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11 October 2006

TO: Wetland Managers, Restoration Project Proponents & Interested Persons

DATABASE OF MANAGED WETLANDS AND HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECTS IN THE SACRAMENTO-SAN JOAQUIN DELTA ESTUARY & CENTRAL VALLEY

Central Valley Water Board staff (staff) is compiling a database that describes existing managed wetland areas as well as completed, in-progress and anticipated habitat restoration efforts in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary (the Delta) and its upstream watersheds. The database will help in the development of a methylmercury control program for the Delta that protects water quality for wildlife, drinking water, agriculture, recreation, and other beneficial uses and makes the Delta a safe place to catch and eat fish for both people and wildlife. A wetlands database would be valuable to staff and wetland managers because it would:

1. Identify the benefits associated with existing wetlands and proposed restoration efforts and regulatory requirements or mandates for wetland projects. This information will enable staff to determine any potential regulatory conflicts between Clean Water Act requirements for a methylmercury control program for the Delta and regulatory requirements and benefits associated with existing and proposed wetlands. Addressing any potential conflicts early in the development of the methylmercury control program will better enable a program that balances the need for wetland restoration to provide critical wildlife habitat with the potential adverse impacts of methylmercury formed in the wetlands on those and downstream habitats.
2. Create a mechanism for habitat managers and wetland project proponents to collaborate on methylmercury characterization and control studies. As described in the enclosed Information Sheet, staff proposes that Phase 1 of the methylmercury control program include characterization and control studies for each of the source categories (agriculture, wetlands, NPDES permitted facilities and urban runoff, etc.). In response, some stakeholders asked that staff facilitate information sharing and coordination between ongoing and future projects. The wetlands database is expected to be a useful tool for project planners, managers, and staff to collaborate and build upon ongoing studies.

If you are the manager of an existing wetland or the proponent for a habitat restoration project, we would appreciate if you could send the following information so that we can include it in a database that we will make available to the public on our website:

1. Name of habitat area or project
2. Purpose (e.g., recovery of ecological function, mitigation for impacts of another project, research)
3. Type (existing managed wetlands, enhancement of existing wetlands, restoration of wetlands that previously existed, or creation of wetlands where previously none existed)
4. Status (existing wetland or proposed, in-progress, or completed restoration project)
5. Anticipated completion date (for proposed & in-progress projects)
6. Landowner(s)
7. Managing agency

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8. Sponsors
9. Specific wildlife species of concern that the project is intended to protect or enhance
10. Specific benefits expected of the project
11. Regulatory and statutory impetus and constraints for project, if any
12. Names of component sites (if a project has multiple locations)
13. Existing & planned habitats for component sites (e.g., tidal, muted tidal, managed marsh with water control structures, perennial non-tidal, seasonal non-tidal, mixed hydrology, riparian)
14. Existing & planned acreage for each component site or project
15. Project location (latitude & longitude for all component sites; please provide ArcView shape files if available)
16. County
17. Nearest waterway(s) per U.S. Geological Survey 7.5 minute topographic quadrangle
18. Characteristics of restored area (vegetation types, water depths, etc.)
19. Monitoring components (e.g., will fish, sediment and/or water samples be analyzed for inorganic mercury or methylmercury before and after project construction?)
20. Contact information for project manager (name, address, telephone, email)
21. Any additional comments, or citations or Internet addresses for project reports

The attached Microsoft Excel spreadsheet can be used as a template and is available on our website: <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/programs/tmdl/deltahg.html>. Please email your completed template or other explanatory material to Michelle Wood (mlwood@waterboards.ca.gov) or mail it to her attention using the address listed in the letterhead by **6 November 2006**. The fields of the template mirror the above list and are based on the attribute fields in "Bay Area Wetland Project Tracker", which provides information about wetland projects in the San Francisco Bay Area (see: <http://www.wetlandtracker.org/>) but does not include projects in the Delta or Central Valley.

In addition, staff has compiled a preliminary list of projects in the greater Delta region. The list describes managed wetlands, in-progress and proposed restoration projects, and wetland- and methylmercury-related research studies based on staff's review of accessible publications. This list will be available on the Central Valley Water Board website, along with other draft staff reports and notices. If you find any discrepancies in this list, or know of additional wetland projects or methylmercury studies associated with wetland and riparian areas in the Delta or Central Valley, please notify Michelle Wood by email or telephone. This list and resulting database will be updated as project information is submitted and will be made available on our website.

We appreciate your input and look forward to developing a wetlands database for the Delta region that can guide the development of a methylmercury control program that supports the beneficial uses of the Delta and its upstream watersheds. Please forward this letter to any interested project managers or researchers. Please contact Michelle Wood (916-464-4650) or me (916-464-4621) if you have any questions or if you know of an existing database that serves a similar function for Delta and Central Valley wetlands.

Patrick Morris
Mercury TMDL Unit

Enclosures: Information Sheet [Delta MeHg TMDL Info Sheet_2006-06-21.pdf]
Microsoft Excel template [Wetland Info Template.xls]