



June 15, 2011

The Honorable Ken Salazar  
Secretary, Department of Interior  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240

The Honorable John Laird  
Secretary, Natural Resources Agency  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Secretary Salazar and Secretary Laird,

We, the undersigned, write to urge you to make the key necessary decisions in the coming days and weeks to develop a proposal of water system and ecosystem improvements via the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) to address the ongoing crisis in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Our organizations fully support California's co-equal goals of water supply reliability and ecosystem restoration for the Delta. Decisions to craft a BDCP package that restores a reliable water supply for the California economy, and recovers this treasured estuary, are essential to achieving the co-equal goals.

We encourage the agencies to adhere to their anticipated timeline and move forward with a decision as quickly as possible in the coming year. Our state cannot afford further delays in this process, as our water system is in desperate need of infrastructure upgrades to protect water supply from natural disasters and climate change, address environmental needs, and improve reliability for our state's economy.

We fully realize both the complexity of the Delta challenge and the difficulty of shifting from the planning phase to the deciding phase. Yet the BDCP is clearly at that crossroads. Thousands of pages of scientific and technical information released over the past months have provided the necessary building blocks for decisions. Public water agencies are on a path to spend nearly a quarter of a billion dollars on planning before the first investments can be made on actual improvements.

There will always be a degree of scientific uncertainty in the Delta. There will always be differing views. There will always be stakeholders with a passion for one of the co-equal goals more than the other. We recognize that the BDCP, with hundreds of public meetings, has received considerable input. What we need now is a robust proposal that advances both water supply reliability and Delta restoration in a workable fashion.

The evidence is overwhelming that the status quo is a grave threat to the Delta, from the seismic risk to levees to the many stressors facing key fish species such as salmon. The time to act is now. Without these infrastructure upgrades, not only will the Delta fail to receive the needed environmental improvements, but communities across the state will be at risk of water disruptions, new construction and development projects could be derailed, and we could lose new industry investments in the state due to the lack of a clean, reliable water supply.

We appreciate your leadership to get the BDCP to this critical decision stage. We urge you, now, to seize this rare moment in California water history to move the Delta toward an era of action and positive change.

Sincerely,



Tom Nassif  
President and CEO, Western Growers Association



Rex Hime  
President & CEO, California Business Properties Association



Jim Earp  
Executive Director, CA Alliance for Jobs



Jose Mejia  
Director, California State Council of Laborers



Richard Lyon  
Senior Vice President, California Building Industry Association



Daniel M. Curtin  
Director, CA Conference of Carpenters



Allan Zaremberg  
President & CEO, California Chamber of Commerce



Tim Cremins  
Political Director Western Region, International Union of Operating Engineers

cc. Jerry Meral, California Natural Resources Agency