allocated for the 2025–26 funding cycle, consistent with legislative earmarks and the existing General Grant Guidelines. In Agenda Item 9, the Conservancy Board will consider approving a solicitation for the Rice Incentive Program in the amount of \$3.5 million. In addition, \$500,000 from the 2025-26 funding appropriation

will be provided to the John Muir Land Trust for the restoration of Bethel Island, consistent with direction from the Legislature.

In preparation for the 2026–27 funding cycle, the Conservancy Board will also consider modifications to the General Grant Guidelines in Agenda Item 10. If approved, the proposed revisions will be released for public comment and subsequently brought back to the Conservancy Board for final approval at the May Board meeting. The revised guidelines would apply to future funding cycles, which are anticipated to be allocated by the Legislature as part of their ongoing budget process.

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

The Conservancy successfully completed a three-year audit conducted by the California State Personnel Board, achieving full compliance with no findings. In February, our Records Retention Schedule was approved by the Secretary of State's Records Management and Appraisal unit. A records destruction log will be created, which along with the Schedule, allows for proper, legal disposition of records that have met retention. Work is ongoing on the lease renewal process with the Department of General Services. Recruitment efforts continue for the Senior Environmental Scientist and Supervisor II positions. As of March 2026, the Conservancy has executed five grant and contract amendments, closed four agreements, and processed 61 invoices this year.

DELTA DROUGHT RESPONSE PILOT PROGRAM (DDRPP)

The six DDRPP grantees currently hosting micrometeorological equipment on their project sites continue to implement water conservation practices as part of the Conservancy's interagency agreement with the University of California, Davis (UC Davis) until the end of the water year in September 2026. The Conservancy organized the Delta Evapotranspiration Methods Workshop on January 20, 2026, to bring the project participants and collaborators together to review the micrometeorological results. The participants included UC Davis, Office of the Delta Watermaster, OpenET, Department of Water Resources, and the Delta Stewardship Council.

DELTA SCIENCE

Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee (DPIIC) Restoration Subcommittee (RSC)

The Conservancy continues to co-lead the DPIIC RSC with colleagues from the Delta Stewardship Council (Council). The Restoration Subcommittee's work is guided by the [workplan](#). The vision of the DPIIC RSC is a Delta ecosystem that supports the mosaic of natural and human communities, is resilient to stressors, adapts to change, and is accessible for recreation. The DPIIC RSC plans to host the fourth Delta Restoration Forum on May 1, 2026.

Delta Interagency Invasive Species Coordination 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 (DWR), had its first quarterly meeting of the year on February 18, 2026. In addition to the customary updates from all attending organizations, the Team heard an update from DWR on the Surveillance of eDNA for Notification of Target Invasives (SENTRI) project. Additionally, there was an informational presentation from the UC Davis Center for Plant Diversity on identifying the differences between native and non-native *Phragmites australis*, using both genetic and morphometric traits. The Team will meet for its second quarter meeting in mid-May.

COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH

Nature Based Solutions Summit

The Conservancy participated in California's first Nature Based Solutions Summit on January 29 at the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) headquarters in Sacramento. The event offered a valuable space to share ideas, learn from partners, and build connections in service of healthier, more resilient landscapes. Conservancy staff provided information about the Conservancy's Nature Based Solutions projects and Executive Officer Campbell Ingram moderated a panel of diverse State agency leaders who shared examples of nature-based solutions achievements across California.

Outdoors for All Convening

On February 3, the Conservancy attended CNRA's Outdoors for All convening, which focused on exchanging ideas and sharing progress to expand equitable access to the outdoors in California. Deputy Executive Officer Karen Buhr participated in a panel in which attendees heard from leaders championing the Outdoors for All initiative, the progress being made, and how collective leadership is helping create a more inclusive future. Executive Officer Campbell Ingram facilitated a breakout session about advancing shared priorities and aligning funding to support Outdoors for All.

MEDIA MENTIONS

- [Lodi News](#), the [Vallejo Times-Herald](#), the [Turlock Journal](#), and the [Vacaville Reporter](#) published articles about SB 872, introduced by Senator McNerney.
- [CalMatters](#) posted information about AB 2216, introduced by Assemblymember Aguiar-Curry.

BOARD DIRECTIVES TO STAFF

- Email California Natural Resources Agency's [Prop 4 Climate Bond webpage](#) to Board members. Board Member Sandoval mentioned the link during the Executive Officer Report, and Board Members requested that it be shared. The link was shared in the meeting chat, and the Conservancy emailed it to Board Members on February 5.

DELTA CONSERVANCY BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE UPDATE

Agenda Item 5.2: Budget and Expenditure Report

CORRESPONDENCE

- None.

CONTACT

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SACRAMENTO-SAN JOAQUIN DELTA CONSERVANCY BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE REPORT July 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025

Line Number	CATEGORY OF EXPENDITURES Personal Services (PS)	Delta Conservancy Budget	Actual Expenditures	Variance	Percent of Budget Expended
1	Salaries & Wages	\$1,392,075	\$690,224	\$701,851	50%
2	Temporary Help			\$0	0%
3	Benefits	\$776,805	\$388,501	\$388,304	50%
4	TOTAL PERSONAL SERVICES	\$2,168,880	\$1,078,725	\$1,090,155	50%
Line Number	CATEGORY OF EXPENDITURES Operating Expenditures and Equipment (OE & E)	Delta Conservancy Budget	Actual Expenditures	Variance	Percent of Budget Expended
5	General Expense	\$51,400	\$8,483	\$42,917	17%
6	Printing	\$1,900	\$730	\$1,170	38%
7	Communications	\$11,230	\$3,392	\$7,838	30%
8	Postage	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%
9	Travel-In State	\$38,751	\$7,310	\$31,441	19%
10	Training	\$11,500	\$1,535	\$9,965	13%
11	Facilities Operation	\$116,802	\$57,697	\$59,105	49%
12	Contracts & Personal Services-External	\$116,295	\$0	\$116,295	0%
13	Contracts & Personal Services-Interdepartmental	\$103,449	\$23,220	\$80,229	22%
14	Information Technology	\$53,600	\$225	\$53,375	0%
15	Non-Capital Asset Purchases	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%
16	Indirect Cost Recovery	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%
17	Unallocated Operating Expense & Equipment	\$141,499	\$0	\$141,499	0%
18	TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES & EQUIPMENT	\$646,426	\$102,592	\$543,834	16%
Line Number	CATEGORY OF EXPENDITURES Multi-Year Appropriations	Delta Conservancy Budget	Actual Expenditures	Variance	Percent of Budget Expended
19	Proposition 1 Program Support	\$154,733			
20	Proposition 4 Program Support	\$233,470			
21	Proposition 68 Program Support	\$79,753			
22	Delta Drought Response Pilot Program Support	\$85,939			
23	Nature Based Solutions and CAR	\$1,051,438			
24	Grants and Subventions	\$4,000,000			
25	TOTAL MULTI-YEAR APPROPRIATIONS	\$5,605,333		\$5,605,333	
Line Number	TOTALS	Delta Conservancy Budget	Actual Expenditures	Variance	Percent of Budget Expended
26	TOTAL PS, OE & E, MULTI-YEAR APPROPRIATIONS	\$8,420,639	\$1,181,317	\$7,239,322	14%
27	REIMBURSEMENT	(\$307,839)	(\$65,806)	(\$242,033)	21%
28	GRAND TOTAL	\$8,112,800	\$1,115,511	\$6,997,289	14%



Ecosystem Restoration and Climate Adaptation Program Update

Staff Report

PROGRAM UPDATE

As of March 2026, there are 11 active projects and 24 completed projects.

For updates on a specific project, please visit: [Delta Conservancy Project Table Updates page](#).

For an interactive map of program projects, please visit: [Delta Conservancy Project Maps page](#).

SIGNIFICANT PROJECT MILESTONES

P1-1804: Delta Working Waterways Habitat Restoration

This Project has completed permitting, site design, and planning for several habitat restoration sites. When implemented, project sites will mimic or restore ecosystem function and provide water quality, fish, wildlife, and agricultural benefits. Project work has completed, and the Grantee will work with Conservancy staff to complete grant closeout.





Figure 6.1. Pictured above are Schwarz Farm, Bolin Cattle Farm, and Calhoun Cut – three of the seven project sites where grant funds supported the development of grazing, burn, and conservation plans.

P1-1810: Phase 1 San Joaquin River Floodplain Restoration and Floodway Enhancement at Banta-Carbona

This Project has completed 90 Percent Design Plans and permitting efforts for a multi-benefit habitat restoration project at Banta-Carbona Irrigation District’s intake fish screen. When implemented, the Project will improve rearing habitat for juvenile salmon, reduce flood risk, and address sedimentation. Project work has completed, and the Grantee will work with Conservancy staff to complete grant closeout. Updates will be posted on Banta-Carbona Irrigation District’s webpage [here](#).



Figure 6.2. Looking upstream at the San Joaquin River with the project site on right, the grant-funded planning efforts for a project to restore floodplain and side channels to provide habitat for juvenile salmon.

BACKGROUND

The Ecosystem Restoration and Climate Adaptation (ERCA) Program refers to a collection of projects that support multi-benefit ecosystem restoration, watershed protection, and climate adaptation projects in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and Suisun Marsh. Projects in this program are currently supported through several funding sources: Proposition 1 Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act and Climate Resilience, Community Access, and Natural Resource Protection (CAR). The Proposition 1 Grant Program is designed to support multi-benefit ecosystem, watershed protection, and restoration projects in accordance with statewide priorities. The CAR is a General Fund allocation and promotes multi-benefit projects within the areas of climate resilience, community access, and natural resources protection.

The Grant Program requires both a concept proposal and a full proposal. Full proposals are subject to a rigorous review and evaluation process by staff and external professional reviewers (when applicable) and are recommended for funding based upon review, evaluation, and funding availability.

The table below highlights the allocations for Proposition 1 (bond funds) and CAR (general funds). Each funding source has funds allocated for both administration and grants. The amounts remaining to be allocated are funds available for new grants.

Ecosystem Restoration and Climate Adaptation Program Funding Sources. CEP refers to the Community Enhancement Program (Agenda Item 7.1). Amounts listed in millions of dollars.

Funding Source	Total Allocation	Minimum Amount Available for Grants	Total Amount Allocated for Grants	Amount Remaining to be Allocated	Allocation Date	Encumbrance Date	Program(s) Supported by Funding Source
Proposition 1	\$50.0	\$42.5	\$42.4	\$0.1	8/13/2014	Variable	ERCA
CAR	\$5.25	\$4.99	\$4.99	\$0	9/23/2021	6/30/2024	ERCA and CEP
CAR	\$6.125	\$5.82	\$5.35	\$0.02	9/6/2022	6/30/2025	ERCA and CEP

CONTACT

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Community Enhancement Program Update

Staff Report

PROGRAM UPDATE

As of March 2026, there are 12 active projects, two approved projects, and four closed projects. For updates on a specific project, please visit: [Delta Conservancy Project Table Updates page](#). For an interactive map of program projects, please visit: [Delta Conservancy Project Maps page](#).

SIGNIFICANT PROJECT MILESTONES

P6806: Discover the Delta Education Center (Planning)

The purpose of the Project is to update building plans and to process a new building permit, including payment of required Sacramento County fees. Once built the Center will educate the public on the environmental, historical, and cultural influences that created the region, how the region has evolved over time, and the possibilities for the future of the Delta. The Grantee was awarded \$223,456 of Proposition 68 funds in 2022. They received a budget increase of \$61,522 in 2023, a term extension in 2025 and a fund shift in 2025. The Project has been completed, and the Grantee will complete the final report and invoice before the Project closes.



Figure 7.1. Design of Discover the Delta Education Center in Isleton, CA.

P6813: Asian American Heritage Park (Implementation)

The purpose of Project is to construct a .07-acre park showcasing the Asian American heritage of the town of Isleton. The park features include landscaping, walkways, an artistic ceramic water feature, seat walls, walkway tiles, benches, engraved bricks and plaques recognizing contributors to the park, and a Japanese bell temple (Kansho-do). This Project was awarded \$554,772 of Proposition 68 funds in 2022.

They received a budget increase of \$265,799 in 2023 and a term extension in 2025. The Project has been completed, and the Grantee will complete the final report and invoice before the Project closes.



Figure 7.2. Asian American Heritage Park in Isleton, CA.

BACKGROUND

The Community Enhancement Program (CEP) refers to a collection of projects that support and enhance communities and economies in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and Suisun Marsh. Projects in this program are currently funded through Proposition 68 California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 and the Climate Resilience, Community Access, and Natural Resource Protection (CAR) funds. The Proposition 68 Grant Program is designed to promote a robust Delta economy, support the vitality of Delta communities, and allow staff to provide

guidance to project proponents as they develop proposals to meet these goals. The CAR is a General Fund allocation and is designed to promote multi-benefit projects within the areas of climate resilience, community access, and natural resource restoration.

The Grant Program requires both a concept proposal and a full proposal. Full proposals are subject to a rigorous review and evaluation process by staff and external professional reviewers (when applicable), and are recommended for funding based upon review, evaluation, and funding availability.

The table below highlights the allocations for Proposition 68 (bond funds) and CAR (general funds). Each funding source has funds allocated for both administration and grants. The amount remaining to be allocated are funds available for new grants.

Community Enhancement Program Funding Sources. ERCA refers to the Ecosystem Restoration and Climate Adaptation Program (Agenda Item 6.1). Amounts listed in millions of dollars.

Funding Source	Total Allocation	Minimum Amount Available for Grants	Total Amount Allocated for Grants	Amount Remaining to be Allocated	Allocation Date	Encumbrance Date	Program(s) Supported by Funding Source
Proposition 68	\$12.0	\$8.7	\$8.7	\$0	6/8/2018	6/30/2027	CEP
CAR	\$5.25	\$4.99	\$4.99	\$0	9/23/2021	6/30/2027	ERCA and CEP
CAR	\$6.125	\$5.82	\$5.8	\$0.02	9/6/2022	6/30/2027	ERCA and CEP

CONTACT

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Delta Carbon Program Update

Staff Report

PROGRAM UPDATE

As of March 2026, there are three active projects and one closed project.

For updates on a specific project, please visit: [Delta Conservancy Project Table Updates page](#).

For an interactive map of program projects, please visit: [Delta Conservancy Project Maps page](#).

The Delta Carbon Team, facilitated by the Conservancy and co-led by The Nature Conservancy, meets quarterly to discuss Delta carbon issues with a vision to reverse subsidence and reduce associated greenhouse gas emissions while maintaining economic viability and improving climate resilience in the Delta. Meeting information is available on the [Delta Carbon Program webpage](#).

SIGNIFICANT PROJECT MILESTONES

NBS01: Wetland Mosaic Landscape on Webb Tract Project

The Wetland Mosaic Landscape on Webb Tract Project consists of planning and implementing two projects that will result in the rewetting of the majority of Webb Tract, a deeply subsided 5,500-acre island in Contra Costa County. The rice conversion project, which is expected to start land conversion this spring, will convert between 1,000 and 1,500 acres of existing agriculture fields to rice. The wetland restoration project has completed environmental and regulatory compliance, is finalizing design, and is anticipated to start construction this year for up to 2,400 acres of wetland. Additional information is available on the January 2026 [fact sheet](#).

NBS02: Delta Rice Incentive Program

The Delta Rice Incentive Program offers a financial incentive to farmers to convert existing agricultural fields to rice. The Program is completing its third year of enrollment, resulting in enrollment of 11 farmers and 4,869 acres. The Program is monitoring two of the converted fields for carbon emissions. A continuation of the Rice Incentive Program is planned (see Agenda Item 9).

NBS04: Staten Island Wetland Restoration

The Staten Island Wetland Restoration Project will restore 423 acres on Staten Island, a deeply subsided island in San Joaquin County. The island is used as a sustainable, wildlife-friendly farm, and the wetlands will ensure long-term viability by complementing the farming operations through recirculated water and reversing subsidence. The Project has completed final design and permitting. A construction contractor has been secured. Construction is expected to start this spring.

BACKGROUND

The Delta Carbon Program refers to a collection of activities and projects that halt or reverse subsidence and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from highly organic soils in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Projects in this program are currently supported through the Nature Based Solutions: Wetland Restoration

(NBS: WR) General Fund allocation. Chaptered on September 5, 2022, the Amended Budget Act of 2022 (Assembly Bill 179, Item 3875- 101-0001 of Section 111) provided the Conservancy with \$36 million for projects that support NBS: WR.

The Grant Program requires both a concept proposal and a full proposal. Full proposals are subject to a rigorous review and evaluation process by staff and external professional reviewers (when applicable) and are recommended for funding based upon review, evaluation, and funding availability.

The table below highlights the allocations for NBS: WR (general funds), which has funds allocated for both administration and grants. The amounts remaining to be allocated are funds available for new grants.

Delta Carbon Program Funding Source

Funding Source	Total Allocation	Minimum Amount Available for Grants	Total Amount Allocated for Grants	Amount Remaining to be Allocated	Allocation Date	Encumbrance Date	Program(s) Supported by Funding Source
NBS: WR	\$36.0	\$34.2	\$34.2	\$0	9/6/2022	6/30/2025	Carbon

CONTACT

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Consideration of Draft Solicitation Notice for Climate Bond (Proposition 4) and Nature Based Solutions Funding of the Rice Incentive Program
Staff Report

This agenda item presents the draft Solicitation Notice for the Rice Incentive Program funded by the Climate Bond (Proposition 4) and the Nature Based Solutions General Fund.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommend that the Board approve the draft Solicitation Notice for Climate Bond (Proposition 4) and Nature Based Solutions Funding for the Rice Incentive Program.

DESCRIPTION

The goal of the Rice Incentive Program is to fund rice conversion projects on areas with highly organic soils in the Delta to stop or reverse ongoing subsidence, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, maintain agricultural viability of land below sea level, and provide overwintering habitat for resident and migratory birds. The Program is intended to support farmers, including historically underserved farmers, who otherwise cannot convert their fields to rice due to inability to pay or finance high upfront conversion costs. The Program will provide funding for technical assistance on rice farming, field conversion, and other related practices.

The Conservancy will use the General Grant Guidelines, approved by the Board on July 24, 2024, to administer the Rice Incentive Program grants. The Solicitation Notice includes programmatic goals of the Program, proposal submission process and timeline, and funding considerations.

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) as well as through social media posts.

BACKGROUND

Chaptered on July 5, 2024, Senate Bill (SB) 867, the Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024 (SB 867 93020(a)(4)) (Proposition 4 Climate Bond) provided the Conservancy with \$29 million for projects that reduce the risks of climate change impacts upon communities, fish and wildlife, and natural resources, and increase public access. This Solicitation Notice is to fund the Rice Incentive Program using \$3.5 million of the total Proposition 4 Climate Bond funds appropriated to the Conservancy in fiscal year 2025-26.

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 million for projects that support Nature Based Solutions: Wetland Restoration (NBS: WR).

SUGGESTED MOTION LANGUAGE:

Move that the Board approve the draft Solicitation Notice for Climate Bond (Proposition 4) and Nature Based Solutions Funding for the Rice Incentive Program.

CONTACT

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SACRAMENTO - SAN JOAQUIN

DELTA CONSERVANCY

A California State Agency

Rice Incentive Program

**Funded by the Proposition 4 Climate Bond
and Nature Based Solutions General Fund**

Solicitation Notice

Table of Contents

I. Background.....	2
II. Proposal Submission.....	3
III. Available Funding	5
IV. Funding Considerations.....	5
V. Contact	5

I. Background

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy (Conservancy) is a primary state agency in the implementation of ecosystem restoration in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (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.

Roughly 150,000 acres in the Delta has subsided to as much as 9 meters below sea level. Subsidence is due to ongoing loss of organic soil over the last 175 years due to draining of wetlands for agriculture. This threatens the Statewide water supply and results in significant local issues including habitat and revenue loss and high flood risk. Stopping the ongoing subsidence, improving habitat conditions, and maintaining agricultural viability can all be achieved by converting existing row crops to rice. Rice is grown under wet conditions and thus prevents the oxidation of organic soils.

Funding Sources

Chaptered on July 5, 2024, Senate Bill (SB) 867, the Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024 (SB 867 93020(a)(4)) (Proposition 4 Climate Bond) provided the Conservancy with \$29 million for projects that reduce the risks of climate change impacts upon communities, fish and wildlife, and natural resources, and increase public access. This Solicitation Notice is to fund the Rice Incentive Program using \$3.5 million of the total Proposition 4 Climate Bond funds provided to the Conservancy.

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 million for projects that support Nature Based Solutions: Wetland Restoration (NBS: WR). This Solicitation Notice is to fund the Rice Incentive Program using \$8,642 of the total NBS: WR funds provided to the Conservancy.

Goals of the Program

The goal of the Rice Incentive Program is to fund rice conversion projects on areas with highly organic soils in the Delta to 1) stop or reverse ongoing subsidence, 2) reduce greenhouse gas emissions, 3) maintain agricultural viability of land below sea level, and 4) provide overwintering habitat for resident and migratory birds. Rice projects should occur only on soils with a high percentage of carbon within the deeply subsided portion of the Delta (values above 7.5 in Figure 1). The Program is intended to support farmers, including historically underserved farmers, who otherwise cannot convert their fields to rice due to inability to pay or finance high upfront conversion costs. The Program will provide funding to two or three eligible entities that will work with farmers to convert their existing row crops to rice. Eligible entities include Federal, State and local public agencies including special districts and joint powers authorities and nonprofit organizations with 501(c)(3) status. The selected eligible

entities must also provide technical assistance on rice farming, field conversion, and other related practices to enrolled farmers during the program.

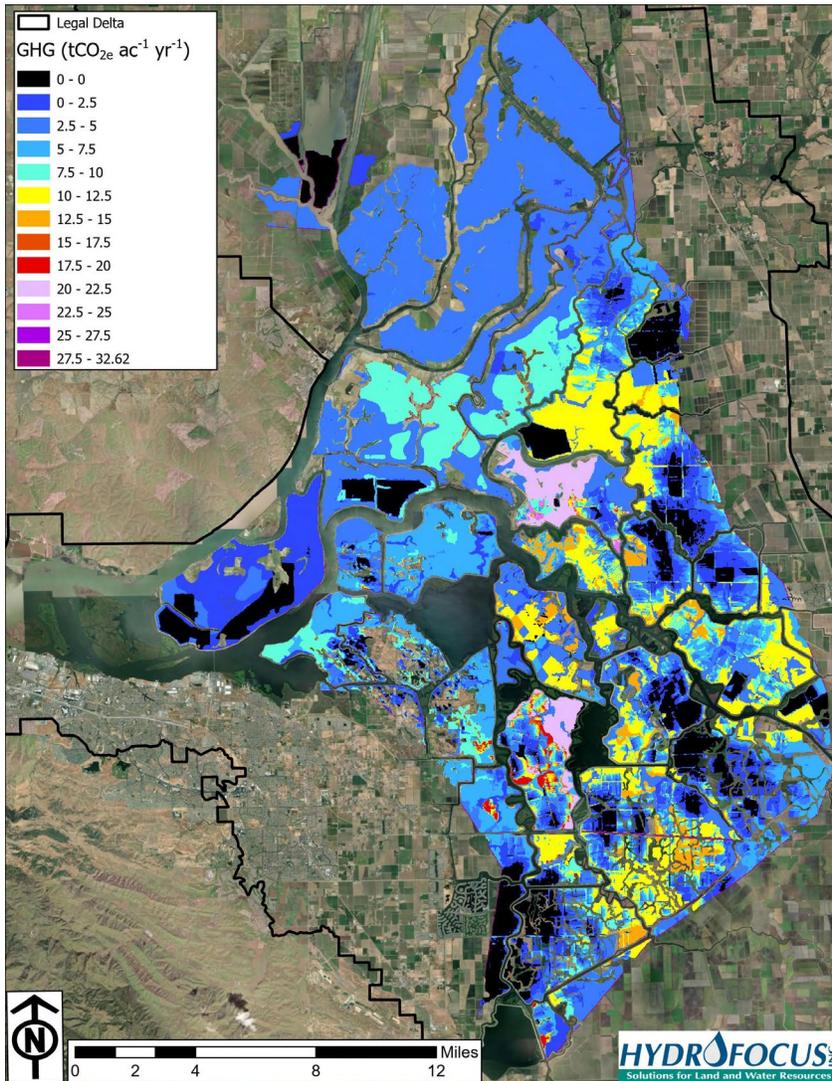


Figure 1. Delta greenhouse gas emissions estimates map showing tons of carbon dioxide equivalents emitted per acre per year throughout the Delta. The Rice Incentive Program should focus on areas currently emitting 7.5 tCO_{2e} per acre per year or more.

II. Proposal Submission

The Conservancy will use its [General Grant Guidelines](#) to administer the grant selection process. Applicants should review the General Grant Guidelines prior to applying for funds.

Application and Review Process

The following section provides a summary of the application and review process.

Concept Proposal

Concept proposals must be received no later than June 15, 2026 using the [Concept Proposal Application and Instructions](#) (available on the Conservancy website) and submitting by email to grants@deltaconservancy.ca.gov. While reviewing the concept proposals, the Conservancy may confer with the applicant to discuss the project or request additional information. An in-person meeting or a site visit may also be deemed necessary.

Viability Assessment

Based on information gathered during the concept proposal stage, Conservancy staff will evaluate the viability of the proposed project by assessing:

- Technical and financial feasibility
- Geographic area and number of acres to be converted to rice
- Benefits to the Delta
- Number of historically underserved farmers being served

Full Proposal

If Conservancy staff determines that a project concept is deemed to be viable and competitive, staff will notify the applicant that they have been chosen to develop the concept into a full proposal.

Full Proposal Assessment and Board Approval

Conservancy staff will assess each full proposal based on the evaluation criteria (see Section IV below) and compare the merits of all full proposals submitted by the due date. Conservancy staff will consult external experts as needed and reach out to applicants if additional information is needed. Staff will recommend the most competitive proposals to the Board at a Board Meeting for consideration of funding. The Conservancy may recommend partial funding or adjust deliverables to maximize the impact of the available funding.

Timeline

Concept proposal due date: June 15, 2026

Full proposal due date: October 30, 2026

Anticipated awards: March 2027

Project start: June 2027

Please contact the Conservancy if the timeline presents a challenge to your project or organization. The Conservancy may be able to adjust timelines particularly for small or under-resourced entities and California's Native American Tribes.

Proposals must be submitted by the deadline to: grants@deltaconservancy.ca.gov.

III. Available Funding

The Conservancy has approximately \$3.5 million dollars available to support grants for the Rice Incentive Program from the Proposition 4 Climate Bond. The Conservancy anticipates awarding two to three grants to organizations serving various populations of farmers. The Conservancy reserves the right to adjust the proposed amount of funding and scope of work to maximize the use of funding.

Consistent with Climate Bond language, the Conservancy may reimburse grantees for indirect costs based on one of the following criteria:

- The grantee's active federally negotiated indirect cost rate (NICRA). Applicants must provide documentation of NICRA.
- The federal de minimis indirect cost rate (15 percent as of October 1, 2024). Note: grantee must document actual costs up to 15 percent.
- A rate negotiated by the grantee with another state agency within the last five years. Applicants must provide documentation to support indirect cost rate calculations.
- If an applicant does not have an existing indirect cost rate, applicants may propose an indirect cost rate. Applicants must provide documentation to support indirect cost rate calculations.

Applicants may request reimbursement for indirect costs for the first \$50,000 of equipment purchases or subcontractor payments. The Conservancy will not reimburse grantees for indirect costs on acquisition fees or for costs associated with subcontractor markup. Please contact Conservancy staff for questions regarding eligible indirect costs.

IV. Funding Considerations

Proposals should clearly describe the project's purpose, expected deliverables, and meaningful benefits while demonstrating feasible project designs, capable teams, and an approach that addresses the needs of historically underserved communities. Projects should also demonstrate readiness to begin and a well-justified budget that matches the scope of work and identifies any cost-share, external funding, or matching funds.

Proposals should present a farmer outreach and enrollment plan inclusive of Historically Underserved Farmers, justify conversion costs using a reasonable method, and describe which communities and populations will benefit and how the project supports their needs.

V. Contact

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

If you have questions, please contact the Conservancy at grants@deltaconservancy.ca.gov or (916) 375-2084.



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

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.

DESCRIPTION

To maintain consistency with other California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) entities, simplify the grant application process, and to be more applicable to multiple funding sources, the General Grant Guidelines were revised. The revised version retains the funding priorities, grant information, proposal and award process, and proposal requirements but scaled back detailed information on specific requirements that will be included in the Solicitation Notice for specific funding opportunities.

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, Section 32364.5). At the July 24, 2024, meeting the Board approved the current Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy General Grant Guidelines (GGG). This item is to approve a revised version of the GGG.

SUGGESTED MOTION LANGUAGE:

Move that the Board approve the updates to Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy General Grant Guidelines for use in granting funds.

CONTACT

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SACRAMENTO - SAN JOAQUIN

DELTA CONSERVANCY

A California State Agency

GENERAL GRANT GUIDELINES

March 2026

Table of Contents

A. Introduction	3
B. Funding Priorities	3
C. Funding Considerations	4
D. Grant Information	5
E. Grant Proposal and Determination Process	8
F. Proposal Requirements	10

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 will use to solicit and select grants. Each grant funding opportunity will be based on these General Guidelines and be further defined by a specific grant solicitation. The General Guidelines supersede all previous grant guidelines. Individual funding sources may also establish additional limitations or require additional guidance as mandated per statute which will be included in the specific grant solicitation notice. 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. For questions or assistance, please contact the Delta Conservancy at (916) 375-2084 or grants@deltaconservancy.ca.gov.

B. Funding Priorities

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy (Conservancy) is a primary state agency in the implementation of ecosystem restoration in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Delta) and Suisun Marsh and supports efforts that advance environmental protection and the economic well-being of Delta residents. The Conservancy's mission is "working 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." All funded projects will support the Conservancy's mission.

The Conservancy has three focus areas: Nature Based Solutions (NBS), community enhancement and access, and ecosystem restoration. NBS goals are to support restoration, conservation, and

climate projects that will stop or reverse ongoing subsidence and reduce greenhouse gas emissions occurring on highly organic soils. NBS projects provide technical assistance and financial support for crop conversion, restoration of managed wetland, research, education and outreach on related topics, land acquisition or easement, and technical assistance to access the Voluntary Carbon Market. Community enhancement and access projects will benefit Delta communities through public access, recreation and tourism, historic and cultural preservation, environmental education, and community engagement or education. Ecosystem Restoration and Climate Adaptation projects will restore and conserve the Delta and Suisun Marsh's natural resources, environment, and biodiversity. Current projects restore, research, plan or educate about landscape health or reduce the risks of climate change impacts upon natural resources, fish, and wildlife.

Priorities within these programs include:

1. Protecting and enhancing habitat and habitat restoration.
2. Protecting and preserving Delta agriculture and working landscapes.
3. Providing increased opportunities for tourism and recreation in the Delta.
4. Promoting Delta legacy communities, historical preservation and economic vitality in the Delta.
5. Mitigating the impacts of climate change and increasing climate change resilience.
6. Increasing the resilience of the Delta to the effects of natural disasters such as floods and earthquakes, in coordination with the Delta Protection Commission.
7. Protecting and improving water quality.
8. Protecting, conserving, and restoring the region's physical, agricultural, cultural, historical, and living resources.
9. Promoting environmental education.
10. Other projects that show a significant benefit to the environment, economy, culture or agriculture in the Delta.
11. Projects that plan for or provide capacity for any of the priorities in this list.

The Conservancy will not fund activities associated with regulatory compliance or mitigation responsibilities.

C. Funding Considerations

The Conservancy evaluates proposals based on how well they align with its mission, strategic plan, and the objectives of the specific funding source, as well as broader state, federal, and regional policies. Proposals are expected to use state resources effectively and responsibly, supported by clear budgets, feasible project designs, capable teams, and an approach that addresses the needs of historically underserved communities.

Projects should also demonstrate readiness to begin and include planning that ensures long-term resilience and sustainability of benefits. Strong, meaningful community engagement is essential, including early collaboration, culturally responsive practices, and accessible participation. In addition, proposals are expected to meaningfully involve tribal leadership and perspectives, respect tribal sovereignty, and integrate traditional ecological knowledge where appropriate.

Finally, projects should offer clear value and multiple meaningful benefits to natural, agricultural, recreational, or cultural resources. They should be grounded in the best available science or traditional ecological knowledge and present achievable, well supported outcomes.

D. Grant Information

This section provides basic information on the types of grants, eligible applicants, and projects.

D1. Grant Categories

Depending upon the limitations and allowances of a particular grant program, the Conservancy may grant funds for the types of activities in the following categories:

Capacity Building

Capacity building is the process of strengthening an organization's skills, systems, resources, and partnerships so it can successfully plan, design, fund, and implement projects. Capacity building must be tied to the mission of the Conservancy and will be prioritized for DACs and SDACs seeking technical assistance and projects for vulnerable populations that include workforce education, training, contractor, and job opportunities.

Feasibility Studies

Feasibility studies are pre-planning activities that assess alternatives, funding sources, laws and regulations, benefits, desirability, location, and scope of potential projects. They result in conceptual plans, cost/benefit analyses, and information on the practicality of a project with low investment of resources. The purpose of feasibility projects is to provide information to project proponents, potential funders, and the community on whether a project would realistically move past the planning phase into implementation.

Planning

Planning projects advance design, permitting, environmental review including California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), community support, and interested party partnership of proposed implementation projects. These

activities include design plans (up to 65 Percent Design Plans), resource assessments, public workshops, baseline monitoring, agency outreach, and community and tribal engagement. Planning does not include any construction or implementation of projects. It is recommended that community outreach, engagement, and some level of feasibility assessment have been completed prior to formal planning.

Pilot Projects

Pilot projects are projects that implement an experimental practice to inform larger scale implementation. 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 the Conservancy to determine the most applicable activity type.

Implementation

Implementation includes activities such as construction or improvement of a capital asset. Planning for implementation activities that include a construction component must, at a minimum, have design plans completed to 65 percent level of development and have completed environmental analysis related to the level of design. 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 NEPA review must be completed prior to grant award. CEQA and NEPA-related activities are not eligible for implementation funding, except in rare instances (e.g., new information requires subsequent analysis).

Land Acquisition or Easement

Land acquisition is the 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 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, or technical or capacity assistance that contributes to the Conservancy's mission, contributes to problem

solving, or advances best available science to enable advancement of high priority initiatives and projects.

D2. Eligibility Requirements

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.

Eligible Grant Recipients

Grants may be awarded to:

- Federal, State and local public agencies including special districts and joint powers authorities (when authorized by specific funding sources)
- Nonprofit organizations with 501(c)(3) status
- Native American Tribes, tribal entities and organizations (when authorized by specific funding sources)

Ineligible Activities and Projects

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
- Endowments

- Food or refreshments (meals included as part of reimbursable travel expenses are eligible)
- Fees or expenses related to tours
- Activities related to eminent domain processes
- Any other activities or expenses that the Conservancy deems an inappropriate use of grant funding

D3. 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, grant funding will be paid in arrears on a reimbursement basis.

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, 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 include or exclude indirect costs as an eligible expense for a specific funding opportunity as agreed upon in advance.

E. Grant Proposal and Determination Process

A grant solicitation, instructions, application forms, announcement of public workshops or 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 may 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 may use a two-step process which consists of a concept proposal and a full proposal.

E1. 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 should use the [Concept Proposal Application and Instructions](#) (available on the Conservancy website) and submit by email to grants@deltaconservancy.ca.gov. Applicants may, and are encouraged to, consult with the Conservancy during the drafting of their concept proposal.

Step 2 Concept Proposal Review

Concept proposals will be assessed based on the criteria in the specific funding solicitation. While reviewing the concept proposals, the Conservancy may confer with the applicant to discuss the project or request additional information. An in-person meeting or a site visit may also be deemed necessary. The Conservancy will review proposals and will invite the proposals deemed to be the most competitive to submit a full proposal. The total of all applications invited back for a full proposal may exceed the total funding available. Applicants invited for a full proposal may be provided with feedback regarding their concept proposals and may be requested to meet with Conservancy staff to discuss feedback if it is relevant to staff review.

E2. Full Proposal

Step 1 Full Proposal Submission

The applicant submits a proposal that comprehensively describes the proposed activities, timeline, budget, and implementation team.

Step 2 Administrative Review

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

At its discretion, the Conservancy may conduct site visits. Applicants may be required to accompany Conservancy staff on site visits.

Step 4 Full Proposal Evaluation

Full proposals will be evaluated using evaluation criteria that will be specified in the solicitation of each funding opportunity and based on the information provided in Sections B and C above. The Conservancy may specify a minimum score that must be obtained 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.

The Conservancy may utilize independent reviewers with technical or subject matter expertise.

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

E3. Board Consideration

All final determinations regarding grant funding will be made by the Conservancy Board at a public meeting. The Delta Conservancy Executive Officer, with coordination of the Conservancy Board Chair or Vice Chair, may award grant funding for projects within the Board's delegation of authority to the Executive Officer. Staff recommendations regarding grant funding will be included in the publicly accessible Board Meeting materials. All applicants and members of the public will have the opportunity to appear before the Board at the public meeting.

The Conservancy may choose to award partial funding to one or more proposals. If the Conservancy receives additional funding, the Board may choose to revisit the submitted applications later without reopening a solicitation or may open a new solicitation. The Conservancy reserves the right to not fund activities that are controversial or to require that any conflict is satisfactorily resolved before awarding funding. The Board may, within its discretion, approve a conditional award of funds.

E4. 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. The specific funding amount, deliverables, or other aspects of the project may be negotiated at this time either by direction of the Board or with minor changes within a scope that would not have affected the competitiveness of the grant if they were included in the original application.

F. Proposal Requirements

Required components of all full proposals include, 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

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 F12. Land Acquisition for more information)
- Maps and site plans
- Letter from landowner/water rights holder (if not the applicant)
- Final environmental review documents
- Covered action checklist
- Letters of support and cost share commitment letters
- Resolutions of support from applicable local government agencies

F1. 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.

F2. 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.

F3. 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. If so, information will be included in the solicitation notice. 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.

F4. Environmental Compliance

Grant-funded activities must comply with applicable state and federal laws and regulations, including CEQA, NEPA, the Delta Plan, and other environmental permitting requirements. While Conservancy staff may assist, applicants are responsible for demonstrating compliance and providing all necessary documentation. If no other agency can act, the Conservancy may serve as the CEQA lead agency, and early coordination is required.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife has established the Cutting the Green Tape Program that provides a suite of tools to reduce unnecessary barriers for conservation projects. This includes the CEQA Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects (SERP) that can save significant time and cost for restoration projects. Note that SERP concurrence for Delta restoration projects will require a letter of support from the Delta Counties Coalition. For additional information on the tools available within the Cutting the Green Tape Program, applicants can visit [Cutting the Green Tape](#).

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, applicants must ensure Delta Plan consistency, consult with the Delta Stewardship Council as needed, and submit a covered action checklist with their full proposal. Activities requiring certification must describe how consistency will be achieved, including any needed adaptive management tasks, and must be certified before funds can be released for construction or implementation.

Assembly Bill (AB) 52 requires the involvement of California Native American tribes in the CEQA environmental review and decision-making process. It mandates early project notification and, if requested, Tribal consultation to evaluate potential impacts on tribal cultural resources. Applicants are responsible for meeting all AB 52 requirements and ensuring that tribal input is

appropriately incorporated into the CEQA process. For additional information on AB 52, applicants can visit the [Native American Heritage Commission website](#).

F5. 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. 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.

F6. Best Available Science and Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) or Traditional Knowledge (TK)

All proposals with a scientific component will be evaluated on the scientific basis of the proposed activities, including TK and TEK when applicable. 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](#). The Delta holds deep cultural significance for Native American Tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the region. As partners in restoration efforts, Native American Tribes can offer Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) and/or Traditional Knowledge (TK) that enhances ecological outcomes while honoring cultural values and properties. To ensure meaningful integration, tribal input should be sought early and maintained throughout project planning and implementation, ideally through a coordinated and collaborative approach that embeds tribal perspectives in core design decisions.

Applicants proposing ecosystem restoration and enhancement activities or Nature Based Solutions 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), [Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy Draft](#)

[for Public Comment](#) (for nature-based solutions projects), [California's Nature-Based Solutions Climate Targets](#) (includes targets for re-wetting peat soils in the Delta and for restoration of tidal wetlands), [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](#).

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 required to be a deliverable.

F10. 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 consistently with the purposes of the grant.

F11. 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.

F12. 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.
- 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.

F16. Demonstration of Local Support

Applicants are expected to demonstrate local support by describing both public and institutional support for the activities, including how the community and Tribes 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, Native American Tribes, other public and private community members and organizations, and surrounding landowners. If an applicant has a specific resolution of support from the affected city, county, tribe or local district, or Native American Tribe, 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.

F17. 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.

F18. 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.

F19. Disadvantaged and Severely Disadvantaged Communities and Vulnerable Populations

Many communities in the Legal Delta and Suisun Marsh are considered disadvantaged communities (DAC) or severely disadvantaged communities (SDAC) or vulnerable populations. 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. A vulnerable population is a subgroup within a region or community that faces a disproportionately heightened risk or increased sensitivity to impacts of climate change and that lacks adequate resources to cope with, adapt to, or recover from such impacts.

Mapping resources available for the purpose of identifying SDACs and DACs by census tract or block group are available on the [Disadvantaged and Severely Disadvantaged Communities Mapping Tool](#). The Conservancy may consider other means of identifying SDACs, DACs, and vulnerable populations and the specific funding sources may specify alternative definitions or specify methods for identification which will be included in the solicitation notice.

F20. 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, SDACs and DACs and other underrepresented groups as well as involve leadership from these groups in the planning and execution of their projects. 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. It is strongly recommended that the community is engaged in the design and leadership of the project. Extra consideration will be given for projects that demonstrate inclusion.