

[Email Communication]

From: California Natural Resources Secretary Wade Crowfoot
Sent: Thursday, September 19, 2019 6:38 AM
To: Michael A. Brodsky; DWR Director Karla Nemeth
Re: Proposed DCA stakeholder committee

Dear Mr. Brodsky,

Thanks once again for reaching out on Tuesday. It provides me a timely opportunity to explain what a DCA subcommittee could accomplish in my view (and also what it is not meant to accomplish).

As we've shared, the Delta Conveyance Design and Construction Authority's (DCA's) is tasked with the design and engineering work to support the state's effort to modernize Delta conveyance infrastructure. It's critical in my view that *any* design and engineering that is planned anticipate and reduce local impacts wherever possible, and identify any potential community benefits that could be generated as part of the project. A subcommittee of the DCA would allow focus on potential impacts of greatest concern and ensure that such impacts are being fully considered and not glossed over. The subcommittee would ensure that potential impacts are identified and discussed by the DCA by institutionalizing the subcommittee focused on stakeholder input *within* the DCA structure. I anticipate that participants in the subcommittee would include folks that oppose any new project, but want to make sure their concerns about impacts are clearly understood by the DCA.

This proposed DCA subcommittee is not meant to be the primary venue for stakeholder input on the project. Importantly, it would not replace the formal public engagement process that is required under CEQA. As we've shared, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) has committed to conducting a new CEQA process to review a single-tunnel proposed project, and that process will include a separate scoping process to gain input on the evaluation of a range of alternatives including a no-project alternative. By law, the process will include opportunities for the public and Delta stakeholders to provide input on a full range of environmental matters, including measures and alternatives that could avoid or reduce impacts of the proposed project.

It is really important to note that DWR -- not the DCA -- will make decisions about the range of alternatives analyzed, the definition of the proposed project, and final determinations based on the CEQA analysis and public input.

The DCA's role is to provide, at DWR's direction and subject to its oversight, the engineering and design work to inform the details of the proposed project and alternatives within the CEQA process. An important piece of this work is identifying engineering specifications that affect the overall footprint of the project, since that will help inform the impact analysis. Input provided by the subcommittee would feed directly into the DCA's Conceptual Engineering Report, which will be used to conduct the impact analysis as a part of the coming CEQA process.

Beyond the subcommittee and the CEQA public participation process (and beyond focusing just on the conveyance project), I'm hoping that the Secretary's Delta Roundtable we are holding can provide a forum for direct conversation with a broad

cross-section of leaders on big issues facing the Delta including topics such as levees, flood protection, water quality, farmland preservation and aquatic invasive species. The Roundtable also can provide an opportunity for transparent reports from the state on the proposed conveyance project and discussion if Roundtable participants find that helpful.

Thank you once again for reaching out and sharing your concerns directly. We are really committed to strengthening how we can receive and consider input from Delta residents and leaders on the proposed project. I heard loud and clear in discussions with Delta County Supervisors and other leaders in recent months that this process can (and needs to) be improved. In response, we developed new proposed venues to accomplish truly meaningful opportunities for input and discussion. Given these proposed venues are new and unfamiliar, I appreciate the opportunity to explain how they would work.

Best,
Wade

Wade Crowfoot
California Natural Resources Secretary