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EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT January 27, 2016

~ PROGRAM UPDATE ~

Ecosystem Restoration

Proposition 1 Grant Program: The Conservancy's Ecosystem Restoration and Water Quality Grant Program (Prop. 1) focuses on the restoration of important species and habitat and agricultural sustainability. Prop. 1 identifies projects to protect and restore California rivers, lakes, streams, and watersheds that may be funded with Prop. 1 funding (Sec. 79732 et seq). The Conservancy's reopened Concept Proposal solicitation period closed on December 18, 2015. The Conservancy received a total of 23 Concept Proposals during the reopened solicitation period. A staff report including staff recommendations for the Board's approval of and next steps in the solicitation cycle is included in Agenda Item 9.

Arundo Control and Restoration Project: Arundo control work in the Cache Slough Complex began last fall; approximately four acres of Arundo were treated. Project partners are working to obtain permission to treat an additional 11 acres of Arundo in the Cache Slough Complex next fall. Using the information gained from the mapping and prioritization tasks, the Conservancy is reaching out to landowners to expand Arundo control work throughout the Delta. Staff is seeking sites suitable for biological or chemical control and intend to develop an integrated control project. Staff and partnering agencies have identified a couple of sources of potential funding for expanding the project sites and may apply for funding next year once control sites have been obtained.

EcoAtlas - Habitat Restoration Project Tracking: Completed in September, this project significantly expanded EcoAtlas, the state's repository for wetland project data, to include hundreds of habitat protection, enhancement, and restoration projects throughout the Central Valley and San Francisco Bay-Delta regions, including 172 projects in the Delta and Suisun Marsh. Detailed project data, critical for natural resource managers, such as acres of distinct habitat types, species benefitted by project, project progress and status, and funding information, were added to the project tracking database. Additional functionality was added to EcoAtlas to allow for the querying and extraction of this tabular and spatial project data. As new projects are developed and existing projects enter new phases, information can be expanded and updated through the new data portal that allows project proponents to enter and update information displayed in EcoAtlas. Additional data layers such as modern Delta habitats were added to EcoAtlas to allow users to evaluate projects within the context of existing ecological resources and other landscape characteristics and uses. Going forward, the Conservancy will continue to reach out to project managers and assist in keeping information updated.

EcoAtlas - Visualizing and Sharing Data Assessments: The Conservancy will be convening a joint meeting with the project workgroup including state and federal partners and the California Wetland Monitoring Workgroup Level 3 Data Subcommittee in February 2016 to provide input on potential datasets that have been identified and mock ups of potential visualizations. The goals of this project are to (a) collect high-priority datasets with

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strategic value for the region; (b) visualize those datasets geospatially; (c) share those datasets via web services; (d) implement the best available measures of planning effectiveness, including landscape-scale habitat metrics; and (e) develop training materials for outreach to ensure usability and encourage well-informed decision-making.

Water Quality

Delta Environmental Data for the Understanding of a California Estuary (DEDUCE): As part of the Delta Watershed Initiative Network (Delta WIN) efforts, the DEDUCE project is making high priority data—which now exists in programmatic silos—accessible for decision-makers, scientists, and the public through an estuary-wide data center. This project is being implemented in partnership with the Delta Science Program, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), Department of Water Resources, State Water Board, and US Fish and Wildlife Services.

The focus over the past six months has been on soliciting and assembling data from multiple sources. The Conservancy is receiving incoming datasets and identifying any remaining datasets to be included as a part of this project. The project workgroup will convene in February 2016 to discuss project implementation and to review project deliverables.

Education and Outreach

Environmental Education and Outreach: The Conservancy received a grant from the Bureau of Reclamation (approved by the Board in November) to conduct outreach related to water supply reliability, water quality, and ecological restoration efforts in the Delta through FY 19/20. The Conservancy contracted with the Water Education Foundation (approved by the Board in November) to provide public outreach programs, including water tours and briefings, education resources for teachers, conferences and white papers, and a TV documentary. This grant is also funding the Conservancy's Delta WIN program, Delta Dialogues, and the Delta Restoration Network. The Conservancy is currently developing scopes of work for these projects with local community input and expects work to begin under this grant and contract in 2016.

Waterway Cleanup: The next Delta Waterway Cleanup is scheduled for spring 2016 as part of the Sacramento, county-wide Creek Week. The Conservancy is coordinating with partners including the Sacramento Area Creeks Council to plan the event. The Conservancy is also working with the Ocean Conservancy to create a Delta Trash Report Form, which will assist citizens in collecting and reporting data on trash found in the Delta.

Delta Mercury Exposure Reduction Program (MERP): The Conservancy is assembling a database of potential locations in the Delta for posting Delta MERP signs. The sign is being developed by the Delta MERP team with input from the community and will display information about how to safely eat fish that have been caught in the Delta.

Invasive Species Coordination (ISC): The ISC work group met for its quarterly meeting on November 13th. The workgroup reviewed suggested research topics and prioritized the topics using a scoring criteria developed for potential funding opportunities. The next ISC meeting is scheduled for February 2016.

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Coordination and Collaboration

Revisiting the 2003 Mercury Strategy for the Bay-Delta Ecosystem: Co-organized by the Conservancy, Revisiting the 2003 Mercury Strategy for the Bay-Delta Ecosystem is a 3-day workshop that will be held from January 26 to January 28, 2016. The purpose of the workshop is to create a shared understanding among scientists and managers of the current knowledge of mercury science, critical uncertainties, and associated priorities for research, monitoring, and evaluation to address challenges associated with mercury in the Delta ecosystem. Scientists and managers will use the information presented to identify research needs and to guide management decisions addressing mercury pollution. The workshop will also assess the progress made toward achieving the recommendations outlined in the 2003 Mercury Strategy. The workshop will include technical presentations and facilitated discussions. A follow-up synthesis workshop will be held in June. In addition to the Conservancy, the workshop is being organized by the Delta Science Program and the US Geological Survey, and funded by the Delta Stewardship Council and CDFW.

BOARD DIRECTIVES TO STAFF – November 4th

1. Staff will update the Proposition 1 web pages to reflect the Conservancy's current status in the Grant Program process.

Staff Response: Staff updated the Proposition 1 web pages to reflect the Conservancy's current status in the Grant Program process.

2. Staff will provide draft contracts, scopes of work, and budget details to the Board when requesting approval to accept grant funds and enter into contracts for all future agreements.

Staff Response: Staff will provide draft contracts, scopes of work, and budget details to the Board when requesting approval to accept grant funds and/or enter into contracts for all future agreements.

3. Staff will develop a spreadsheet to clearly demonstrate how Proposition 1 funds will be spent.

Staff Response: Staff will present a budget update including the Proposition 1 program delivery and planning funds for Competitive Grants Local Assistant at the January 27, 2016 Board meeting.

4. Staff will provide Board members with a link to the conflict of interest guide developed by the Department of Justice.

Staff Response: Staff emailed Board members the link to the conflict of interest guide developed by the Department of Justice.

5. Staff will start tracking Board member's conflict of interest training and will inform Board members when training is required.

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Staff Response: Staff is tracking Board member's conflict of interest training and has communicated with each Board member whose training had expired.

6. Staff will work with the Program and Policy Subcommittee to develop an internal conflict of interest policy for Board members and staff.

Staff Response: Staff will prepare a draft outline for conflict of interest for the Subcommittee's input at the Subcommittee meeting in February.

BOARD DIRECTIVES TO STAFF – November 20th

1. Staff will provide the Board with contracts, scopes of work and budgets for the regional planning efforts and the RUCS-analysis.

Staff Response: Staff will provide the Board with contracts, including scopes of work and budget for the regional planning efforts and RUCS-analysis at future Board meetings.

DELTA CONSERVANCY BUDGET UPDATE

Agenda Item 6.2: Delta Conservancy FY 2015-16 Budget Plan and Update

OUTREACH-DELTA MEETING MATRIX

Agenda Item 6.3: Outreach-Delta Meeting Matrix including most recent events and key dates of future meetings

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