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Request for Approval of Resolution 2017-04 to enter into an Interagency Agreement with the State Water Board to Support the Implementation of Delta Mercury Exposure Reduction Program

Staff Report

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Board approve Resolution 2017-04 to enter into an interagency agreement with the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board). The proposed interagency agreement would provide \$154,100 to the Delta Conservancy to support the Delta Mercury Exposure Reduction Program (MERP).

DESCRIPTION

The Delta Conservancy works in partnership with Department of Public Health, Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, and the Central Valley Water Board on the Delta MERP Steering Committee. Through the Interagency Agreement, the Conservancy will provide technical and administrative support, and program management and coordination to implement exposure reduction activities, including:

- Coordination with community based organizations currently in the Delta to incorporate fish consumption guidance messages into the ongoing activities;
- Collaboration with affected communities, agencies, and others to plan and implement outreach and educational activities to reduce health risks to people who consume contaminated fish;
- Identification of at-risk populations and ways to reach these populations;
- Manage the small grants to community-based organizations, tribes, local agencies, and/or other organizations by the Water Boards to conduct exposure reduction activities;
- Identification of community based organizations to help in advisory sign posting; and
- Provide trainings to community-based organizations, tribes, local agencies, and/or other organizations on the interpretation of and teaching of the consumption advisory materials.

BACKGROUND

The Delta and San Francisco Bay have been identified in the federal Clean Water Act Section 303(d) as impaired due to elevated concentrations of methylmercury in fish, which poses a human health threat. In 2005, the State Water Board adopted Resolution 2005-0060, which directs the Central Valley Regional Water Board and the San Francisco Bay Water Quality Control Board to "investigate ways, consistent with their regulatory authority, to address public health impacts of mercury in San Francisco

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Bay and Delta fish.” In response, the Central Valley Water Board and the San Francisco Water Board separately adopted mercury control programs that require development and implementation of exposure reduction activities geared toward people who eat fish. In 2003, the Central Valley Water Board’s Executive Officer approved a work plan for the Delta MERP.

Under this proposed Interagency Agreement, the Conservancy will continue efforts, begun under a prior contract, to implement the exposure reduction activities of Delta MERP. The State Water Board’s Cleanup and Abatement Account and monetary contributions from individual agencies and other entities participating in the program provide funding for the agreement.

The Delta Reform Act of 2009 established the Conservancy and includes three relevant mandates; (1) to protect and improve water quality; (2) protect, conserve, and restore the region’s physical, agricultural, cultural, historical, and living resources; and (3) promote environmental education.

These efforts are consistent with the following objective as outlined in the Delta Conservancy’s 2017-2022 Strategic Plan, Goal 2, Delta Ecosystem Viability.

- Objective 2: Strengthen the coordination of water quality monitoring, data integration, and implementation of best management practices in partnership with existing Delta watershed efforts.

Contact

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