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Representing the Heavy Construction Industry
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August 29, 2007

Mr. Phil Isenberg, Chair
Task Force Members
Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force
650 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Chair Isenberg and Members of the Task Force:

The California Alliance for Jobs has been following the efforts of the Delta Vision Stakeholder Coordination group and supports the concept of dual conveyance if storage, both surface and subsurface, is better integrated into the final vision. Overall, moving towards dual conveyance by quickly implementing a middle river conveyance option while planning for the addition of an isolated facility is an excellent approach. It provides for quick action to resolve critical short-term issues while also providing an opportunity to plan for and ensure effective long-term solutions are implemented in a reasonable timeframe.

As the Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Committee contemplates its recommendation, we encourage you to include additional storage as an integral element with statewide benefits. The benefits of storage include increased water supply reliability, improved ecosystem health, and responsible long term planning. First, additional storage will increase water supplies for the 25 million Californians who rely on the delta for their drinking water supplies by allowing for more water to be captured during heavier seasonal flows, essentially increasing the "water pie." Second, it will improve ecosystem health by allowing for better synchronization of exports with higher seasonal water flows reducing harmful effects from pumping during low flows. To date, insufficient storage capacity has limited the ability to take advantage of peak flows and resulted in significant impacts to the ecosystem from pumping during low flow times. Finally, storage is needed for responsible long-term planning to ensure drinking water for California's growing population, drought protection, and to address the adverse impacts that global warming could have on the Sierra snow pack. It is critical for effective operation of an isolated conveyance facility. Additionally, although they have different approaches, the need for additional storage is recognized in the comprehensive water plans put forward by both Governor Schwarzenegger and Senate Pro Tem Don Perata.

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At this point, the vision should not be constrained by funding considerations. The Delta Vision will consider both short and long-term elements that will be implemented over a number of years. While we recognize the many elements being discussed (seismically secure islands, improved conveyance, storage and restoration) will be costly for both water exporters and the state, as a whole, the voters have continually supported water funding and will continue to approve the funding necessary if there is a strong Delta Vision, integrated with the Statewide Water Plan, that supports both supply and the environment. Fortunately, billions of dollars in water funding needed to implement many of the short term solutions were approved less than a year ago though propositions 1E and 84. The release of these funds should not be held up within the state bureaucracy but should be allocated as soon as possible so real improvements can occur quickly.

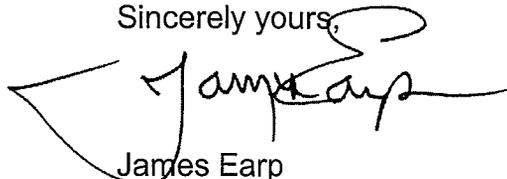
For the vision to be effective, it must be followed by legislative and regulatory changes that will align the implementing agencies and provide authority and consequences that will result in action. The status quo is not working. While the state and federal agencies must be participants in the plan they must also be accountable for implementing the actions of the final Delta Vision in a timely fashion.

We appreciate that the Delta Vision focuses primarily on the Delta region but we believe it is important to note that other regional and statewide water efforts, such as water recycling, better groundwater management, system connectivity, water use efficiencies etc., are critical to ensuring an adequate water supply for California's growing population.

The Delta Vision Stakeholders Committee has engaged in thoughtful dialogue resulting in two visions that share many common elements. By developing a common understanding of the major issues facing the Delta, stakeholders representing a broad spectrum of perspectives have found extraordinary levels of agreement. We urge you to take the best of both of these visions, add storage and other input as provided, to create a Delta Vision that will sustain the Delta for future generations.

Thank you for your consideration of our recommendations.

Sincerely yours,



James Earp
Executive Director