



by email and mail

November 10, 2006

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P. Joseph Grindstaff, Executive Director
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Rod Meade, Program Manager
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Jeffrey F. Mount, Chair
CBDA Independent Science Board
c/o California Bay-Delta Authority
650 Capitol Mall, 5th floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: DELTA ECOSYSTEM RISK ANALYSIS AND STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

Gentlemen,

We are writing to follow up on our letter of October 12, 2006, regarding the urgent need to conduct a risk analysis and inventory of strategic approaches for the Delta ecosystem in order to assist in the development of a long-term Delta

Vision and Strategic Plan, a revised CALFED Ecosystem Restoration Program (ERP) Plan, and a Bay-Delta Conservation Plan. Specifically, the Bay Institute requests that your agencies act on the following recommendations:

1. The ERP should initiate, as soon as possible, a Delta ecosystem risk analysis and strategy development effort in order to help shape the Delta Vision and related efforts. In our view, the Delta Regional Ecosystem Restoration Implementation Plan (DRERIP) now underway provides the most appropriate vehicle for such an effort, obviating the need to create a new process. We strongly support the completion of DRERIP's current work to develop conceptual models and evaluation tools. However, DRERIP's additional planned activities to review ERP actions and Multi-Species Conservation Plan (MSCS) milestones should be replaced by the risk analysis and strategy development we have previously identified as critical to the success of long-term Delta planning efforts. The risk assessment should to the maximum extent possible quantify or otherwise measure risk of extinction to native species and communities; significant changes in habitat quantity, quality and distribution; and significant changes in ecologically important hydrologic and hydrodynamic conditions, associated with likely future Delta trends; and identify broad strategic approaches for reducing these risks. We request a meeting with the three ERP agency directors/supervisors and their staff, as well as the CBDA director and his staff, to discuss the workplan, schedule, budget and personnel necessary to complete the risk analysis and strategy development effort in time to contribute to the various long-term planning efforts.
2. The Independent Science Board (ISB) should work with the ERP to identify and as needed develop appropriate tools for ecosystem risk analysis and strategy development. The ISB should, as soon as possible, review and make recommendations regarding the potential use of the DRERIP conceptual models and evaluation tools to evaluate likely future Delta conditions, degree of risk, and management response; the use of quantitative extinction risk methodologies and other risk assessment approaches to support the risk analysis; the use of low resolution models and other tools for rapid evaluation of different scenarios of Delta change and management response; and the use of decision analysis tools to assist in the development of a range of strategic approaches to reducing future risks to the Delta ecosystem. We request that the ISB consider this

recommendation at the earliest possible opportunity. We would be happy to discuss this recommendation with the ISB at its upcoming meeting.

Please contact the undersigned at 415-506-0150 or bobker@bay.org if you have any questions regarding our recommendations. As always, we look forward to working with you to ensure that long-term efforts to protect the Delta ecosystem are successful.

Sincerely,

Gary Bobker
Program Director

cc:

Lester Snow, Rick Soehren, DWR
Greg Hurner, Perry Herrgesell, Brad Burkholder, DFG
Leo Winternitz, Lauren Hastings, Darcy Jones, Steve Culberson, CBDA
David Harlow, Melisa Helton, USFWS
Mike Aceituno, Diane Windham, NOAA Fisheries
Bruce Herbold, US EPA
Denise Reed, Robert Twiss, ISB
Serge Birk, CVPWA
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Bruce DiGennaro, Essex Partnership
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Christina Swanson, TBI