

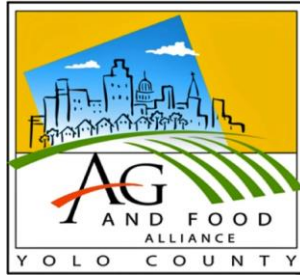
From: Michelle Stephens <michellelinstephens@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 09, 2014 11:00 AM
To: BDCP.comments@noaa.gov
Cc: Don Saylor; Farmer ChowDownFarm
Subject: Yolo Ag & Food Alliance Response to the Bay Delta Conservation Plan
Attachments: BDCPResponse_YoloAFA.pdf

Hello Mr. Wulff,

Please see the attached response from the Yolo County Ag & Food Alliance. Do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you,
Michelle

Michelle Stephens
Farmbudsman
Solano & Yolo Counties
530.863.9073
michellelinstephens@gmail.com



June 9, 2014

Ryan Wulff, NMFS
650 Capitol Mall, Suite 5-100
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Bay Delta Conservation Plan Comments

Dear Mr. Wulff,

This letter is in support of the official comments from the Yolo County Board of Supervisors in response to the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP). On behalf of the Yolo County Ag & Food Alliance (Yolo AFA), we fully support the response to the BDCP from our Board of Supervisors and feel that they have identified key issues that should be addressed within the plan.

The Yolo AFA is a community group that supports the food system in Yolo County. This includes the production, processing, and distribution of our agricultural resources. Yolo AFA membership consists of farmers, ranchers, agricultural organizations, local elected officials, food systems representatives, and governmental resource providers. Our diverse membership ensures a broad and representative voice of the county.

The impact of the BDCP on Yolo County's agriculture has the potential to be great and Yolo AFA agrees that the following points should be addressed before moving forward with this plan:

- **There has not been a comprehensive review of the Agricultural impacts.** Yolo AFA recognizes the need to preserve and protect our natural resources but agrees with Yolo County Supervisors that this preservation should be sustainably balanced between the existing uses in the area, including agriculture, preservation efforts, and established communities. We have a vibrant agricultural community and economy, which should be preserved and enhanced. The impacts on agriculture have not been fully investigated within this plan and should be studied.
- **Local input and governance is needed within this plan.** State solutions to local problems rarely recognize the full spectrum of needs and effects on the community. It is important for local governments and representatives to have a voice in these decisions to help protect the resources and value of each community affected. This inclusion needs to be substantive and recognized by the BDCP Leaders.

- **Economic losses as a direct result of the BDCP.** The loss of productive agricultural land will result in both direct and indirect economic losses. The plan does not adequately identify and mitigate these losses and Yolo AFA agrees with Yolo County that this impact needs to be identified and addressed before moving forward with the plan.
- **Conflicts with Existing Conservations Plans.** As noted by Yolo County, the BDCP interferes with the Yolo Natural Heritage Program, a countywide plan to protect habitat for 11 endangered, threatened, and rare terrestrial species. The BDCP disregards effective work being done at the local level. Additionally, many if not all of Yolo County farmers and ranchers engage in beneficial stewardship projects that are not identified in the BDCP. A more thorough survey of and cooperation with existing measures is needed.

Yolo AFA recognizes the need to balance our economic and environmental resources while benefiting the communities of California. We support the comments of the Yolo County Board of Supervisors and request a more comprehensive study of the impacts of this plan and a careful review of more nuanced tools and solutions for California's water concerns.

Sincerely,

Kristy Lyn Levings
Yolo AFA Chair

cc: Assemblyman Roger Dickinson
Supervisor Don Saylor
Senator President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg
Senator Lois Wolk
Assemblywoman Mariko Yamada