

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

# MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING

Thursday, May 15, 2025

2:00 p.m.

(Paragraph numbers coincide with agenda item numbers)

## 1. CALL TO ORDER

The special meeting of the Delta Conveyance Design and Construction Authority (DCA) Board of Directors was called to order in person, by teleconference, and remotely - Conference Access Information: Phone Number: (669) 444-9171, Code: 89213820093#, <https://dcdca-org.zoom.us/j/89213820093?from=addon> at 2:00 pm.

Board members in attendance from the DCA remote location at the Portola Hotel & Spa were Director Gary Martin, Director John Weed, and Alternate Director Dennis LaMoreaux sitting in for Director Adnan Anabtawi. President Martin Milobar participated remotely from Kern County Water Agency. Director Tony Estremera, Director Robert Cheng, and Director Miguel Luna participated from remote locations.

Alternate Directors Sarah Palmer attended from the DCA remote location and Alternate Director Michael Plinski attended remotely; the Board Clerk captured their attendance for the record.

DCA staff members in attendance were Graham Bradner and Josh Nelson.

## 2. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

### a) Discuss and Consider Support for Governor's Legislative Proposals to Fast-Track Delta Conveyance Project, a Critical Water Infrastructure Project

#### *Approve Resolution*

Mr. Bradner presented to the Board that Governor Newsom recently announced a number of proposed trailer bills to assist efforts to modernize critical water infrastructure through the Delta Conveyance Project (DCP). These proposals will help streamline alternative processes for DCP, saving time and money to adapt State Water Project (SWP) to the effects of climate change, protect against earthquake risk.

The proposals preserve environmental protection while promoting efficiency and expediency that will allow DCP to save years and billions of dollars by avoiding delays. The

trailer bill language has not yet been released. However, the Governor's press release is anticipated to address four (4) main points. First, simplifying permitting. The proposal would simplify permitting for projecting certain deadlines from the existing SWP water right permits, recognizing that the SWP should continue serving California's water needs indefinitely. The proposal will also strengthen enforcement of the State Water Board's existing rules for permit protests. Second, confirming funding authority. The proposal confirms that the Department of Water Resources (DWR) has the authority to issue bonds for the cost of the DCP water agencies. Third, preventing unnecessary litigation delays. The proposal narrows and streamlines judicial review of future challenges to the DCP, building on models that have served other large public works projects. Lastly, supporting construction. The proposal streamlines the authority to acquire land supporting the ultimate construction of the DCP.

Mr. Bradner expressed his appreciation for the Governor's leadership and recognized the urgency of the DCP and the opportunity to modernize how we move critical infrastructure forward.

He concluded by articulating that staff strongly supports the Governor's forward-thinking approach and recommends that the Board consider authorizing the Board President and/or the Executive Director to issue letters of support for the proposals. As specific bills are released, letters will be drafted and sent as appropriate.

President Milobar also thanked Governor Newsom for his continued leadership and prioritizing California's water future. He expressed his support for the efforts to move this project forward and is proud to stand behind the direction outlined by the Governor, noting that this is about protecting California's water supply now and into the future. President Milobar also commended Ms. Karla Nemeth for her leadership and hard work on this project as the Director of the DWR.

Director Estremera stated that his agency (Santa Clara Valley Water District) issued a press release the previous day to support the Governor's actions, emphasizing that this is the path forward to getting the project done. He noted that Silicon Valley depends heavily on the Delta for its water. He stressed the importance of the project to the region, which includes some of the largest corporations on the planet. He underscored the responsibility of the SWP to serve the community and its constituents. He concluded by stating that they are satisfied with the recent developments and thanked the Governor and Director Nemeth for their efforts in moving the DCP forward.

Director Cheng expressed support for the Governor's and Ms. Nemeth's actions, describing their support as bold and commendable. He acknowledged the controversy surrounding

the DCP and anticipates continued discussion but emphasized that this show of support is both welcomed and necessary as a catalyst to advance the DCP to its next phase.

Director Martin offered full support for the Board’s action and expressed appreciation for the Governor’s decision, noting that it will help save people across California potentially millions of dollars by avoiding delay-related costs.

Alternate Director Palmer provided a public comment on the item, she stated that she had attended a meeting where Ms. Nemeth spoke about the DCP, along with several federal representatives. She remarked that while not everyone may feel entirely enthusiastic, there is reason to be optimistic about the progress being made. She emphasized the long-term significance of the DCP, noting that it is not about short-term gains within a single political term, but rather about shaping California’s future over the next 50 years and beyond.

She referenced discussions at the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) conference, informing the Board that the efforts for the Central Valley Project (CVP) and the SWP would have cost an estimated \$30B to \$40B when adjusted for present-day value, placing the current project in a similar scope and scale. While acknowledging the immense cost, she stressed the importance of recent actions by the Governor, Ms. Nemeth, and others in making it possible to potentially consider bond financing as a viable option.

She concluded by stating that viewing the project as an extension of the SWP and investing in California’s long-term water infrastructure represents an important opportunity. She praised the leadership of Governor Newsom, Ms. Nemeth, and the collaboration with federal partners, and closed by expressing optimism for the forward and upward path ahead.

No further comments or questions were received from the Board, nor were any public comment requests received.

Recommended Action: Authorize Letters of Support from President and Executive Director by Motion.

Motion to Approve Authorizing Letters of Support from President and Executive Director for Governor’s Legislative Proposals to Fast-Track Delta Conveyance Project, as

Noted:	Luna
Second:	Estremera
Yeas:	Milobar, Martin, Luna, Estremera, Cheng, LaMoreaux, Weed
Nays:	None
Abstains:	None
Recusals:	None

Absent: None

Summary: 7 Yeas; 0 Nays; 0 Abstain; 0 Absent. (Motion by Minute Order 25-05-01).

**3. ADJOURNMENT:**

President Milobar adjourned the meeting at 2:08 p.m., remotely-Conference Access Information: Phone Number: (669) 444-9171, Code: 89213820093#, <https://dcdca-org.zoom.us/j/89213820093?from=addon>