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EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT November 21, 2016

~ PROGRAM UPDATE ~

Ecosystem Restoration

Proposition 1 Grant Program: The Conservancy's Ecosystem Restoration and Water Quality Grant Program (Grant Program) focuses on the restoration of important species and habitat, on improving water quality, and on agricultural sustainability. The Grant Program identifies projects to protect and restore California rivers, lakes, streams, and watersheds that may be funded with Prop. 1 funding (Sec. 79732 et seq). On September 30th, the Conservancy closed its concept proposal solicitation for the 2016-2017 fiscal year. The Conservancy received 13 proposals, three of which are for planning projects (category 1) and 10 of which are for implementation projects (category 2). Proposals have been received for projects in all five Delta counties. In total, applicants requested \$15.98 million. Staff reviewed and scored all of the eligible proposals (11 total) and is recommending that the Board request full proposals for 9 projects that have requested \$15.10 million in total. More information is provided in the concept proposal staff report. For the 2015-2016 funding cycle, the Conservancy has approved, conditionally approved, or reserved funding for 9 projects that have requested approximately \$6.3 million in grant funding. To date, one grant agreement has been fully executed and four others are in the routing process.

Arundo Control and Restoration Project: The Arundo Control and Restoration Program permits issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the Ulatis Creek restoration site are still in progress. This process has been delayed due to comments from the Yocha Dehe tribe to the US Army Corps of Engineers. To address these comments, agency, tribal, and Conservancy representatives will be conducting a site visit to tour the project area. Once the Army Corps permits are issued, these permits will be sent to the Central Valley Flood Protection Board (CVFPB), which will allow CVFPB to issue an encroachment permit. This will be the final permit required for the habitat restoration work at Ulatis Creek. The final process to receive signatures from the Army Corps, and the final issuance of the encroachment permit from the CVFPB extended beyond the October first deadline for work to begin this year imposed to avoid take of Giant Garter snakes. This means that we will have to wait until May of 2017 when the Giant Garter snake work season opens to begin ground preparation and plant installation at this site. The Department of Water Resources (DWR) has approved a time extension for our agreement to December 2019 and expanded the geographic scope of Arundo control efforts along the Sacramento River. The Conservancy, with its partners Sonoma Ecology Center and Solano Resource Conservation District, submitted a proposal to DWR on October 27 with an update on our Phase 1 status and a request for an additional \$2.2 million for Phase 2 habitat restoration and Arundo control activities.

Delta Conservation Framework: The third Delta Conservation Framework outreach workshop was held on October 20, 2016 at the Jean Harvie Center in Walnut Grove. The workshop focused on gathering input focusing on success evaluation and potential opportunity areas. The final workshop is scheduled for Wednesday November 30th, from 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. at the Jean Harvie Community Center and a fifth evening workshop is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, December 1st at a location to be determined.

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Cache Slough Regional Planning: On November 7th, there was a kickoff meeting of the Cache Slough Planning project held at the Solano County administrative building. The meeting was attended by representatives from Solano and Yolo Counties, the Solano County Water Agency, Reclamation District 2068, several state agencies and consultants. The group discussed the purpose and objectives of the project, reviewed a draft charter and began to discuss data and information that should be incorporated into the planning process. The group also discussed the need for additional outreach to ensure all interests are represented. The group will meet at least monthly through May of 2017. The next meeting is scheduled for the morning of Friday, December 16th.

Water Quality

National Environmental Information Exchange Network Grant: The Delta Conservancy, in coordination with the US Geological Survey, Department of Water Resources, and the State Water Board, partnered with SFEI to submit an application to National Environmental Information Exchange Network for a \$300,000 grant. Building upon existing water quality work by the supporting agencies, the proposal seeks funding to establish tools for standardization of continuous data. The expected award date for this grant is July 31, 2017.

Delta Mercury Exposure Reduction Program (MERP): The Delta MERP signs are ready for posting in the Delta. The sign was developed by the Delta MERP team with input from the community and displays information about how to safely eat fish that have been caught in the Delta. The Conservancy will be reaching out to the agencies who donated in-kind resources to request their help with posting. The next Delta MERP Stakeholder meeting is scheduled on December 8th.

Economic Development

Delta Marketing Program: The Delta Marketing website and marketing plan are the second phase in the Delta Awareness Campaign. Phase one was the development of the Delta logo, which was completed by the Delta Protection Commission (DPC) in 2014. Conservancy staff has been working closely with DPC staff on the project. On October 27th, the Delta Conservancy reconvened the Delta Marketing Taskforce in order to introduce the new contractor and solicit feedback on two potential themes for the website. The Taskforce was pleased with the quality and direction of the project and will reconvene in November to review a draft of the full website and begin reviewing a draft marketing plan for their needs. Design Media is currently developing the website based on feedback received during the October Taskforce meeting, and is developing the marketing strategy based on feedback from previous Taskforce meetings in 2015.

BOARD DIRECTIVES TO STAFF – August 28th

1. Staff will continue to provide a status update and opportunity for discussions about improving the Proposition 1 Grant Program on the agenda for future Board Meetings.

Staff Response: At each Board meeting, staff will update the Board on the status of all active grants and the current solicitation cycle. Staff will solicit feedback from the Board during the presentation of these reports.

2. Staff will continue to hold workshops for future Proposition 1 Grant Program solicitation cycles to further improve the quality of applications.

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Staff Response: Prior to the next grant cycle, staff plans to hold workshops to solicit public comment and provide information and training to potential applicants. Staff is currently working on developing a program development approach that will be brought before the Board prior to the next grant cycle. Additionally, the regional restoration planning efforts will provide specific guidance on measurable objectives for the completed regions. At future workshops staff will be able to direct applicants to priority restoration needs, clearly defined objective and specific performance measures to gage progress toward meeting objectives the regions.

DELTA CONSERVANCY BUDGET UPDATE

Agenda Item 6.2: Expenditure Report

OUTREACH-DELTA MEETING MATRIX

Agenda Item 6.3: Outreach-Delta Meeting Matrix

CORRESPONDENCE

Agenda Item 6.4: Letter from the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation regarding the Arundo Control and Restoration Project.

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