

ITEM: 7

SUBJECT: Joint Water Boards' Strategy for Protecting Beneficial Uses of the San Francisco Bay and Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta

BOARD ACTION: *Consideration of a Resolution Approving the Strategic Workplan for Actions to Protect Beneficial Uses of the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary*

BACKGROUND: Despite extensive effort and expense over the past decade to restore the Delta ecosystem, evidence of declines in populations of Delta species indicates that the system is not improving. As such, several efforts are underway to develop a vision for the future of the Delta including Delta Vision, the Bay-Delta Conservation Plan, and Delta Risk Management Strategy. At the same time, the Interagency Ecological Program is conducting large-scale studies to determine the relative importance of the factors thought to be contributing to the decline of Delta species. The Water Boards are engaged in all of these efforts to varying degrees.

To ensure coordination among the Water Boards as well as with the entities engaged in the Delta planning efforts mentioned above, the Water Boards formed the Bay-Delta Team comprised of staff from the State Water Board Division of Water Rights and Division of Water Quality, the Central Valley Regional Water Board, and the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Board (collectively Water Boards). In 2007, the Bay-Delta Team developed a suite of short and long-term actions for protecting beneficial uses of the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The actions were intended to complement and coordinate ongoing Delta-related activities. In December 2007 and January 2008 the Water Boards jointly adopted resolutions 2007-0079, R5-2007-0161, and R2-2008-0009 committing to the suite of actions and directing staff to develop a strategic workplan that describes the scope of the actions and specifies timelines and resource needs for implementing them.

Water Board staff prepared the draft Strategic Workplan for the Bay-Delta and distributed it for public comment in June 2008. On 16 July 2008 the State Water Board adopted Resolution 2008-0056 approving the workplan with modifications made at the hearing. In general the revisions were minor, editorial or clarifying changes. The one significant change was addition of a task to conduct fact finding proceedings on the sources of salt to the Delta, impacts of constant or variable salinity, the benefits of fish screens on in-Delta diversions, impacts of ammonia and toxicity, and the impacts of net outflow objectives. Attachment A shows the State Water Board changes. Depending on the amount of staff time required for these proceedings, timelines for other tasks in the strategic workplan may need to be extended.

Staff proposes this resolution be adopted as a joint statement of intent by the State Water Board and the Central Valley and San Francisco Bay Regional Water Boards.

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt the proposed resolution.

Mgmt. Review \_\_\_\_\_

Legal Review LT0

**11/12 September 2008**

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