



State Water Resources Control Board

INVITATION TO TRIBAL LISTENING SESSION ON STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD EFFORTS TO UPDATE AND IMPLEMENT THE WATER QUALITY CONTROL PLAN FOR THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY/SACRAMENTO-SAN JOAQUIN DELTA ESTUARY

Dear Honorable Tribal Leaders,

The State Water Board respectfully requests the participation of California Native American Tribal Chairpersons in a tribal listening session taking place on Wednesday, March 15, 2023. The tribal listening session will provide an overview of the State Water Board's mission and responsibilities as well as current efforts to update and implement the Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary (Bay-Delta Plan), including consideration of possible Voluntary Agreements. The tribal listening session will consist of a presentation by staff from the State Water Board, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and California Department of Water Resources (DWR) followed by a discussion to gather feedback and answer questions.

This tribal listening session is intended to supplement, not replace, tribal consultations. Government-to-government consultations can be arranged at the request of tribal leadership.

State Water Board staff appreciates the opportunity to meet with your Tribe to discuss the Bay-Delta Plan. Meaningful engagement with California Native American Tribes is fundamental to the mission of the State Water Board. Working with California Native American Tribes holds a special value at the Water Boards because of our parallel relationship to the people we serve and because of tribes' historic knowledge and experience managing California's water resources since time immemorial.

E. JOAQUIN ESQUIVEL, CHAIR | EILEEN SOBECK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

HOW TO JOIN THE MEETING

The tribal listening session will be held virtually via the Zoom meeting platform. A call-in option is also available.

Wednesday, March 15, 2023

1:30 PM – 4:30 PM

Zoom registration link:

<https://waterboards.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEvd-ugqTosHNVvyIA-OxE25jPok1whvMMU>

Zoom telephone number: 1 (669) 900-9128

Meeting ID: 952 0287 1661

Password: 254815

BACKGROUND

Protecting the Bay-Delta watershed is one of the State Water Board's primary responsibilities and top priorities. The State Water Board is responsible for adopting and updating the Bay-Delta Plan, which identifies beneficial uses of water in the Bay-Delta watershed, water quality objectives for the reasonable protection of those beneficial uses, and a program of implementation to achieve the objectives.

The Bay-Delta watershed is a critical part of California's water supply system and provides habitat for fish, wildlife, and species with high ecological, economic, and cultural importance. Native species in the Bay-Delta ecosystem are experiencing an ecological crisis due to habitat conversion, degraded water quality, reductions in flows, changes in the timing and distribution of flows, and the inability to access natal habitats blocked by dams and levees. This has led to severe declines, and in some cases extinctions, of native fish and other aquatic species. The State Water Board is actively working to address many of these issues through the update and implementation of the Bay-Delta Plan.

The Bay-Delta Plan is currently in the process of being updated and implemented through two separate processes called Plan amendments. The first Plan amendment is focused on Lower San Joaquin River flows and southern Delta salinity and the second Plan amendment is focused on the Sacramento River, Bay-Delta, and Delta Eastside Tributaries. The State Water Board is actively seeking consultation with California Native American Tribes on these processes.

In December 2018, the State Water Board adopted Bay-Delta Plan amendments focused on Lower San Joaquin River flows for the protection of fish and wildlife and southern Delta salinity for the protection of agriculture. On July 15, 2022, the State Water Board issued a Notice of Preparation and announced a California Environmental Quality Act scoping meeting for a proposed regulation to implement the 2018 Bay-Delta Plan update. As part of that process, in October 2022, the State Water Board sent letters to California Native American Tribes in accordance with Assembly Bill 52 (AB52) and Executive Order B-10-11 (B-10-11) to provide an opportunity for consultation related to the proposed implementation regulation.

The State Water Board is also considering updates to the Bay-Delta Plan focused on the Sacramento River and its tributaries, Delta eastside tributaries (including Calaveras, Cosumnes, and Mokelumne rivers), interior Delta flows, and Delta outflows. Currently, the State Water Board is developing a Staff Report/Substitute Environmental Document as

part of this Plan amendment. This document provides background on the purpose and need for updating the Bay-Delta Plan, project alternatives (including a potential Voluntary Agreement alternative), as well as technical, environmental, and economic analyses of the proposed alternatives, among other information. The Staff Report/Substitute Environmental Document is still being drafted with an anticipated public release date of late spring/early summer 2023. In January 2023, the State Water Board sent letters to California Native American Tribes in accordance with B-10-11 to provide an opportunity for consultation regarding the Sacramento/Delta update to the Bay-Delta Plan.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

More information on the State Water Board's Bay-Delta planning and implementation processes is available at:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/bay_delta/

If you would like to receive email updates about the State Water Board's Bay-Delta planning and implementation processes, please sign up for the State Water Board's "Water Rights – Bay Delta Notices" email list at:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/resources/email_subscriptions/swrcb_subscribe.html.

CONTACT

If you require special accommodations or have any questions regarding this invitation, please email Rob McCarthy at: Robert.McCarthy@waterboards.ca.gov.