

**THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
TO LEASE FARMLAND IN THE SACRAMENTO-SAN JOAQUIN BAY DELTA
FOR RICE CULTIVATION PURPOSES**



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

July 11, 2024

Question #1: Was this grazed last year?

Answer: Cattle were removed from Webb Tract in spring of 2023. There has not been any grazing on the island since that time.

Question #2: What is the population of pigs on the island?

Answer: The population of pigs on the island is currently unknown.

Question #3: Who operates the Reclamation District (RD)?

Answer: Reclamation District 2026 is overseen by three trustees representing landowners. RD 2026 is a single landowner district, with Metropolitan Water District being the sole landowner. Each of the trustees are appointed by MWD.

Question #4: Are the pumps part of the budget for the RD?

Answer: Yes. The Reclamation District pays for operation and maintenance of the two pump stations on Webb Tract.

Question #5: What was the management out here last year? How many cattle? Timing of irrigation?

Answer: Cattle were removed in spring of 2023. There were no cattle during the growing season. The island has not been irrigated since corn was last farmed on the island in 2021.

Question #6: When was the last time it was farmed?

Answer: The last time corn was grown on the island was 2021.

Question #7: What was the yields on the corn when it was farmed?

Answer: As reported to MWD, the yields on the corn farmed in 2021 were 5 tons per acre.

- Question #8:** Is corn farming desired in the interim for farming?
Answer: **No. While prepping for rice, Metropolitan would prefer a crop that do not increase land subsidence as noted in Section 2.3 of the RFP.**
- Question #9:** Other than rice, what would be acceptable to farm out here?
Answer: **Crops that do not increase land subsidence as noted in Section 2.3 of the RFP.**
- Question #10:** How level are these fields?
Answer: **The existing grade on the proposed rice field varies. None of these fields have been leveled for rice.**
- Question #11:** What is the expectation of MWD to share data with potential farmer Lessees?
Answer: **MWD will share data that would be beneficial to a farmer lessee.**
- Question #12:** What are the prevailing wage requirements?
Answer: **The grant requires payment of prevailing wage for labor code activities to which payment of prevailing wages would be subject. The lessee is responsible for ascertaining and complying with all current general prevailing wage rates for crafts.**
- Question #13:** Is there employee housing on the island?
Answer: **There is one trailer on the island that is currently used by a full-time caretaker employed by the Reclamation District. There is no Metropolitan employee housing on the island.**
- Question #14:** Is the Lessee responsible for the 24-hour security/employment?
Answer: **Yes, Lessee is responsible for 24-hour security on the island as noted in Section 2.4 of the RFP.**

Question #15: What is the expectation of management during the non-growing season?

Answer: The entire island is available for agriculture until construction begins on the wetlands. The lessee will be responsible for vegetation management or weed control on the entire island. The lessee is expected to assist the Reclamation District #2026 with the maintenance of internal island canals and ditches, and any emergency response situation.

Question #16: Is grazing OK as an interim use of the island?

Answer: Yes, grazing is acceptable for interim use of the island.

Question #17: If grazing is used, is fencing required?

Answer: Use of fencing is at the discretion of the lessee, but a clear separation from the levee footprint will need to be maintained so animals are contained in areas of island fields (whether established or new). Animal access to levee footprint is not allowed.

Question #18: Is there hunting and off-season use? There is an existing life estate on the property (see map).

Answer: Waterfowl hunting occurs on approximately 139 acres of the Property involving the Life Estate parties and invitees with hunting rights encumbering a portion of the Property. Lessee shall be prepared to coexist with such third-party hunting activities. Subject to restrictions and Metropolitan's approval, lessee MAY be authorized to hunt waterfowl and engage in other off-season recreation activities.

Question #19: Will Delta Conservancy approve the rice plan?

Answer: Metropolitan will approve the rice plan.

Question #20: What is the plan for irrigating the fields?

Answer: The fields are fed by gravity flow from existing siphons. A general map showing the location of the siphons and the general direction of flow currently on the island is attached.

Question #21: Is the requirement that the Lessee currently be growing rice?

Answer: As noted in Section 1.6.6 of the RFP, Metropolitan prefers that all interested parties have experience with rice cultivation in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and maintaining sustainable agricultural practices that reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and prioritize environmental benefits. Respondent's business shall have been in existence farming in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta for at least five years and currently engaged in rice farming crops with experience farming at least 500 acres of rice.

Question #22: Is anyone renting the duck club currently?

Answer: The Property includes a duck club house, maintenance/storage facilities and a Quonset hut (maintenance facility). Currently, no one is renting the duck club. The selected lessee shall be prepared to accommodate joint use of the duck club house and maintenance/storage facilities with Metropolitan staff, Reclamation District #2026 staff, or third-party invitees (as agreed to and written into any lease agreement).

Question #23: Are special ferry runs available?

Answer: Special ferry runs can be arranged through the Delta Ferry Authority Executive Director (Reclamation District #2026). There is an additional cost for non-scheduled runs (rates are determined by Landowner-sponsored or Lessee-sponsored requests).

Question #24: Is the area near ferry access point in Oakley available for staging?

Answer: The area has been used for staging in the past on the Jersey Island section adjacent to Delta Ferry Authority Jersey Island landing, but Metropolitan does not own the property. Staging would need to be arranged with the current owner on Jersey Island.