



Delta Counties Coalition

Contra Costa County · Sacramento County · San Joaquin County · Solano County · Yolo County

"Working together on water and Delta issues"

June 19, 2020

Honorable Senator Ben Allen
State Capitol, Room 4076
Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable Senator Anthony Portantino
State Capitol, Room 3086
Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia
State Capitol, Room 4140
Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable Senator Henry Stern
State Capitol, Room 5080
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: **Delta Counties Coalition's Resiliency and Economic Recovery Bond Position**

Dear Senators Allen, Portantino, Stern, and Assemblymember Garcia:

This session, there has been a fruitful discussion around bond legislative proposals to advance climate resiliency and, more recently, economic recovery. Whether now or in a later session, the Delta Counties Coalition (DCC) respectfully requests your support to ensure important DCC priorities are reflected in the final version. The DCC supports a Resiliency and Economic Recovery Bond that provides significant funding for in Delta flood management projects and other direct assistance to local Delta communities to address the threats of flood, sea level rise and to maintain the existing through-delta conveyance system, while protecting the Delta ecosystem.

A Resiliency Bond Must Fund Levees in the Delta. The DCC requests a separate allocation for Delta resiliency with direct allocations for levees and other measures to protect against flooding and sea level rise **in the Delta**. Delta levees need to continue to be improved to meet an acceptable minimum engineering standard, and the funds allocated should be proportional with the overall size of the bond. In crafting the bond language, it should be recognized that:

- Delta levee improvements provide multiple benefits, including protecting communities, agriculture, through-Delta conveyance corridors, and critical infrastructure of statewide and local importance (roads, railways, transmission lines, waterways);
- Delta levee projects provide ecosystem benefits on a programmatic level; the Central Valley Flood Control system has been meeting a net enhancement of habitat standard for the system as a whole since 1988; and
- Delta levee funding should not include multi-benefit language that requires ecosystem benefits for every levee project. Due to the unique geography and other unique constraints in the Delta, it is often not possible to include ecosystem benefits, and past bonds with this language have failed to fund important levee projects.

Any bond must also be neutral on a potential Delta Conveyance project. A Tunnel-neutral water bond would not include any funds for implementation of any aspect of the project, meaning:

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- No direct or indirect funding for the tunnel, including other tunnel permit conditions, and no funding for other mitigation requirements that could be relied upon by or facilitate the tunnel
- No funding for purchase of flows needed to operate proposed new north Delta intakes or otherwise meet state and federal water projects' compliance or mitigation requirements.

Water bond funding may also include funding for:

- Delta habitat enhancements on Delta islands and in the Yolo Bypass already in public ownership;
- Restoration projects supported by local Delta communities that incorporate Good Neighbor policies;
- Payment of in lieu taxes when lands are taken out of private ownership for restoration purposes; and
- Projects that create more efficiency and utilize local and regional water supplies that result in reduced reliance on the Delta.

The DCC looks forward to working with your offices to develop a bond focused on resiliency and recovery. Please feel free to contact us through our coordinator Natasha Drane at 916-874-4627 or DraneN@SacCounty.net.

Sincerely,



Don Nottoli
Supervisor, Sacramento County



Skip Thomson
Supervisor, Solano County



Karen Mitchoff
Supervisor, Contra Costa
County



Oscar Villegas
Supervisor, Yolo County



Chuck Winn
Supervisor, San Joaquin
County

cc: Resiliency Bond Principal Coauthors
Delta County Delegation