

DELTA PROTECTION COMMISSION

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Association of Bay Area Governments

Sacramento Area Council of
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San Joaquin Council of Governments

Central Delta Reclamation Districts

North Delta Reclamation Districts

South Delta Reclamation Districts

West Delta Reclamation Districts

Bay Delta Authority

Department of Boating and Waterways

Department of Fish and Game

Department of Food and Agriculture

Department of Water Resources

State Lands Commission

State Parks

Delta Landowner –
Outdoor RecreationDelta Landowner –
Production AgricultureDelta Landowner –
Wildlife Conservation

December 1, 2008

Mike Chrisman, Chair
Delta Vision Committee
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Chair Chrisman and Members of the Committee:

SUBJECT: Comments on Discussion Draft Dated November 25, 2008

Pursuant to direction provided at the meeting of the Delta Protection Commission (Commission) on November 20, 2008, the following comments and points of clarification are provided by staff of the Commission for consideration by your Committee for inclusion in subsequent Delta Vision draft implementation documents.

As background, please note that the Commission has been actively engaged in the Delta Visioning process and has previously provided comments to the Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force as it relates to the Delta Protection Act (Act) and the policies of the Commission's Land Use and Resource Management Plan for the Primary Zone of the Delta (Management Plan). Those letters of comment dated August 14, 2008 and September 29, 2008 are provided as attachments for your reference.

The following comments and points of clarification are provided (in italics) relative to specific sections of the Draft Discussion Document as noted:

Enhancing and Protecting the Delta

1. Achieve federal designation for parts of the Delta as a National Heritage Area and expand the State Recreation Area network in the Delta.

Direct the Department of Parks and Recreation to apply for federal designation of all or portions of the Delta as a National Heritage Area, a place designated by Congress "where natural, cultural, and recreational resources

combine to form a cohesive, nationally-distinctive landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography.” Expand the State Recreation Area network in the Delta.

In keeping with the Commission’s role of promoting economic development in the Delta, and recognizing that the Commission has expended considerable resources to research and begin the feasibility and application process for designation of the Delta as a National Heritage Area, including the establishment of rapport with the appropriate federal contacts and potential local supporters and partners, it is recommended that this mandate include specific/identification of the Commission as the designated local sponsor in the Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) feasibility and application planning process. Continued coordination between the Commission and State Parks, as has taken place to date on this task, is strongly encouraged through formal citation by the Committee in order to assure effective and efficient utilization of resources toward accomplishing this goal.

4. Accelerate appropriate land use policies for at risk areas in the Delta.

Seek legislation which would require review and improvement of local land use plans for (1) the Cosumnes/Mokelumne floodway and San Joaquin/South Delta lowlands, and (2) urbanized and urbanizing areas in the Delta at flood risk (Bethel Island, City of Isleton, Brannan-Andrus Island, and Walnut Grove – including residential areas on Grand Island, Locke, Clarksburg, Courtland and Terminous). The legislation would specify the standards the improved land use plans must meet and treat the named areas as within the Delta Primary Zone until the improved plans were completed and accepted by the Delta Protection Commission.

It should be noted, as clarification with respect to the areas noted as urbanized/urbanizing, that while Bethel Tract, the City of Isleton, and “portions” of Brannan-Andrus Island are in the Secondary Zone, Walnut Grove, Locke, Clarksburg, Courtland and Terminous are located in the Primary Zone pursuant to the Delta Protection Act. The Town of Hood should also be included in the listing as a community located in the Primary Zone.

Mike Chrisman
Delta Vision Committee
December 1, 2008
Page Three

Effective Governance and Reliable, Sufficient Funding

- 1. Modify interim governance for the Delta. Some parties have suggested this alternative could be the long-term governance solution.**

Immediately establish the Delta Policy Group composed of the Secretary for Resources; Secretary for Food and Agriculture; Secretary for Business, Transportation and Housing; Secretary for the California Environmental Protection Agency; Director of the Department of Water Resources; Director of the Department of Fish and Game; Director of the California Bay Delta Authority; and the Chair of the State Water Resources Control Board. Request the Federal Government to participate in this Policy Group.

It is recommended that a representative of the Commission (Chair or Executive Director) be included as a member of the Delta Policy Group based on the role of the Commission as integral to Delta policy making as administrator of the policies of its Management Plan pursuant to the provisions of the Delta Protection Act, potentially consistent with the Delta Plan.

The Commission, as the voice of those who live, work and play in the Delta, appreciates the opportunity to be engaged in the visioning process.

Sincerely,



Linda Fiack
Executive Director

cc: John Kirlin, Executive Director
Arne Simonsen, Chair, Delta Protection Commission
Topper van Loben Sels, Vice-Chair, Delta Protection Commission
Members, Delta Protection Commission

Attachments