

EXHIBIT A

Executive Summary

We will investigate the potential of native submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) to provide resources to native fish species in the low salinity zone of the San Francisco Bay-Delta. These SAV beds, composed primarily of *Stuckenia pectinata* (sago pondweed), are an extensive feature along many of the islands in Suisun Bay and the west Delta, yet almost nothing is known of their seasonal patterns in physical structure or their invertebrate communities, both of which could influence use by native fishes. We hypothesize that the position of these beds in the shallow subtidal zone along the islands increases resources for fish species, perhaps including species of concern such as delta smelt and chinook salmon. The objectives of this project are to: 1) characterize seasonal patterns in habitat structure of SAV beds in four locations in Suisun Bay and the western Delta, with comparisons to four non-native *Egeria densa*-dominated beds, 2) document seasonal changes in the epifaunal invertebrate community composition and abundance in *Stuckenia* versus *Egeria* beds, 3) utilize stable isotope analyses to evaluate food web relationships within and among the beds, and 4) begin preliminary evaluation of fish use of *Stuckenia* beds through limited sampling inside and outside of beds.