



### **Delta Counties Coalition**

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

*"Working together on water and Delta issues"*

July 14, 2015

The Honorable David Valadao  
United States House of Representatives  
1004 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Valadao:

The Delta Counties Coalition (DCC) appreciates your efforts to address the ongoing drought that is greatly impacting the Central Valley, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and the entire State. As you are aware, California is entering its fourth year of drought, resulting in State-mandated water use reductions of over 25 percent. The DCC restates the need for any future drought-related legislation to be consistent with its operating principles listed in Attachment A, particularly on the following points:

- Delta region consequences are addressed and Delta stakeholders are consulted in measures to improve drought conditions elsewhere (Principles 3 and 4);
- Additional exports from the Delta are prohibited or severely restricted, requiring a strong showing by export beneficiaries that exports will not have negative effects on the environment, agriculture, urban supplies, and water quality in the Delta (Principles 1, 2, 7, and 10);
- Water rights priorities and areas of origin protections of State law are protected (Principle 2);
- Statutory protections for the Delta are not diminished (Principles 1, 2, 7, and 10);
- Temporary Urgency Change Permits (TUCPs) are not inappropriately promoted and used as a water management tool, allowing and perpetuating unsustainable and inadequate long-term drought planning; Delta water supply and quality effects from use of TUCPs for drought are disclosed (Principles 1, 2, 7, and 10); and
- Additional aquifer drawdown is prevented; groundwater replacement and compliance with California's Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014 are promoted.

While there are supportable provisions in H.R. 2898, much of the legislation is inconsistent with the above principles. For this reason, the DCC opposes the bill as currently constructed. We

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strongly believe that our depth of understanding of the Delta region and California water issues can help find statewide solutions to the drought. The DCC is interested in Federal legislation that fully and fairly reflects the Delta's role in meeting legitimate needs around the State and that seeks to protect and improve the Delta consistent with the coequal goals in the State's Delta Reform Act of 2009. Only then can the Delta's vital resources, important to both the Delta region's residents and the entire State, be assured.

Sincerely,



Mary Nejedly Piepho  
Supervisor, Contra Costa County



Skip Thomson  
Supervisor, Solano County



Don Nottoli  
Supervisor, Sacramento County



Jim Provenza  
Supervisor, Yolo County



Katherine M. Miller  
Supervisor, San Joaquin County

Attachment A: Delta Counties Coalition Principles

cc: Senator Barbara Boxer  
Senator Dianne Feinstein  
Representative John Garamendi  
Representative Doris Matsui  
Representative Mike Thompson  
Representative Ami Bera  
Representative Tom McClintock  
Representative Jerry McNerney  
Representative Jeff Denham  
Representative Mark DeSaulnier  
Representative Doug LaMalfa  
Representative Jared Huffman  
Representative Eric Swalwell

**Delta Counties Coalition Principles**

The Delta Counties Coalition believes that the management of the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta and greater Bay Delta Estuary must:

1. Protect and improve water quality and water quantity in the Delta region and maintain appropriate Delta outflow for a healthy estuary;
2. Protect the existing water right priority system and legislative protections established for the Delta;
3. Respect and safeguard Delta Counties' responsibilities related to land use, water resources, flood management, tax revenues, public health and safety, economic development, agricultural stability, recreation, and environmental protection in any new Delta governance structures;
4. Represent and include local government in any new governance structures for the Delta;
5. Protect the economic viability of agriculture and the ongoing vitality of communities in the Delta;
6. Support rehabilitation, improvement and maintenance of levees throughout the Delta;
7. Support the Delta pool concept; in which the common resource provides quality freshwater supply to all delta users, requiring mutual responsibility to maintain, restore and protect the common resource;
8. Support immediate improvements to through-Delta conveyance;
9. Require that any water conveyance plan for the Delta be aligned with the principles established by this resolution and supported by clearly demonstrated improvement to the entire state's water management;
10. Protect and restore the Delta ecosystem, including adequate water supply and quality to support it in perpetuity; and
11. Include the study of storage options and implementation of conservation, recycling, re-use, and regional self-sufficiency as part of a state-wide improved flood management and water supply system.
12. Support those conservation actions that are aligned with the principles established by this resolution and that are in accordance with habitat plans and programs of the Delta Counties.