

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

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February 23, 2015

Mr. Scott Wilson
Regional Manager
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Bay Delta Region
7329 Silverado Trail
Napa, California 94558

RE: Refinements/Updates to the Notification of a Streambed Alteration Agreement Pursuant to Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code for the Emergency Drought Barriers Project

Dear Mr. Wilson:

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) is submitting this letter to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) in order to comply with Section 1602 of the California Fish and Wildlife code and is intended to highlight project refinements/updates for the Emergency Drought Barriers Project (EDB or Project).

In March 2014, DWR submitted a notification for a Streambed Alteration Agreement (SAA) to CDFW. Because water supply and quality improved, DWR was not required to install the barriers in 2014 at three strategic locations throughout the Delta (see <http://www.water.ca.gov/waterconditions/emergencybarriers.cfm>); however, DWR, based on discussions with CDFW, decided to postpone CDFW's statutory time limit for processing the SAA notification until 2015 (i.e., in lieu of rescinding the notification). This postponement allowed DWR to refine and update the Project and comply with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements. The proposed project purpose (to reduce the intrusion of saltwater into the Delta during drought conditions when stored water in upstream reservoirs is insufficient to meet Delta outflow required to repel San Francisco Bay salinity) and the three project locations (Sutter Slough, Steamboat Slough, and West False River) remain unchanged. Nevertheless, DWR has refined and updated several project components, which include the following:

- **Permit Term:** Rock (rip-rap) barrier weir structures would be installed at three sites. During this 10-year period, the barriers could be installed up to three times, including potentially in consecutive years.
- **Geotechnical Exploration:** Geologic exploration would potentially occur in any year from 2015 to 2025 that the EDB would not be installed. A total of three overwater drill holes would be completed. Geotechnical exploration is required to reduce uncertainty associated with the underlying ground that would support the

barriers, locate poor foundation soils like peat, and better estimate engineering design parameters.

- **Construction Installation/Removal Dates:** The rock barriers may be installed at each of the sites in spring or summer, beginning no sooner than May 7 at the West False River location, and May 22 at the Sutter and Steamboat Slough sites. The construction period would be approximately 30 to 60 days. Barrier removal may require approximately 30 to 60 days for Sutter and Steamboat sloughs with removal commencing on or near October 1 and approximately 45 to 60 days for West False River with removal also commencing on or near October 1. The barriers would be removed entirely no later than November 1 for Sutter and Steamboat sloughs and November 15 for West False River, before the rainy season when freshwater runoff typically occurs and flood risk increases.
- **Conservation Measures:** DWR refined existing conservation measures and developed new conservation measures to avoid and minimize environmental impacts.
- **CEQA:** DWR prepared an Initial Study/Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/Proposed MND) and submitted it to the State Clearing House (SCH No. 2015012048) on January 23, 2015.

Please note that the bullet points only highlight the significant project refinements/updates. Please refer to the enclosed Incidental Take Permit (ITP)(February 2015) for a complete project description.

In order for CDFW to issue an SAA, DWR has updated Form FG 2023 (Attachment A). For convenience, DWR has also provided, on CD only, the ITP application (Attachment B), IS/Proposed MND (Attachment C), Aquatic Biological Assessment (BA) (Attachment D), Terrestrial BA (Attachment E), and copies of the Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404 ENG Form 4345 and CWA Section 401 Water Quality Certification Application (Attachment F).

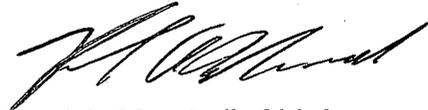
We appreciate your expedient processing of the SAA notification so that DWR may commence installation, if necessary, in May 2015.

We look forward to working with you to obtain a SAA for this significant project to protect the Delta from impaired water quality. If you have any questions or need further

Mr. Scott Wilson
February 23, 2015
Page 3

information please contact our Project Manager, Jacob McQuirk at (916) 653-9883 or
jacob.mcquirk@water.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Paul A. Marshall, Chief
Bay-Delta Office

Enclousres

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