MEMORANDUM

October 14, 2022

TO: Melinda Terry, NDWA/CCVFCA
Dante Nomellini, Sr., CDWA
John Herrick, SDWA

FROM: Gilbert Cosio

SUBJECT: Summary of Delta Adapts Meeting with DSC Staff

John, Dante & Melinda,

As we have discussed, I will be representing your interests and meeting with the DSC staff relative to development of the Delta Adapts plans. Our first meeting with the full staff was October 7. It included 15 DSC staff and 2 of their consultants. The discussion centered on description of their current status of the plans relative to Ag, Flood and Ecosystem. In addition, Jessica Rudnick requested that farmers consider filling out the farmer surveys and would encourage additional in-person meetings with farmers. Both of these have proven fruitful in hearing what farmers are thinking about the future, which helps the staff out greatly. She asked for your assistance in getting the word out to your constituents.

Following are brief descriptions of the focus topics.

Ag Focus Group

In past meetings, concern was raised by local stakeholders regarding the development and use of the Delta Ag Production model (DAP) to estimate impacts to agriculture due to climate change. DSC staff and its consultants have begun making changes to the model based on comments received at the August model subcommittee meeting. The model will no longer incorporate salinity's impact on water supply availability and impact on crops. The main climate change stressors will be temperature increase and reduction in available June water. The June available water had originally been estimated at 32% below current levels. After some additional research it was determined to lower this estimate to 20% in the south Delta, 18% in the central Delta and 15% in the north Delta. It was also agreed that crop use will be based on OpenET. We did not discuss issues regarding sea level rise impact on the water table and how farmers will react to that impact.

Flood Focus Group

During the Flood Focus Group meetings, questions were raised by local stakeholders regarding the design used for estimating costs to maintain the level of protection as flood levels rise due to sea level rise and climate change. Concerns were also raised about how the model being developed to estimate levee work and costs was using very coarse estimates of levee height and peat thickness. DSC staff reported that they have been working on alleviating those concerns by syncing levee height and peat thickness on a finer scale and have set up the model to use PL84-99 single slope criteria as the design. The model essentially compiles a look-up table that estimates costs based on levee height and peat thickness. For non-construction costs (engineering, regulatory permitting, construction inspection, etc.) DSC will be using percentages that have been reviewed recently by local engineering firms. We did not discuss specifics like location of borrow material and other individual line-item cost details. The model assumes that the non-project levees all start at the Bulletin 192-82 geometry and level of protection and 2030 hydrology. Based on all of the above, DSC reported that preliminary estimates indicate the total cost to be in the neighborhood of $4 billion. It's hard to evaluate whether this is reasonable, we need to see more specifics as they are developed, especially in the south Delta were local stakeholders have concerns about the future hydrology and the resulting levee vulnerability. Although the number is large, the total price is not as high as UC Davis and others had estimated in the past.

Ecosystem Focus Group

The Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee (DPIIC) has been looking at ecosystem restoration and has begun developing a restoration plan. Sometime in early 2023 a restoration forum will be held and landowners and farmers are being encouraged to attend. To schedule and plan this forum, the Delta Conservancy has sent out a survey link to solicit input about availability from stakeholders. The survey is very basic and doesn't take much time to fill out. Here is the link to the survey:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1KbMwbXVaRNefPvkCh9mNYueA3n31xTVWcVpr8bBsFJA/viewform?ts=62ed8909&edit_requested=true

The restoration plan's goal is to establish 50,000 to 80,000 acres of habitat. This includes the 30,000 acres already in progress through the EcoRestore program which means 20,000 to 50,000 acres are needed in the future to reach this goal. Attached are several maps from Chapter 4 of the Delta Plan showing the potential location of habitat restoration. The Ecosystem Focus Group will be presented 3 scenarios for future restoration. The first scenario will concentrate on utilizing "publicly owned" lands. This includes properties owned by the Nature Conservancy and Metropolitan Water District. Scenario 2 will complete restoration on publicly owned land, but will also indicate desired additional acres needed in various parts of the Delta. There is a plan to encourage conversion of land to rice cultivation, and development of habitat on ground that may no longer be farmable. The hope is that these acres will come from willing sellers. MWD has obtained a grant and is currently working on a plan to develop a mosaic of land uses that may help landowners and reclamation districts incorporate cropping changes and habitat development in the future. Scenario 3 has not been fully developed as it will need more stakeholder input since most of the land used for habitat development is currently in private ownership.

The DSC plans to reach out to stakeholders before any additional focus group meetings are held. They are hoping to meet with stakeholders before the end of November. They are seeing the value of getting intermediate feedback before the more formal focus group meetings.

Let me know if you have any questions re the above. I will compile my own questions, but if you have any issues you would like brought up in our discussions, let me know.

Thanks,

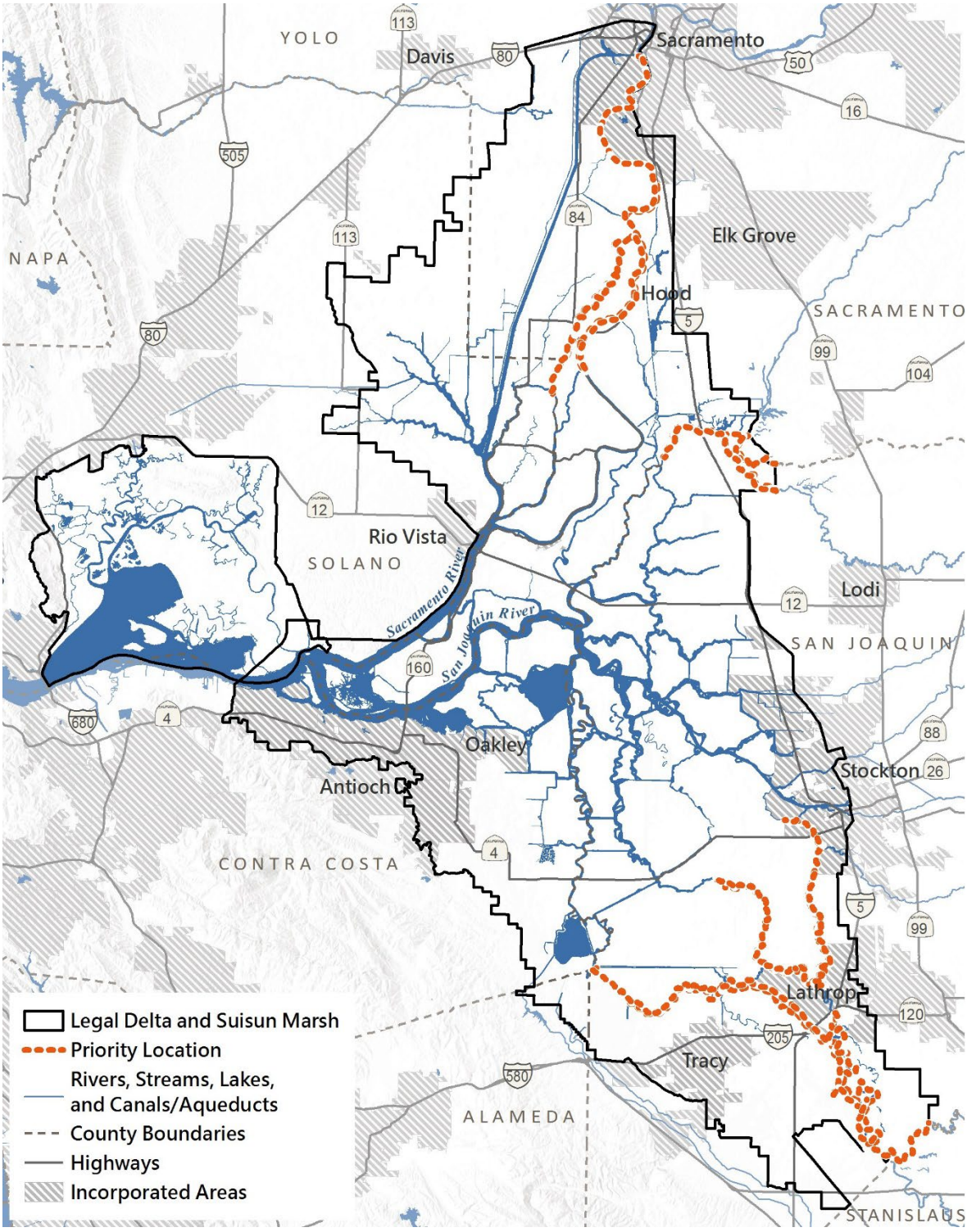

Figure 4-4. Priority Locations to Evaluate Physical Expansion of Floodplains

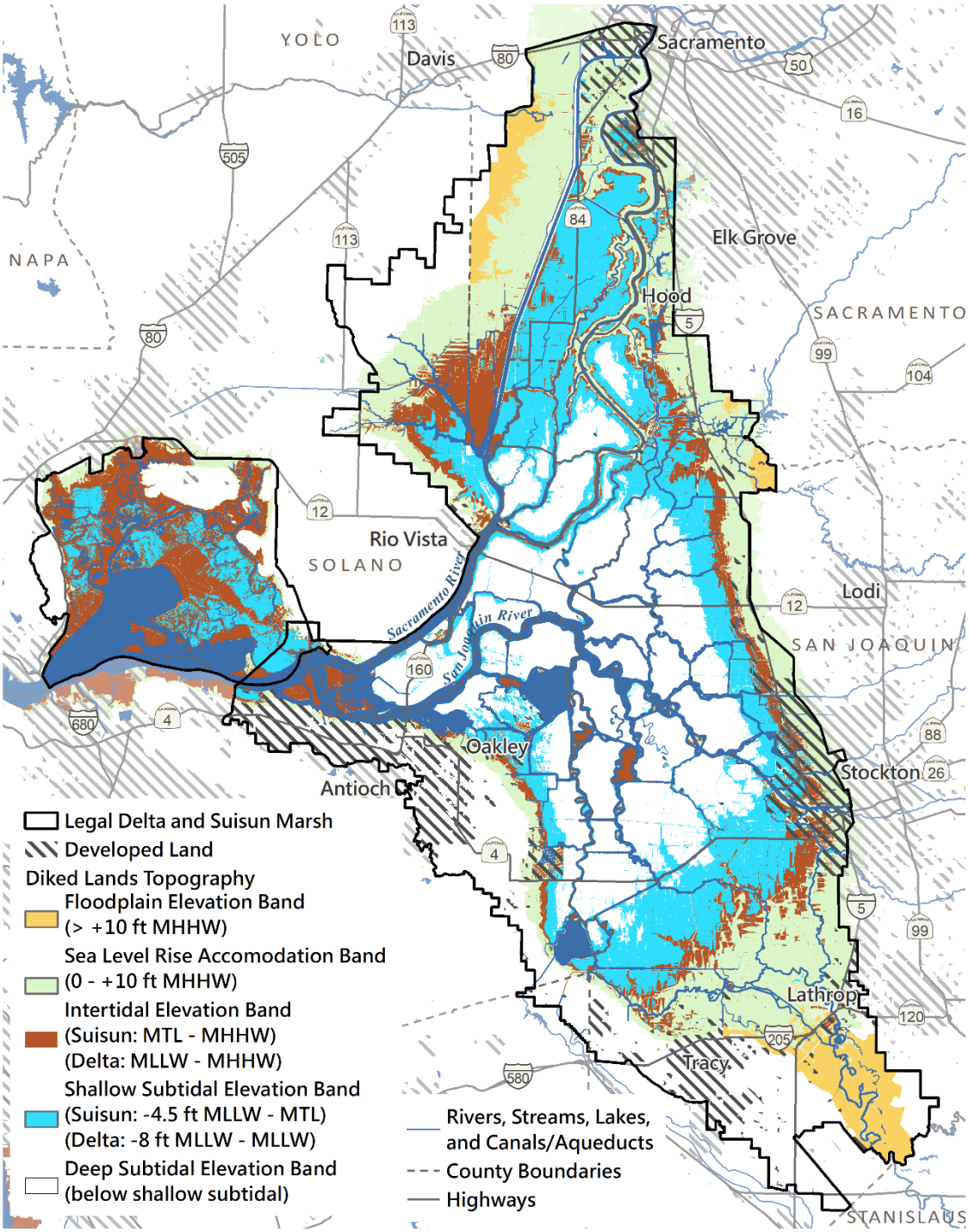

Figure 4-5. Elevation Bands for the Protection, Restoration, and Enhancement of Different Classes of Natural Communities

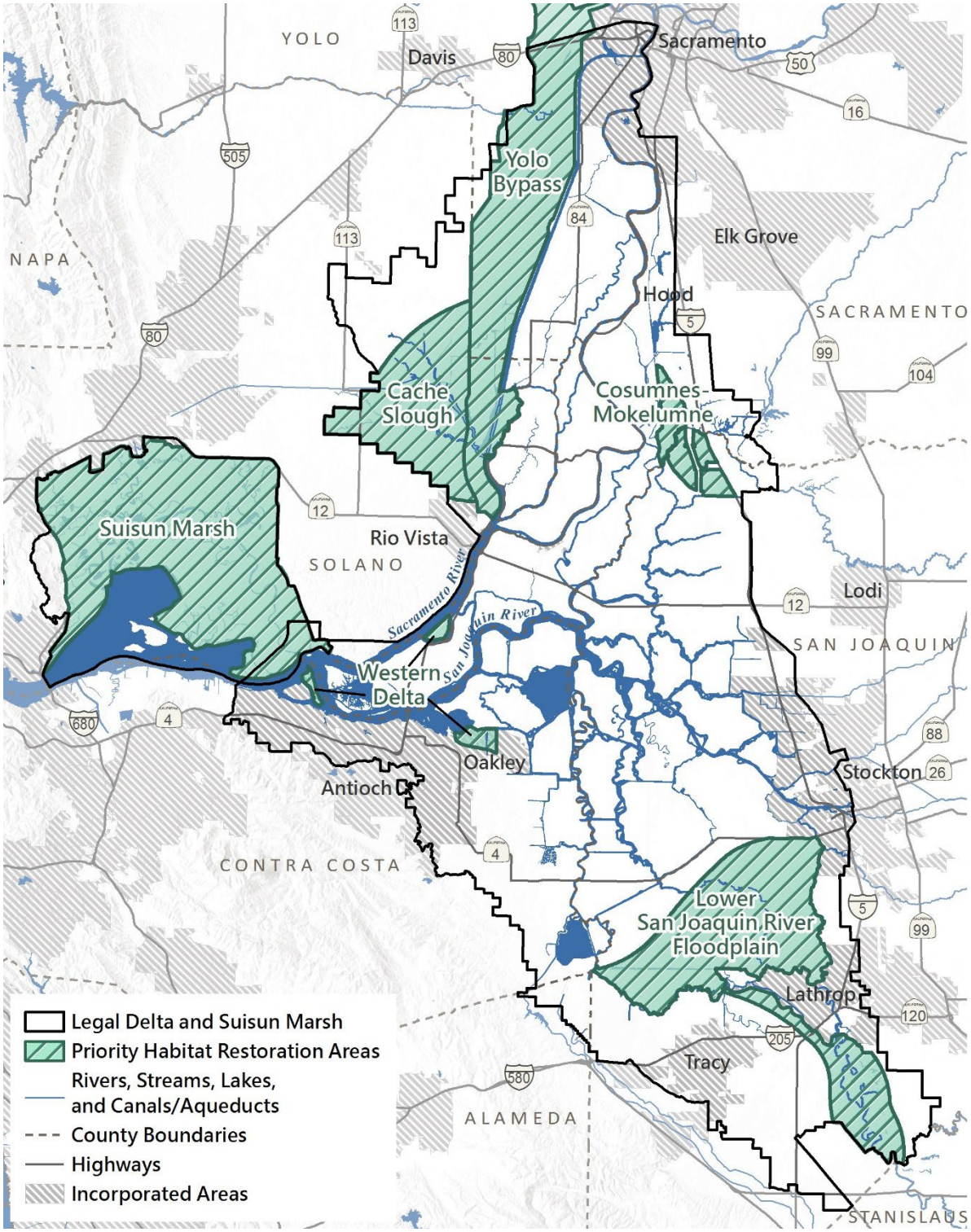

Figure 4-7. Priority Habitat Restoration Areas

Note: The Priority Habitat Restoration Areas are the same as those depicted in Appendix 5.