



Don J. Cameron
Board President
General Manager,
Terranova Ranch, Inc.

September 10, 2018

Joshua Eddy
Executive Director

Rachelle Pastor Arizmendi
VP & Chief Operating
Officer for Pacific Asian
Consortium in
Employment

Ashley Boren
Executive Director,
Sustainable Conservation

Donald Bransford, Owner,
Bransford Farms

Nancy Casady
General Manager
Ocean Beach People's
Organic Food Co-Op

Helene Dillard, Dean
College of Agricultural and
Environmental Sciences
at the University of
California, Davis

Michael Gallo, Co-owner
Joseph Gallo Farms

Crystal Hayling, Executive
Director,
The Libra Foundation

Eric Holst,
Senior Director,
Environmental Defense
Fund

Jeff Huckaby, President
Grimmway Farms

Bryce Lundberg,
Vice President,
Lundberg Family Farms

Martha Montoya,
President,
Los Kitos Produce

Frank Muller, Co-Owner
Muller Ranch, LLC

Joy Sterling, CEO
Iron Horse Vineyards

Andrew J. Thulin, Dean
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environmental
Sciences, California
Polytechnic State
University

The Honorable Jerry Brown
State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Brown:

On behalf of the State Board of Food and Agriculture, I write to urge you to do all you can to keep the parties at the negotiating table to develop Voluntary Settlement Agreements for the Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary. You have highly qualified leadership convening the parties on your behalf: Director Karla Nemeth, Director Chuck Bonham and Governor Bruce Babbitt. However, your personal intervention at key decision points conveys a strong message that collaboration will bring more timely and effective results for fish as well as other beneficial uses of water for agriculture, municipalities and rural communities. Your strategic and personal engagement may be the ultimate tool that brings negotiations to a conclusion by the end of the year.

We commend your Administration for its commitment to update the Water Quality Control Plan. There is no doubt that the protection of fish in the Delta is needed, especially since our rivers are home to many sensitive species that contribute to the biology and environment of what is now the world's fifth largest economy. We also appreciate what an enormous challenge it is to balance all competing uses of water. That was underscored at the August 21-22, 2018, hearings of the State Water Resources Control Board.

That challenge was noted in the summary and message to readers of the Board's own 2010 report required by Water Code section 85086(c) (2009 Delta Reform Act): "We know however, that there are many other important beneficial uses [in addition to fishery protection] that these waters support such as municipal and agricultural water supply and recreational uses. The State Water Board is required by law to establish flow and other objectives that ensure the reasonable protection of beneficial uses. In order for any flow objective to be reasonable, the State Water Board must consider and balance all competing uses of water in its decision-making."

Voluntary Settlement Agreements have the very real potential to strike the balance required of the Board. The Voluntary Settlement Agreements should take full advantage of the findings and continued work of the Delta Science Program to improve modeling and monitoring and to capitalize on all that has been learned about the land-water connection. Voluntary Settlement



Agreements would allow for proactive management of landscapes and ecosystems, improving the health of the natural resources upon which California and food production depend.

Negotiating Voluntary Settlement Agreements this year is imperative because several areas of the State Water Board's proposed Bay-Delta Plan lack the necessary comprehensive analysis to better inform the board's decision making. It does not fully account for the economic impacts to agriculture and rural communities. It needs a more adequate evaluation of the effect of the proposed Plan amendment with the implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act which will result in less groundwater availability. It also needs a more robust assessment of climate change scenarios and impacts. Adoption of the plan without this additional analysis or without voluntary settlement agreements would result in dismal outcomes.

California is blessed to have diverse, bountiful agricultural food production systems that are the envy of the world. It leads the nation in agricultural food production value which is impressive when we consider California is also the most populated State and is the home to some of the most beautiful, sensitive and iconic landscapes of natural beauty and environmental significance. We are one of five Mediterranean climates in the world, a food source for an ever-expanding population. California is also a world biodiversity hotspot – home to more species of plants and animals than any other state in the country.

We are grateful for the tremendous leadership you have brought to the critical issues of water for our state's future. We welcome the opportunity to meet with you to address any questions you may have regarding the issues we have raised.

Sincerely,



Don J. Cameron
President

cc: Diana Dooley, Executive Secretary
Keely Bosler, Cabinet Secretary
Kim Craig, Deputy Cabinet Secretary
Peter Southworth, Deputy Legal Counsel
Bruce Babbitt, Special Advisor
Karen Ross, California Department of Food and Agriculture
Karla Nemeth, California Department of Water Resources
Chuck Bonham, California Department of Fish and Wildlife