



Delta Counties Coalition

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

"Working together on water and Delta issues"

April 27, 2021

Dear Members of the Delta Congressional Delegation:

As you know, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Counties Coalition (DCC) is a consortium of Contra Costa, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Solano, and Yolo Counties, formed to speak with one voice on our collective concerns regarding the co-equal goals of protecting, restoring, and enhancing the Delta ecosystem, and providing a more reliable water supply for California.

Consistent with these objectives, we urge that you work to include funding in the Fiscal Year 2022 Energy and Water Appropriations bill for the Army Corps of Engineers to implement a new authority that was established as part of the Water Resources Development Act of 2020 (WRDA '20).

Section 128 of WRDA '20 established a new program, the Harmful Algal Bloom Demonstration Program, to "determine the causes of, and implement measures to effectively detect, prevent, treat, and eliminate harmful algal blooms . . ." It provides a one-time authorization of \$25 million, available until expended. Six focus areas were identified in the legislation for participation in the program, including "the waterways of the counties that comprise the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, California".

As you know, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay Delta is the source of drinking water for roughly 30 million people and agricultural irrigation water for the Central Valley region. It is also home to a vast array of threatened and endangered aquatic species. Unfortunately, the frequency, range, and severity of harmful algal bloom (HAB) outbreaks in the Delta is dramatically increasing. Some cyanobacterial HABs, which are found in the Delta, can produce toxins that can kill fish, mammals, and birds, and may cause human illness and even death. According to NOAA, "other algae are nontoxic, but eat up all of the oxygen in the water as they decay, clog the gills of fish and invertebrates, or smother corals and submerged aquatic vegetation. Still others discolor water, form huge, smelly piles on beaches or contaminate drinking water."

While most HAB events are naturally occurring, caused by nutrient levels, sluggish water flow, and unusually high water temperatures, they can be influenced by the increasing effects of climate change. Prolonged droughts and warmer temperatures in California have increased the times in which HABs can bloom, inflicting damage on the local ecosystem.

It is essential to recreation and tourism in the Delta, but also to the health and safety of those who live or recreate in the region or depend on the Delta's water, that the increasing spread of HABs be arrested and reversed. Toward this end, we ask that the full \$25 million authorized by WRDA '20 be appropriated in FY '22. This will help assure that some of the funding comes to the Delta to address our needs, begin to provide information that can benefit the rest of the country that is

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impacted by HABs, and also begin to yield information to support an extension and expansion of the program in a WRDA '22.

Again, we ask that you work to include \$25 million in the FY '22 Energy and Water Appropriations bill for the Army Corps of Engineers to carry out the Harmful Algal Bloom Demonstration Program.

Sincerely,



Don Nottoli
Supervisor, Sacramento County



Mitch Mashburn
Supervisor, Solano County



Karen Mitchoff
Supervisor, Contra Costa
County



Oscar Villegas
Supervisor, Yolo County



Chuck Winn
Supervisor, San Joaquin
County