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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

State Water Resources Control Board

August 24, 2011

Gerald H. Meral, Ph.D.
Deputy Secretary
Bay Delta Conservation Plan
California Natural Resources Agency
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Dr. Meral:

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSES IN SUPPORT OF THE BAY DELTA CONSERVATION PLAN

This letter is a follow-up to the April 19, 2011 letter I sent you regarding environmental analyses conducted in support of the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP). Subsequent to that letter, State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) and Department of Water Resources (DWR) staff have had constructive discussions and developed preliminary model runs to explore what could be a useful additional alternative that achieves increased Delta outflows. The goal of these discussions and model runs has been to model an increase in Delta outflow, above that achieved in alternative four (per the September 1,2010 BDCP "Modified Array of Alternatives"), that would result in:

- no negative effects on cold water pool storage;
- not drawing down Sacramento Valley groundwater levels;
- no decreased water supplies other than south-of-Delta Central Valley Project (CVP) and State Water Project (SWP) deliveries.
- no failure to deliver San Joaquin River exchange water rights; and
- no failure to deliver refuge water.

Our staff has identified a modified alternative four that achieves these goals. Additional model iterations are needed to determine the precise constraints and results, including the effect on Delta outflow. Staff expects the modified alternative will result in an average increase of Delta outflow, relative to alternative four, of between 0.8 and 1.2 million-acre-feet per year, with an associated westward shift in X2. Staff expects to confirm the results by September 2, 2011. Consideration of this modified alternative four would satisfy the State Water Board's suggestion for BDCP to consider a reasonable range of alternatives.

The State Water Board, however, will still need additional analyses to support changes to the 2006 Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Bay-Delta Plan). These additional analyses do not need to be part of the California

Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) analysis for the BDCP. The State Water Board's environmental documentation will evaluate a reasonable range of interim and long-term alternatives, which will need to consider measures beyond the scope of the BDCP. These alternatives may include the evaluation of additional flow from upstream water sources for the purpose of meeting outflow or other objectives. The State Water Board is required to develop and evaluate such alternatives to meet our obligations under CEQA to evaluate a reasonable range of alternatives.

Thank you for the modeling support you have already provided. We appreciate your offer to continue to assist with modeling and analyses. Please contact me at (916) 341-5615, or Mr. Les Grober at (916) 341-5428 or lgrober@waterboards.ca.gov to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,

Thomas Howard

Thomas Howard
Executive Director

cc: Mr. Mark Cowin, Director
California Department of Water Resources
P.O. Box 942836, Room 1115-1
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001