



September 23, 2019

Ms. Nancy Vogel, Director
California Water Resilience Portfolio Initiative
Nancy.Vogel@resources.ca.gov

Dear Ms. Vogel,

As your agency winds up its listening sessions prior to preparing the Water Resilience Portfolio, Friends of Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge (Friends) urges that the Portfolio account for those terrestrial species dependent on healthy riparian and wetland habitat, in particular waterfowl.

The Friends is a non-profit organization that works to promote and protect the Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge. Our organization has been involved from the outset in the planning and permitting process for the proposed delta conveyance tunnels. Early on, we participated in a working group of the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP). We successfully collaborated with the Department of Water Resources and others to develop protective measures for sandhill cranes and other listed species to reduce impacts on these terrestrial species. These measures were subsequently incorporated into the California WaterFix.

While the Friends group remained concerned regarding the grave impacts to terrestrial and other species from the WaterFix project, this process showed the importance of careful consideration of terrestrial impacts and attention to wildlife ecology in the planning of infrastructure projects.

Governor Newsom's executive order directing your agency to lead in the preparation of a Water Resilience Portfolio specifically includes among the water challenges facing California the native fish populations threatened with extinction. Water-dependent terrestrial species face similar challenges, not just from a changing climate, but from water projects that could be developed in that portfolio. The Portfolio must acknowledge these threats and impacts and include guidance calling for adequate pro-

tection and habitat improvements as an integral part of all water infrastructure projects.

Moreover, due to the high habitat value of the Delta for special status avian species such as the sandhill crane, we ask that you refrain from incorporating a single tunnel conveyance project into the Portfolio unless it can be shown that there are no other viable alternatives to meet California's future water supply needs.

Thank you for listening,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chris Tooker".

Chris Tooker, President