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DELTA STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

A California State Agency

November 8, 2013

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Jeanine Townsend, Clerk to the Board
State Water Resources Control Board
P.O. Box 2000
Sacramento, CA 95812-2000

Dear Ms. Townsend,

Thank you for the notice dated September 26, 2013 asking us to review and provide any comments on the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board's (Central Valley Water Board) proposed amendment to the Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Basins to establish a drinking water policy for surface waters of the Delta and its upstream tributaries (Drinking Water Policy).

The comments the state and regional Water Boards provided to our Delta Plan were very helpful in our public review process. We trust these comments will be helpful to you.

The Delta Reform Act of 2009 (Act) established the Delta Stewardship Council and required the Council to develop a Delta Plan to further the achievement of the coequal goals of providing a more reliable water supply for California and protecting, restoring, and enhancing the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Delta) ecosystem (Water Code sections 85054 and 85300(a)). In addition, the coequal goals are to be achieved in a manner that protects and enhances the unique cultural, recreational, natural resource, and agricultural values of the Delta as an evolving place. On May 16, 2013, the Council adopted the Delta Plan, which was required to include measures to promote a more reliable water supply including improving water quality to protect human health and the environment (Water Code section 85302 (d)(3)). The Delta Plan contains 12 recommendations specifically related to water quality improvements in the Delta.

One Delta Plan recommendation is specific to this current Basin Plan amendment process:

The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board should complete the Central Valley Drinking Water Policy by July 2013 (Recommendation WQ R4, Chapter 6: Improve Water Quality to Protect Human Health and the Environment)

Conclusion

We have reviewed the Drinking Water Policy adopted by the Central Valley Water Board on July 26, 2013 (R5-2013-0098) and have concluded it has the potential to improve water supply reliability by improving water quality in the Delta. The Drinking Water Policy is based on the best available science, and is a well-considered approach to addressing significant water quality issues for municipal water supplies. It strikes a good balance between flexibility and effectiveness.

We urge the State Water Resources Control Board to review and approve this policy. It is the product of many years to effort, including the participation of an advisory group composed of key public agencies and non-government stakeholders that will be affected by the policy. We commend the Central Valley Water Board for its adoption of this policy, and greatly appreciate the perseverance of its staff in bringing this matter to a successful conclusion.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed action. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact me at (916) 445-0258.

Sincerely,

Cindy Messer

Cindy Messer
Deputy Executive Officer

cc: Central Valley Water Quality Control Board