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August 23, 2010

Delta Stewardship Council
650 Capitol Mall, Fifth Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Final Draft Interim Plan

Dear Council Members:

Solano County values the opportunity to comment on the Final Draft Interim Plan. Although the County has commented on each of the earlier drafts of the Interim Plan, it will be important to broadly communicate the Delta Stewardship Council's purpose, establish collaboration with State agencies that have intersecting plans (despite their focus outside of water resource issues), and develop a method of evaluating the Interim Plan so that analyses of its strengths and weaknesses can be effectively used to structure the Delta Plan.

Although this interim document is a plan, the ultimate purpose of the Delta Stewardship Council (Council) should be communicated clearly and broadly, so each stakeholder impacted by this document will understand the Council's ultimate goal(s). Plans should be flexible enough to adjust based on circumstances, but the purpose should remain regardless of environmental or other factors or events that cause changes. It is encouraging to see that even after adoption, the Interim Plan may be revised with specific projects and programs added as appropriate. In addition to the importance of plan flexibility, if a general understanding exists of the Council's purpose, this will help in establishing the relative weight of project and funding priorities.

Interagency collaboration is another tool that will be invaluable in avoiding duplication and achieving the best and most cost-effective results. It would appear that plans impacting the Delta should be the result of collaboration between numerous State entities that include the Public Utilities Commission; Business, Transportation and Housing; the Environmental Protection Agency; Food and Agriculture and possibly other parties that can provide high level analysis of proposals for the Delta. Many of the areas targeted for habitat restoration efforts have human and physical infrastructure that should be identified and appropriately addressed. It is critical to establish dialogue and a basic understanding of how the strategies of each group involved intersect. If State agencies wisely choose to work cooperatively with other State and local government entities, impacted agencies can be identified, opportunities for collaboration recognized, and the end products may be mutually beneficial and less costly.

There should also be a mechanism included to evaluate the results of the Interim Plan. Such an evaluation should identify the strengths and weaknesses of the Interim Plan and ensure these observations and other pertinent analyses are incorporated into the Delta Plan.

Delta Stewardship Council
Final Draft Interim Plan
August 23, 2010

We look forward to working with you on the development of the Delta Plan and other projects and programs that will impact the Delta. If you or your staff has any questions concerning these issues, please contact Kathy Barnes-Jones, Delta Water Program Analyst, at 707-784-7914.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John M. Vasquez", with a stylized flourish at the end.

John M. Vasquez, Chair
Solano County Board of Supervisors

cc: Solano County Legislative Delegation
Solano County Board of Supervisors
Delta Counties Coalition