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Subject: Bay-Delta Workshop Panels - San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority Submittal

This e-mail is sent on behalf of the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority and in response to the request made in the June 22, 2012 Notice of Public Workshops and Request for Information, Comprehensive (Phase 2) Review and Update to the Bay-Delta Plan that entities seeking to participate in a panel organized by Dr. Bernstein inform the State Water Board of its suggested panel participant(s). The Water Authority represents 29 water agencies that deliver Central Valley Project water to millions of Californians residing in small rural communities to the world's technology center, the Silicon Valley, some of the nation's most productive farmlands, and significant portions of the State's managed wetlands, which are an essential part of the Pacific Flyway. The Water Authority has considerable scientific and technical expertise on water quality and respectfully requests participation on the State Water Project/Central Valley Project contractors' panel, for each of the noticed workshops. The Water Authority expects to present at least one hour of material for workshop 1 (ecosystem changes) and workshop 3 (analytical tools) and two hours of material for workshop 2 (pelagic and salmon). The Water Authority intends to coordinate with, but will make presentations separate from, the State Water Contractors.

Critical to the success of the workshops is the presentation of scientific information that focuses on identifying: (1) factors most likely influencing water quality to the detriment of beneficial uses, and (2) the extent and basis of agreement, disagreement, or uncertainty associated with the scientific information. As a result, the highest priority questions for the Water Authority are those presented in its June 8, 2012 submittal to the State Water Board, which are the following:

Ecosystem Changes and the Low Salinity Zone

Key Issue:

1. How have the Sacramento-San Joaquin River watershed, the Bay-Delta ecosystem, and ocean conditions changed over time [with particular focus on the 35+ years]?

2. How have the different trophic levels (including fish, zooplankton, and phytoplankton) of the watershed, ecosystem, and ocean changed over time?

3. What factors contributed to these species changes and what is the relative importance of those factors?

When answering question (1), (2), and (3), please consider physical, chemical, biological, hydrologic, and hydraulic changes.

Pelagic species

Key Issues:

1. What are the most important factors affecting the abundance of each life stage of pelagic fishes of concern?
2. How has each of these factors changed over time?
3. How do these factors relate to ecosystem changes and to each other?

Salmonids

Key Issues:

1. What are the most important factors affecting the abundance of each life stage of each salmonid of concern?
2. How has each of these factors changed over time?
3. How do these factors relate to ecosystem changes and to each other?

Evaluation Methods

Key Issues:

1. What types of analyses should be completed to estimate potential effects of changes to the Water Quality Control Plan?

2. What tools are available to complete those analyses?

When answering questions (1) and (2), consider the Water Board's need to assess all beneficial uses and public trust values, including fish abundance, water supply, hydroelectric power production, recreation, groundwater levels and quality, greenhouse gas emissions, including economic and social.

Even though the questions identified above were proposed jointly with the State Water Contractors, each set of water contractor presentations will be unique, making different but complementary points.

During each workshop, through several representatives, the Water Authority will summarize pertinent scientific and technical information responsive to those questions to explain areas where information presented by other interested parties is in agreement, disagreement, or uncertain. Where disagreement exists, the Water Authority will also attempt to explain why it believes there is disagreement. In all cases, the Water Authority will attempt to characterize the degree of uncertainty associated with the information. In addition to those who will present, the Water Authority will endeavor to have experts available in all areas addressed in its written submittals and to respond to questions posed by the State Water Board and its staff.

The Water Authority would like to discuss with the State Water Board staff and Dr. Bernstein how it is approaching the workshops, the scientific information it intends to present, and how it intends to respond to the information presented by other interested parties.

If you have any questions regarding this submittal, please contact Jon Rubin, Senior Staff Counsel for the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority, at Jon.Rubin@SLDMWA.Org.

Regards,

Rebecca Akroyd

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