



Craig McNamara
Board President
Owner, Sierra Orchards

June 8, 2017

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Executive Director

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Drake Enterprises

Michael Gallo, Co-owner
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Eric Holst,
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Fund

Bryce Lundberg,
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Los Kitos Produce

Joy Sterling, CEO
Iron Horse Vineyards

The Honorable Karen Ross
California Department of Food and Agriculture
1220 'N' Street, Suite 400
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Secretary Ross:

Our recent update to the California Ag Vision included 'Water' as a strategic priority, recognizing the impact water policy has on agricultural production for the farmers and ranchers of our state. As part of this priority, the Board included a recommendation to host public forums on key issues and solutions related to water policy implementation in the state.

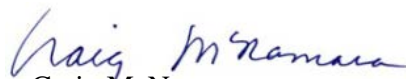
Our current, and most welcomed, water year has provided an opportunity to discuss and inform long term state policies related to ground water recharge. California needs a robust recharge effort to replenish groundwater basins. By having greater access to water and incentives to recharge groundwater basins, the farmers and ranchers, cities and counties, and NGOs and GSAs of the state can make real progress in achieving the goals of the California Water Action Plan and the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act.

This could be achieved by providing incentives for the development of infrastructure needed to increase recharge opportunities; extending the provisions of the Governor's Executive Order of November 2015 that provide a CEQA exemption and expedited process for temporary water rights permits; and expanding the groundwater recharge purposes considered to be beneficial uses to include replenishment of over drafted aquifers.

We believe it is an appropriate time for CDFA to convene a public forum with water authorities; agricultural organizations; regulators; and other stakeholders to address 'Recharge Policies' of the state, laying the foundation for future groundwater recharge opportunities.

The Board is more than willing to assist CDFA in the implementation of this proposed forum.

Best regards,


Craig McNamara
President

