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Attachments: SWC Response to Water Board Injquiry.pdf

Good morning,

On behalf of the State Water Contractors, attached is our response to the June 22, 2012, Notice of Public Workshops and Request for Information, Comprehensive (Phase 2) Review and Update to the Bay-Delta Plan.

Kind regards,

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STATE WATER CONTRACTORS RESPONSE TO THE WATER BOARD'S REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

This is the State Water Contractors' ("SWC") response to the June 22, 2012, Notice of Public Workshops and Request for Information, Comprehensive (Phase 2) Review and Update to the Bay-Delta Plan. The SWC include 27 water districts from northern, central and southern California, representing 25 million residents as well as 750,000 acres of agricultural land. The SWC anticipate presenting at each of the noticed workshops.

In light of the significant amount of new technical information that needs to be brought to the attention of the State Water Resources Control Board ("Water Board") members and staff, the SWC anticipate requiring an hour for each workshop topic including, but not limited to, an hour for the workshop covering pelagic species and an hour for the workshop covering salmonid species. While the SWC has some commonality with the federal Central Valley Project ("CVP") water contractors, such that joining these two sets of water contractors makes sense from a logistical perspective, the SWC and the CVP water contractors have distinct and somewhat disparate interests. It is currently anticipated that the SWC and the CVP water contractors will be submitting separate written materials and will be making separate oral presentations. As always, the SWC and CVP water contractors will strive to avoid duplication in their respective submissions, as well as avoiding duplication with the Department of Water Resources, Bureau of Reclamation, north Sacramento valley and San Joaquin River water interests, and other workshop participants.

Each of the noticed workshops is equally important to the SWC. The most relevant inquiry within each of the workshops is represented by the questions originally proposed by the SWC in its June 8, 2012, submittal to the Water Board. The questions originally posed by the SWC are included within the more general questions adopted by the Water Board. In their presentation of information, the SWC anticipate covering the subject matter responsive to the questions identified below:

Ecosystem Changes and the Low Salinity Zone

Key Issue:

1. How have the Sacramento-San Joaquin River watershed, the Bay-Delta ecosystem, and ocean conditions changed over time?
2. How have the different trophic levels (including fish, zooplankton, and phytoplankton) of the watershed, ecosystem, ocean changed over time?
3. What factors contributed to these species changes and what is the relative importance of those factors?

When answering question (1), (2), and (3), please consider physical, chemical, biological, hydrologic, and hydraulic changes.

Pelagic species

Key Issues:

1. What are the most important factors affecting the abundance of each life stage of pelagic fishes of concern?
2. How has each of these factors changed over time?
3. How do these factors relate to ecosystem changes and to each other?

Salmonids

Key Issues:

1. What are the most important factors affecting the abundance of each life stage of each salmonid of concern?
2. How has each of these factors changed over time?
3. How do these factors relate to ecosystem changes and to each other?

Evaluation Methods

Key Issues:

1. What types of analyses should be completed to estimate potential effects of changes to the Water Quality Control Plan?
2. What tools are available to complete those analyses?

When answering questions (1) and (2), consider the Water Board's need to assess all beneficial uses and public trust values, including fish abundance, water supply, hydroelectric power production, groundwater levels and quality, greenhouse gas emissions, including economic and social.

Even though the question identified above were proposed jointly with the CVP water contractors, each set of water contractor presentations will be unique, making different but complementary points.

During each workshop, the SWC will summarize scientific information and attempt to explain areas where information presented by other interested parties is in agreement and/or disagreement with the SWC presentation and our understanding of the best available science. In addition to those who will present, the SWC will endeavor to have experts available in all areas addressed in their written submittals and to respond to questions posed by the Water Board and its staff. The SWC will have experts present that are able to address a range of highly relevant issues including, but not limited to: aquatic biology (salmon, steelhead, sturgeon, and smelt); food webs; zooplankton and phytoplankton ecology; nutrient uptake; biostatistics; hydrodynamics/hydraulic modeling; biological/life cycle modeling; resource economics; and restoration ecology.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Terry Erlewine at (916) 447-7357 or Becky Sheehan at (916) 650-2607.