

Meeting Summary
 Community Benefits Program Workshop
 Delta Conveyance Project
 California Department of Water Resources
 May 25, 2021, 6pm - 8pm

Meeting Synopsis

On May 25, 88 people attended the third Community Benefits Program Workshop. Royce Fast, President of the Kern County Water Agency, Board of Directors, welcomed participants. Carrie Buckman, Environmental Program Manager, Department of Water Resources (DWR), reviewed how the Community Benefits Program fits into the Delta Conveyance Project and described the proposed Community Benefits Program. Graham Bradner, Executive Director of the Delta Conveyance Design and Construction Authority (DCA) reviewed the Community Benefits Program economic development and integrated benefits program component.

DWR is proposing a Community Benefits Program for the Delta Conveyance Project. Background on the proposed program is available on the Delta Conveyance Project <https://water.ca.gov/deltaconveyance>. This third Workshop focused on ensuring participants understand the Community Benefits Program, providing a recap from of the first two workshops, and receiving input and feedback from participants on opportunities for economic development, including targeted hiring, local business utilization, and integrated infrastructure. Participants provided input via Zoom polls, asking questions, and making suggestions. The Workshop concluded with how DWR will use participant input to develop the Community Benefits Program Framework. DWR will include the Framework as an appendix to the project’s Draft Environmental Impact Report.

Workshop participants represented the following California Counties:

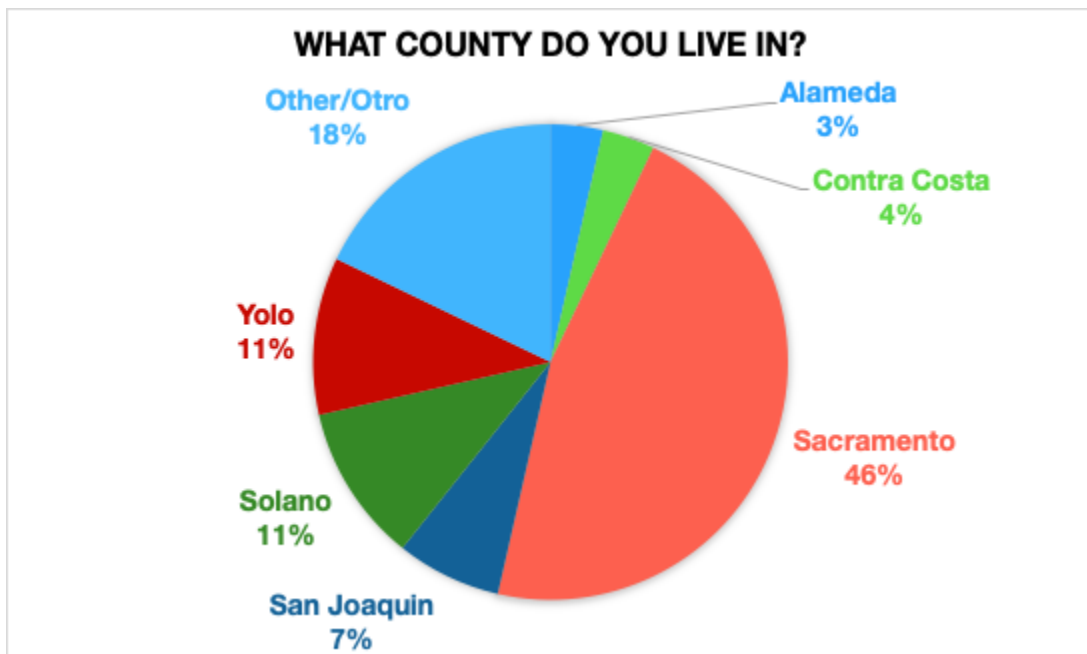


Table of Contents

Meeting Synopsis	1
Table of Contents	2
Welcome and Introductions	3
Delta Conveyance Project and Community Benefits Program Overview	3
Economic Development and Integrated Benefits	4
Target Hiring	4
Business Participation Programs	5
Integrated infrastructure or “Leave Behinds.”	5
Community Engagement in Ongoing Program Development Overview and Discussion	6
General Public Input and Feedback	6
Next Steps	8

This meeting summary paraphrases individual comments and suggestions from participants in the Community Benefits Program Workshop.

All materials are available to participants at the [DWR website](#).

*For questions, please contact DWR at DeltaConveyanceCBP@water.ca.gov
1-866-924-9955.*

Welcome and Introductions

Juliana Birkhoff, Managing Facilitator, Ag Innovations, introduced Royce Fast. She explained that Mr. Fast is the President of the Kern County Water Agency Board of Directors. She said that Mr. Fast is involved in the State Water Project, the Delta Conveyance Project, and local groundwater management projects. Mr. Fast is from Bakersfield and is a fourth-generation farmer..

Mr. Fast welcomed participants to the Community Benefit Workshop. He said the Community Benefits Fund is an important part of the Delta Conveyance Project. For the Community Benefits Program to work, he explained, DWR and the participating water agencies need to hear the ideas of the Delta community. He said he was a fourth-generation farmer and knows there are many multi-generation farmers in the Delta. He recognized the Delta as an extremely important agricultural region. He noted that no one understands the needs of the region better than the people that live, farm, and work in the Delta. He said any Community Benefits Fund should include projects and programs that reflect the needs of the local community. Mr. Fast explained that participants are the best people to define what Delta community needs are. He concluded with an appreciation for the participants ideas and time.

Delta Conveyance Project and Community Benefits Program Overview

Carrie Buckman, Environmental Program Manager for the Delta Conveyance Project, DWR, presented the purpose of the Delta Conveyance Project. Ms. Buckman started by noting that State Water Project (SWP) infrastructure is aging. She said that modernizing SWP infrastructure would restore and protect the future reliability of SWP water deliveries. Ms. Buckman outlined that the proposed project is designed to modernize the infrastructure in a cost-effective way and is consistent with California's Water Resilience Portfolio.

Ms. Buckman described the four Delta Conveyance Project objectives. These are:

- Address sea level rise and climate change.
- Minimize water supply and disruption due to seismic risk.
- Protect water supply reliability.
- Provide operational flexibility to improve aquatic conditions.

Ms. Buckman also outlined the timeline for the proposed project, identifying the next major milestone as the release of a public review Draft Environmental Impact Report in early to mid-2022. A PDF version of the PowerPoint presentation and a link to the recorded Workshop can be found at <https://water.ca.gov/Programs/State-Water-Project/Delta-Conveyance/Community%20Benefits%20Program> Ms. Buckman explained that the Community Benefits Program is part of DWR's approach to addressing impacts from Delta Conveyance Project construction and operations that are not addressed through traditional mitigation. She clarified that regulatory mitigation would address proposed project impacts based on requirements in environmental regulations. Ms. Buckman said the proposed Community Benefits Program would provide resources for direct benefits to communities most impacted by project implementation. She described the proposed Ombudsman Program as a program to provide information, explore complaints, and provide compensation for potential unforeseen construction impacts. Taken together, DWR proposes the three processes to address community impacts.

Ms. Buckman outlined five core commitments for the proposed Community Benefits Program. She described the five commitments as:

1. **Transparent:** open process to collaborate effectively
2. **Constructive:** participation in good faith with the community to create a positive legacy
3. **Inclusive:** broad stakeholder participation to expand capture of voices
4. **Fair:** benefits related to localized nature of effects

5. **Unconditional:** community benefits are not dependent on support for the project. Ms. Buckman explained that the Community Benefits Fund is a proposed fund to support grassroots developed ideas for the Delta community. She explained that DWR proposed creating the Community Benefits Program to acknowledge:

- The direct project benefits are not located inside the Delta.
- If the project is approved, the project could have potential adverse effects on the Delta through construction.
- The limitations of traditional environmental mitigation.

Ms. Buckman explained that DWR has heard suggestion about the Community Benefits program through interviews, and two online public workshops. DWR has heard:

- People do not like the Delta Conveyance project but are prepared to discuss the Community Benefit Program
- There are revisions to the concept, purpose, objectives, and funding categories of the Community Benefits Program.
- Many thoughtful and comprehensive suggestions about funding ideas to possibly include in a Delta Fund

Economic Development and Integrated Benefits

Graham Bradner, Executive Director of the Delta Conveyance DCA explained the economic development and integrated project benefits of the Community Benefits Program. The DCA helps design, develop, and, if approved, implement the proposed Delta Conveyance program. Mr. Bradner's presentation focused on potential facilities and locations, economic development, and integrated project benefits or "Leave Behinds". To begin Mr. Bradner reviewed the location and facilities for the proposed project. He pointed out the proposed locations for intakes, tunnels, pumping plants, forebays, and the South Delta conveyance facilities.

Mr. Bradner explained that there are two key areas of economic development which include targeted hiring and business participation programs. The goal would be to find ways to target portions of the massive investment required to deliver the Delta Conveyance Project toward the regions most impacted by construction and populations or businesses that have historically been disadvantaged in public works contracting.

Throughout the presentation, participants used the chat function to ask questions and participated in Zoom polls to give feedback on each segment.

Target Hiring

Mr. Bradner explained target hiring as an opportunity to increase participation of socially or economically disadvantaged workers in a project or program. He said targeted hiring programs can create long-lasting economic stability for targeted workers. The programs can provide an economic stimulus within their communities. Mr. Bradner noted that most successful programs include partnerships with existing jobs training, pre-apprenticeship, and other workforce development organizations to help create a pipeline of qualified workers. Mr. Bradner provided a case study of 8 different example targeted hiring programs and highlighted differences in their implementation.

- A participant asked if there would be limitation on the kinds of construction workers who would be in the targeted hire program. For example, would the program only include union workers, only women, or are these just example ideas?
 - Mr. Bradner responded that he was presenting ideas to illustrate varieties in different programs. Targeted businesses could include small businesses, emerging small businesses, veteran, women, black, indigenous, people of color owned. A wide variety of businesses could be included.

Mr. Bradner asked participants to provide input, via Zoom poll, about targeted hiring. Below are participants responses to the poll:

Your Input on Targeted Hiring Program	
The targeted hiring program sounds great, just what we need!	0%
The targeted hiring program is a good idea but needs to be adapted to the Delta.	80%
No, targeted hiring is not for us.	10%
I do not know or do not have an opinion, maybe I do not understand, or maybe I need more time to think about It.	10%

Business Participation Programs

Mr. Bradner explained that business participation programs address the effects of past discrimination by increasing participation of disadvantaged businesses in public contracting. The programs provide guidance or mandates that a percentage of all services, goods, or materials must come from targeted businesses. These programs can direct contracting or contracting advantages to specific business types where a characteristic can benefit work performance.

He further explained that the programs can create sustainable businesses and economic stimulus; close to 50% of all Californians are employed by small businesses. Mr. Bradner provided a case study of 3 different example business participation programs and highlighted differences in their implementation.

- A participant asked if there were specific, small business targets?
 - Mr. Bradner explained that it was too early for specific business targets. Different programs vary in how they approach business participation. The case studies show different approaches.

Your Input on Business Participation Program?	
A business participation program will have a great economic benefit for the Delta.	14%
This is a good idea, but it needs to be tailored to the Delta to have much effect.	55%
This is not a good idea for us, not worth the energy and resources to develop.	0%
I do not know of do not have an opinion, maybe I need more information or just to think about It some more.	32%

Integrated infrastructure or “Leave Behinds.”

Mr. Bradner explained integrated infrastructure or “Leave Behinds”. He said as the state constructs the Delta Conveyance Project it may be possible to integrate a public benefit with the functional requirements of the Project.. For example, the construction could add bike paths along haul routes, a ball field around a maintenance area, or a public walking path near intake areas. Mr. Bradner said that integrated benefits might include other ideas, such as extending high speed internet service. Mr. Bradner provided a case study of an example project with integrated infrastructure and additional examples of integrated site beneficial uses and utility and logistics dual benefits.

Mr. Bradner asked participants for feedback on integrated infrastructure ideas through a Zoom poll. These are the results:

Do you support the idea of "co-siting" community needs and project facilities?	
Yes	73%
No	5%
I do not know or have an opinion yet.	23%

- A participant wondered if the program would go forward if the Delta Conveyance Project was not permitted.
 - Mr. Bradner explained that The Community Benefits Program is part of the Delta Conveyance Project. If the Delta Conveyance Project does not move forward, then the business utilization and integrated benefits would also not be implemented.
- A participant asked if any of the integrated infrastructure locations could flood in case of levee failure.
 - Mr. Bradner responded that it is not possible to answer because they have not been determined yet. Certainly, the considerations of flooding would be a key factor of future design.

Community Engagement in Ongoing Program Development Overview and Discussion

The facilitator also asked participants to provide information and input on the next steps to develop the Community Benefits Program.

- What does the Delta community need to provide input on the program?
- Ideas and suggestions on next steps and structure/organization?

General Public Input and Feedback

What does the Delta community need to provide input on the program?

- A participant said he understands the desire for the project and did understand that everybody needs water. However, he wanted to know how the project addresses adverse construction effects. Would DWR consider adverse effects after construction, for example, Delta water quality or levee failure?
 - Ms. Buckman explained that as part of the environmental analysis process, DWR is looking at the potential environmental impacts associated with both the current and long-term operation of the project. She explained that DWR would look at the impact to build and operate the project. She noted that if DWR finds significant adverse effects, there will be measures to avoid or reduce or mitigate the effects.
 - She also explained that people suggested levee improvements and water quality in previous workshops. Levee improvements could provide benefits and could live on throughout the implementation of the project.
- Another participant asked if the business program could include levee maintenance businesses?
 - Mr. Bradner responded that the program could be open to local qualified small businesses. Examples such as levee maintenance might be the kind of business that could be supported.

- Another participant noted that previous meetings discussed a range of community benefits in several categories. However, the discussion about targeted hiring, utilizing local business, and integrating infrastructure in the existing facilities, seems limited to large infrastructure. What happened to all the ideas discussed at the last Workshop?
 - Ms. Buckman responded that DWR understands this is large infrastructure project. The project will need a qualified workforce and local businesses to support it. DWR is developing approaches to create long-lasting economic benefits for the region. The goal is to develop programs and economic development that lives well beyond the construction phase of this project.
 - She explained that integrated design benefits may be unrelated to the actual design of the actual project. Some regional or local benefits might include power for local communities who need a more reliable source of power or creating more high-speed internet to the local communities. She explained that these ideas are not required as part of the project, necessarily, but they would be benefits for the people who are living and dealing with this project during construction.
 - For the other Community Benefits ideas, all the project ideas that people had from the last Workshop have been added to ideas from tribal Workshop and interviews. There is a long list of ideas, independent of the Project, that the Community Benefits Program could fund if it is approved. This list will be attached to the Community Benefits Program Framework.

- A participant asked if DWR has concluded if construction work around this project will use project labor agreements? Has DWR decided that construction work will be union only or if there will be opportunities for non-signatory contractors. Would DWR use non-signatory contractors' workforces and apprenticeship programs?
 - Mr. Bradner responded that DWR and DCA were still in the early phases. The goal is to hear from the community about what could be beneficial. DWR and DCA do not have a plan that lays out how we would specifically accomplish the types of benefits that the community might ask for.

- A participant said the Delta Conveyance Project carries water south and has no connection whatsoever with improving or restoring the Delta water quality. What is the goal for the water project and what will it do for Delta water?
 - Ms. Buckman responded that DWR was the owner and operator of the SWP. The purpose of the Delta Conveyance Project is for DWR to restore and protect the water supplies to the Central Valley, parts of the Bay Area, parts of the Central Coast, and Southern California. The Community Benefits Program can provide a way to provide Delta benefits. For example, many people have suggested ideas to improve Delta water quality through the Community Benefits Program.

- A participant noted that everyone agrees that Delta suffers from a lack of good internet service. So, it makes sense to provide that. It is also important to reduce project footprints. If leaving behind sports fields and bike paths creates a bigger footprint, then it might not be worthwhile. It is also important to remember there are regionally based needs within the Delta itself. Something that works in the North Delta might not work in the south part of the Delta or the central part of the Delta and vice versa. It will be important to understand the different needs of Delta communities.
 - Mr. Bradner said he appreciated that minimizing footprints made sense.

- A participant asked if natural habitat restoration could be a leave behind?
 - Ms. Buckman responded that as part of the environmental processes under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), DWR will be analyzing potential effects and identifying mitigation. There will be habitat restoration actions as part of the mitigation measures that are required as part of the Environmental Impact Report.

- However, there is the potential for habitat restoration, in addition to what is required by CEQA, to be part of a Community Benefits Program. For example, as DWR looks at facilities, the construction area may be larger than the permanent long-term footprint. One idea is to return some of that area to agricultural use, or flood protection, or habitat restoration.
- A participant explained his understanding of the construction and operations impact of the project. He explained that he had not heard any ideas of how the Community Benefits Program would address those concerns. He said there were economic, traffic, water, and agricultural impacts. He did not see how anything proposed would address all the projects going on in the area. How would these programs address floods, drought, there are too many agencies involved and too many projects going on in this area to keep track of everything. Under climate change scenarios, flooding and drought will be more extreme. He concluded that he did not see how DWR would address all the impacts that will result from the project.
 - Ms. Buckman noted that the Delta Conveyance Project is designed to provide reliability for the SWP. DWR will include an assessment of flood and traffic effects municipalities and legacy communities in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR). DWR will also be looking at possible traffic effects of construction roads, construction workers, or construction equipment coming in and out of the Twin Cities. If DWR finds any effects, the EIR will propose ways to mitigate that impact. The Environmental Impact Report will be available for the public in mid-2022.
 - Ms. Buckman acknowledged there are a lot of different efforts in the Delta. DWR will look at the cumulative effect of past, present, and future projects. That analysis will be a part of the Environmental Impact Report.
- A participant asked if DWR was exploring other alternatives to the Delta Conveyance Project.
 - Ms. Buckman responded that DWR is the owner and operator of the SWP. It will not meet the SWP fundamental project purpose if DWR leaves it to degrade. DWR will examine the environmental impact of a “no project” alternative in the EIR. DWR will also conduct a cost-benefit analysis that, in conjunction with the environmental analysis, will be considered before decisions are made regarding potential approval of the Project.
- A participant commented that Delta is a water-based agricultural and recreational region. Any project that impacts the Delta as a viable agricultural and recreational region based around water is a problem. Community Benefit Program or economic development ideas need to focus on the characteristics of the Delta as it is. He noted that there should be good jobs, especially for people in Sacramento and Elk Grove. But the leave behind should focus on projects that support the Delta's character.
- A participant asked where was the best place to find the most up-to-date information about the Delta Conveyance Project?
 - Mr. Bradner responded that there was up to date information on the Delta Conveyance Design and Construction Authority website at <https://www.dcdca.org>. The DCA website includes virtual tours for the entire project. This will give you a flyby of the entire project from one end to the other, you can see where all the features are. There is also information on Facebook and YouTube.

Next Steps

The facilitator thanked participants. She noted that there would be a meeting summary posted on the Website. The draft Community Benefits Program Framework will be included as an appendix in the Draft EIR, expected Mid-2022. Meanwhile, DWR will provide tools and resources to the community to help further develop the Community Benefits Program.