

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE

STATE CAPITOL
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA
95814

November 20, 2013

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
Governor of the State of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Secretary Sally Jewell
United States Department of Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Governor Brown and Secretary Jewell:

This year has been among the driest in California's recorded history. Fast depleting reservoirs are setting the stage for widespread hardships next year for farmers and communities throughout the state, absent a significant change in weather patterns. The challenges of this year, and potentially the next, reinforce how essential it is for California's water system to capture adequate supplies in wet years in order to withstand its devastating dry cycles.

Nowhere is this need greater than in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, where two water systems provide an essential supply for 25 million Californians and more than 3 million acres of farmland that produce food for the entire nation. The Delta is in need of considerable investment to stabilize the state's backbone water supply system and to restore balance to the wetland ecosystems which provide a home to several native and endangered species.

In recent months, the state and federal administrations, and participating agencies, have released thousands of pages of compelling information and analysis on a proposed solution – the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) – along with extensive economic analysis including a cost and benefit analysis. This plan presents California with the opportunity to adequately capture water during wet years and help stabilize the Delta ecosystem.

Failing to enact a plan that achieves California's coequal goals of water supply reliability and Delta restoration will have dramatic, negative economic impacts throughout the state, costing an estimated 1 million jobs and cutting-off water supplies for two-thirds of the state's population for potentially up to three years if the Delta region is struck by a natural disaster.

The BDCP is a work in progress, but it shows the most promise of any plan previously proposed for the Delta.

By federal and state law, BDCP must meet the most stringent environmental protections and respect California's water rights system. The plan is evolving through the most transparent process ever undertaken, as demonstrated by the release of all administrative draft documents throughout each step of the BDCP process. The emerging proposal is designed to safeguard existing water deliveries – not additional supplies – for communities from the Bay Area to Southern California through a conveyance system under the Delta that simultaneously protects drinking water quality and shields supplies from catastrophic seismic events. It also proposes the most ambitious wide-scale habitat restoration on the western seaboard for the Delta estuary to improve Delta ecosystems that comply with the federal and state Endangered Species Acts.

Your personal effort and that of your administration is critical to advance an informed discussion about the benefits and impacts of the emerging alternative and the rationale for this course of action as opposed to other alternatives. It will be important for the participating water agencies to resolve how to pay for the conveyance improvements and associated mitigation and to outline a plan for how the state will finance its share of the 50-year restoration program in the Delta. Given the continued threats to water supplies and decline of the Delta's ecosystem, the status quo is no longer an acceptable option.

We urge you to stay the course with the Bay Delta Conservation Plan release of the public draft documents and a 120-day comment period. We also applaud your recent efforts to minimize impacts in the Delta by reducing, in half, the overall footprint of project facilities and by shifting many construction activities away from Delta communities.

It is imperative that we move toward finalizing a plan that both stabilizes water supplies for California and protects the Delta. Thank you for your efforts to ensure that California has water for both its environment and its economy.

Sincerely,



The Honorable Senator Bill Emmerson
California State Senate



The Honorable Ed Hernandez
California State Senate



The Honorable Carol Liu
California State Senate



The Honorable Alex Padilla
California State Senate

The Honorable Richard D. Roth
California State Senate

The Honorable Raul Bocanegra
California State Assembly

The Honorable Ian Calderon
California State Assembly

The Honorable Isadore Hall, III
California State Assembly

The Honorable Roger Hernández
California State Assembly

The Honorable Bob Huff
California State Senate

The Honorable Cheryl R. Brown
California State Assembly

The Honorable Ed Chau
California State Assembly

The Honorable Melissa A. Melendez
California State Assembly

The Honorable Scott Wilk
California State Assembly

The Honorable Travis Allen
California State Assembly

The Honorable Reginald Jones Sawyer
California State Assembly

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeff Gorell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jeff" being more prominent than the last name "Gorell".

The Honorable Jeff Gorell
California State Assembly

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tom Daly". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tom" being more prominent than the last name "Daly".

The Honorable Tom Daly
California State Assembly

Copies mailed to:

Nancy McFadden, Executive Secretary
Office of Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr.

Martha Guzman-Aceves, Deputy Legislative Secretary
Office of Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr.

Cliff Rechtschaffen, Senior Advisor
Office of Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr.

John Laird, Secretary, California Resources Agency

Janelle Beland, Undersecretary, California Resources Agency

Dr. Gerald H. Meral, Deputy Secretary, California Resources Agency

Karla Nemeth, BDCP Program Director

Mark Cowin, Director, Department of Water Resources

Charlton H. Bonham, Director, Department of Fish and Wildlife

Richard Stapler, Deputy Secretary of Communications
California Resources Agency

Ms. Penny Pritzker
Secretary of Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce

Mr. Daniel M. Ashe
Director, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Commissioner Michael L. Connor
Bureau of Reclamation

Nancy Sutley, Chair
White House Council on Environmental Quality

Dr. Kathryn D. Sullivan
Acting Administrator