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June 26, 2008

CHIEF COUNSEL
STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
P O BOX 388
SACRAMENTO CA 95802

DELTA VISION TASK FORCE
650 CAPITAL MALL 5TH FLOOR
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814

Re: Bay Delta Conservation Plan
Delta Vision Strategic Plan
Delta Blue Ribbon Task Force

Dear Staff of the above:

We own the unique and priceless 1927 residence at 12330 Highway 160 on the Sacramento River on Sutter Island near Courtland, and the adjacent 44 acres. We have lived on Sutter Island since 1984 and enjoy raising our two daughters here surrounded by the wonderful diverse

agricultural heritage established over 200 years ago. We have recently purchased the adjacent acres to our home and currently are designing our vineyards. These properties have been utilizing water from the Sacramento River for over 100 years.

We do not agree to give up either our property or our water rights to send water to Southern California.

Water Export from the Delta is the primary damaging factor to water quality in the Delta.

With shockingly quiet speed and little public notice, it appears that several state and private agencies are mobilizing a plan to take water rights from Northern California residences and businesses and use them to satisfy Southern California's need for water. The better approach would be to request Southern California to institute strict conservation methods and explore desalination of ocean waters. With global predictions of a rise in sea levels, this alternative makes sense.

Has this alternative or any other alternatives been fully scientifically and economically analyzed? (1)

The California voters denied the request for a peripheral canal. Now calling it a "duel conveyance system", the Department of Water Resources is attempting to do what the public rejected.

What is the legal authority to proceed with a project that the public rejected? (2)

To dramatically alter the ecosystem of the Delta and try to purchase unique and priceless properties and businesses, seems both economically unwise and scientifically unsupported. There are tremendous revenues that are generated by local industries, Bogle Wineries, to name the largest, which would be lost to the State's income. Currently, the Delta represents 17% of

the total wine grape production in the state and soon will be at 25%. Besides wine grapes, the Delta is one of the leading producers of pears in the state and numerous farmers have diversified to include cherries, apples and kiwis, asparagus, olives and many open row crops.

Removing 100,000 acres of highly productive farmland which has been producing for a 100 years, purchasing exclusive residences, ranches and farmlands, and channeling the water resources to Southern State farmers with inferior land makes no sense. In addition to the conveyance costs, significant water is lost by evaporation.

Has the exact cost per cubic acre of water to transfer been determined, including the evaporation loss? (3)

Has a realistic cost to purchase the lands from the existing owners been calculated? (4)

Where is this money coming from? (5)

Without an overriding public good, such dramatic changes as flooding working islands makes no sense. The purpose and effect have not been disclosed.

Stonelake Wildlife Refuge does not have the money to maintain their existing eco-habitat. Prospect Island is another example of an expensive attempt to restore an eco-system that has failed.

What is the funding and procedure to maintain thousands of acres in their natural state, free of invasive non-native species? (6)

Most Delta residences will not agree to sell at any price and will resist eminent domain. The law protects private property for other than clear and necessary public good. That has not been claimed or shown. This potential

land grab is all about Southern State farming and development and development dollars. The State is moving too fast without studying the impact on **people**.

The claim to study "the Delta as a place" without analyzing the families who will be affected and the business and employment revenues that will be lost lacks insight into the overall process.

The Delta is also home to the origin of the Sacramento Food Bank in Clarksburg. Father Dan Madigan started this organization approx. 20 years ago from the St. Joseph's Catholic Church (celebrating 115 years July 2008), and it has grown to a 20 million dollar service organization. Delta Community provides support to needy communities throughout Northern California.

Given the countless meetings that are taking place, how many millions of dollars of the taxpayers' monies have been spent on an inadequate "strategic plan"? (7)

How much money by each State of California Department is allocated to complete this Delta Vision Strategic Plan or what is that budget? (8)

The North Delta Water Association has a forty year contract signed in 1981 that prevents any of these changes. Had the Depart of Water Resources complied with the contract and provided and maintained increased water flows, the health of the Delta would be intact.

How does the State of California intend to address the legal issue of the contractual water rights of the North Delta Water Association landowners? (9)

Given the short period of time and the urgency of this matter, there may be additional questions and concerns besides the nine questions raised above. Please provide detail responses to each question both on your websites and

to the public.

An excellent reference to more fully understand the complex issues is hereby attached. In October 2007 John Herrick wrote this letter to Mr. John Kirlin, Executive Director of the Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force at 650 Capitol Mall, Sacramento. His letter has yet to be addressed. Please answer the questions he has raised. Please include this letter in the comments to the Blue Ribbon Task Force.

Sincerely,

Daniel and Donis P. Whaley

Gary and Peggy Merwin

Grape Growing 'Hotbed'

Big wineries sniffing around Clarksburg vineyards

CELIA LAMB | STAFF WRITER

Increased demand and contracts from big-name wineries have boosted the confidence of winegrape growers in the region, stimulating vineyard planting in southern Sacramento areas.

Over the next five years, Clarksburg winegrape grower Ken Wilson plans to add 500 acres to his family's 800-acre vineyard, adding about 100 acres per year.

"We're getting longer-term contracts now because wineries are starting to realize there hasn't been a lot of planting, but demand continues to grow," Wilson said.

Growers said big wineries, including E&J Gallo Winery and Domaine Chandon Inc., have been making deals in the region.

"There are a few wineries out there that are signing pre-planting contracts, but they're choosing the areas very carefully," said Craig Ledbetter, a partner in Lodi-based Vino Farms Inc. "Clarksburg is kind of a hotbed. You get higher tonnage but good quality white grapes in that area. Pinot noir also does very well."

Wilson Vineyards recently

DENNIS McCOY | SACRAMENTO BUSINESS JOURNAL

Ken Wilson and his dog, Shadow, check out his pinot noir winegrapes at his vineyard in Clarksburg.

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CLARKSBURG | Clarksburg prices nearing sustainability, but Lodi prices lagging behind

FROM PAGE 1

negotiated a contract with a winery that wants to create a wine made only with grapes from Clarksburg, where cool Delta breezes create growing conditions similar to the wine-growing regions along the coast, but with none of the water-shortage worries.

"We have plenty of land here and plenty of water," Wilson said. "It creates an ideal climate for premium winegrapes."

The so-called "Sideways Effect," meaning the higher demand for pinot noir and lower demand for merlot that resulted from the way those varietals were treated in the 2004 movie "Sideways," led to a spike in pinot noir plantings from 2005 to 2007, especially in Clarksburg.

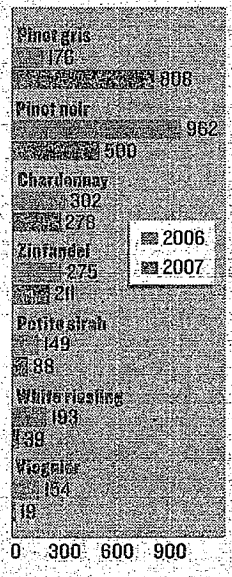
Chardonnay, petite sirah and zinfandel acreage also has increased in the grape-growing districts that include southern Yolo, southern Sacramento and northern San Joaquin counties. But pinot gris took up the biggest share of vineyard plantings.

"It's such a hot varietal," said Karen Ross, president of the California Association of Winegrape Growers. "It's been one of the few varietals that there have been contracts offered (for)."

"It's a wine that's easy to drink on a hot summer day," Ledbetter said. "It's taking the place of white zinfandel. It's still sweet, but a little dryer."

Taste in grapes change

Top winegrapes planted in Sacramento, Yolo and San Joaquin counties (by acres planted, ranked by 2007 planting)



Vino Farms is part of a group of investors that bought 250 acres in Clarksburg last year. About 65 acres already had pinot gris vines, and the owners planted pinot noir, chardonnay and more pinot gris on the rest of the property. Vino Farms also tore out an old 65-acre zinfandel vineyard on Grant Line Road in Sacramento County because it wasn't producing good yields, and replanted it with white riesling and chardonnay.

LangeTwins Winery in Woodbridge has planted about 85 acres of pinot noir and 65 acres of pinot gris (also known as pinot grigio) over the past year, LangeTwins co-founder Bradford Lange said.

"Pinot noir and pinot gris are at a price point that makes sense," Lange said.

Cognizant of how the 1990s boom in vineyard planting led to a glut of winegrapes and low prices in the early 2000s, growers remain leery of planting too much. High prices for fuel and land add to their reluctance to take out loans for property purchases.

High steel prices have also increased the costs of planting. The price of stakes used to support vine trellises has risen from $1.35 each to $3.25.

'In 2010, I could see prices being sustainable.'

Craig Ledbetter
partner, Vino Farms Inc.

Bogle Vineyards Inc. in Clarksburg recently finished planting pinot noir vines on 20 acres, the company's last open land, vineyard manager Warren Bogle said. He said land prices near Clarksburg area have more than doubled, from about $5,000 per acre when his family last bought land in 2000, to about $10,000 to $14,000 per acre now.

"People are coming in from out of the area, buying ground and planting grapes," Bogle said. "They must have a lot of up-front cash to do that."

Sutter Home Winery Inc., owned by Trinchero Family Estates, has started planting grapes on several hundred acres it bought near Walnut Creek. But wineries aren't rushing into land purchases.

"With the price of land as high as it is, it's hard to find open ground, plant that and make a return on investment in 15 years," Ledbetter said.

That return on investment is critical for vineyard owners' financial sustainability, he added. Growers must put away enough cash to replant vineyards that lose productivity after 25 or 30 years.

Ledbetter said Lodi- and Clarksburg-area vineyard owners need to generate revenue of at least $4,500 per acre to be sustainable. That translates to winegrape prices of $500 to $700 per ton, he said.

Prices have reached that range in Clarksburg. Lodi, where prices plummeted to about $380 per ton in 2003, is still lagging.

"We're headed in the right direction," Ledbetter said. "In 2010, I could see prices being sustainable."

Ten years ago, winegrapes from Lodi were selling for about $650 to $700 per ton. Now, they're priced at about $450 per ton for red varieties, and more than $500 per ton for white varieties, Lange said.

"I think those prices are going to strengthen," he said. "I'm counting on it.

"We have an impending shortage of winegrapes throughout California," Lange added. "The big question mark today is what will be the global reach of (California) wine companies? If they perceive a shortage here, how much might they source grapes from outside the United States?"

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PC-45
Blue Ribbon Task Force
CORRESPONDENCE

Subj: **CLARKSBURG**
Date: 7/1/2008 8:35:06 A.M. Pacific Daylight Time
From: DandGMERWIN
To: mweiser@sacbee.com

Matt

I stand corrected. After seeing today's article in the Bee "Fed's Plan to Aid Delta Water System Assailed" the Sac Bee is not asleep at the wheel. I think if you put the pieces of the puzzle together you will see this is Simple. Water contractor's had to get as many environmentalists on their side as possible so they put together a plan to turn over a 100,000 acre playground for them in the middle of Sacramento, UC Davis and San Francisco's back yard so they can put in a new canal and pump away.All in under the guise of saving fish. The reality is from the scientific end it is an experiment. They have no science to back up what they are trying to do. Look who's pushing this on the list of people hand picked for the BDCP. Environmental scientist's trying to play God and water contractor's. I am just a dumb farmer but in my travels I went to the fish hatchery at Nimbus Dam a few years ago and the biologists there told me how interesting it was that they have done experiments with raising Salmon and released marked Salmon from the American River where the Rogue River empties into the Pacific and vice versa and they both find their way back to their original homes. And these scientist's and water contractor's are just going to create a new habitat where historically there has never been one! Isn't that special! It is bad science behind what they are doing and that is why the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service issued their warning.

Please hold them accountable Matt. The best forecast for the future is to look at history. It is a scientific fact that the largest single cause in the reduction of water quality in the Delta has been the export of hundreds of millions of acre feet of water from the Delta. And they want more. The only solution to pollution is delution.

Clarksburg is a beautiful historical place and has been evolving into a major sustainable wine grape growing region. It is shameful for Arnold to have appointed people to the BDCP that contract water to fill swimming pools in Southern California and we get no representation.

Gary Merwin
3rd Generation Farmer
Trustee R.D. 999

Gas prices getting you down? Search AOL Autos for fuel-efficient used cars.

SOUTH DELTA WATER AGENCY

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July 1, 2008

Via E-Mail dv_context@calwater.ca.gov

Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force
650 Capitol Mall, 5th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Ladies/Gentlemen:

We are writing to provide an initial technical response to your invitation for constructive comment on the June 18 Preliminary Staff Draft of a Delta Vision Strategic Plan.

The length and breath of the Draft attest to the complexity of the subject, and the long range difficulty of restoring and protecting the Delta while also providing an adequate California water supply as the population grows. However, much of the draft is little more than an unrealistic wish list by people with different knowledge bases and perspectives. It includes conceptual solutions to various perceived needs without regard to compatibility or feasibility, or the extent to which the compatible measures could collectively achieve the strategic goals. It also fails to identify the technical analyses needed to determine whether a dual facility would be a viable solution.

For example, page 7 and Action 4.1 on page 29 and elsewhere propose that a large part of the Delta's agriculture be converted to various kinds of wetland and upland habitat. There is no discussion of the fact that this would reduce the developed water supply because open water and wetlands consume much more water pre acre than farmlands. There is no discussion of the consumptive use of water in the Delta. There is no discussion of whether the remaining farms could survive if there is no longer enough business for food processors, and farm service organization to be viable. There is no discussion of the pros and cons of destroying agriculture in the Delta or elsewhere when we have 5 million more people to feed every ten years. Agricultural Code 411 says we must have a sufficient farm water supply so that we don't become dependent on a net import of food. The State Water Plan ignores this legislated policy. Will the Vision Plan also ignore it? How does the Strategic Plan decide what laws and water rights to honor and which to ignore.

Page 35 proposes large controlled increases in outflow to the Bay. There is no discussion of the source of this water.

In discussing the need for a reliable California water supply there seems to be an unexplained assumption that part of that supply must derive from intercepting a substantial part of the remaining but reduced Delta inflow, and exporting it through an isolated canal. Yet it is stated on page 41 that "the surest path to supply reliability is through regional self sufficiency ------." On page 59, Action 9.2 it is acknowledged that exports from the Delta should be reduced in low river inflow conditions and increased in high outflow situations. It is not clearly stated that this increases the developed water supply by capturing excess Delta outflow.

On Action 9.1 page 58 it is proposed to implement a "Middle River Conveyance" system. This is similar to the In-Delta Comprehensive Water Management Plan presented to the Task Force last October. That Plan was then never discussed or mentioned in Task force reports. There has been no discussion of considering the Plan as an alternative to a dual facility, rather than just an interim measure. The Delta Corridor portion of the Plan would keep San Joaquin fish away from screens. Our updated Plan would also correct the deadend feature of screening Sacramento and resident fish in water exported from the South Delta. We would create a flow of Sacramento water past the screens and discharge that flushing flow into the Old River Corridor.

The draft Strategic Plan still assumes that we can have a canal and also restore the Delta. This is not physically possible. The DWR's May response to a question from the Vision Task Force admits that even with <u>average</u> rather than below average summer river flows, the Delta outflow would have to be reduced and X2 moved inland to get any increase in Delta exports by use of a canal. What effect will this have on the City of Antioch and on the ecology of Suisun March? DWR's analysis is based on 2,000 cfs at Vernalis, but it was about 1,000 cfs in three of the last four years and was about 850 cfs last weekend.

A basic cause of our water problems is that the population has already outgrown the developed water supply. California is unsustainably overdrafting its groundwater by about two million acre feet per year. The fresh water inflow to the Delta from the Mokelumne and San Joaquin Rivers has been largely eliminated much of the time. This is the result of exports upstream of the Delta to the Tulare Basin, and to the Bay area. It also results from increased upstream consumptive use of water to grow food and provide urban needs for the growing population. We have about 5 million more Californians every ten years, but the 2005 State Water Plan makes <u>no</u> provision for the water that must be used consumptively to provide food for the increasing population. Researchers at U.C. Riverside have estimated that it takes about 0.75 acre feet of water consumed to grow an adequate and balanced food supply for each member of the public.

Since the decrease in Delta inflow is a major cause of the problem, it is not logical to believe that we can solve the problem by using a canal to substantially further decrease inflow, and by destroying the dispersal of any remaining inflow through Delta channels, and by increasing exports from the Delta. The draft Plan does not discuss this.

A canal through the Delta would also divide the Delta into two parts. It would sever lands, farm roads, county roads, irrigation systems, drainage systems, levees, all but a few channels, recreational boating routes, etc. It would increase major flood stages by impeding flow across the canal. It would cause seepage problems, and require new fish screens. It would create problems for utilities, gas pipelines, and water pipelines to the Bay area. It would create blind sloughs with no circulation. The draft does not mention this.

On page 23 of the above mentioned May report by DWR to the Task Force it is acknowledged that DWR has not yet investigated the water quality and flow effects within Delta channels. When that is done for both average and low river flow conditions it will show that salinity will be too high for reliable crop production in the Delta south of the Sacramento channel. This will put farms out of business. Farmers are the primary maintainers of non-urban levees. When farming a destroyed, the levees will be abandoned and the Delta will convert to an open salty Bay. How will this affect fishery?

The draft Strategic Plan and the State Water Plan do not distinguish between proposals such as transfers which reallocate but do not increase water supply, and measures which do increase supply. The Plan does not distinguish between non-consumptive uses which can be, and are largely already recovered in the Central Valley, and consumptive uses which can not be recovered. Most of the man made consumptive use is for the production of food. This consumptive use requires far more water than all of the non-consumptive uses of water. Little can be done to decrease the amount of water that must be consumed to produce a pound of crop biomass. Pushing farmers to use drip irrigation will not reduce the consumptive water use. The non-consumed excess applied water is already largely recovered.

We recommend that the Strategic Plan be revised in respect to the above discussion and similar matters.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

Alex Hildebrand

cc: Sunne McPeak
John Herrick
Secretary Mike Chrisman