



Blue Ribbon Committee for the Rehabilitation of Clear Lake

September 23, 2020

Hon. Gavin Newsom, Governor
Hon. Cecilia Aguiar Curry, CA State Assembly
Hon. Mike Maguire, CA Senate
Sec. Wade Crowfoot, CA Natural Resources Agency

On behalf of the Blue Ribbon Committee for the Rehabilitation of Clear Lake (Committee), I am writing to respectfully request an extension of funds for research programs in the Clear Lake Basin conducted by the UC Davis Tahoe Environmental Research Center (TERC) and Center for Regional Change (CRC). All Committee members approved this letter and expressed their support for funding this effort in the County of Lake (County) on September 23, 2020.

Since 2017, TERC and CRC have engaged in long-term research efforts to better understand in-lake processes driving environmental challenges in Clear Lake, as well as socioeconomic pressures impacting Clear Lake communities.

TERC is in the process of developing a dynamic hydrologic model of lake processes for the largest natural lake in California. This model will provide a first of its kind look at the key drivers of environmental challenges such as cyanobacteria and cyanotoxin production in the Lake. As a key partner in the Committee process, TERC is designing its model to integrate with a broader watershed-wide model recommended by the Committee in its 2019 Annual Report. Combined, these models are expected to provide essential information for the development of specific management actions and projects to improve environmental conditions in and around the Lake. If funding is unavailable, research activities will cease in Spring 2021. Future funding to reinstate the research program will necessarily be increased due to new startup costs.

Similarly, CRC is engaged in socioeconomic research to identify the conditions driving poor economic growth opportunities in Lake County. The communities adjacent to Clear Lake have been hard hit by natural disasters, notably by significant wildfires in four of the last five years. Moreover, some residents of neighboring communities that have been displaced from their homes have turned to Clear Lake communities for temporary and permanent housing. These disasters highlight how important and urgent the need for data-driven decision-making by local jurisdictions and state agencies. This research can inform important state priorities, including affordable housing, economic development, and assisting vulnerable communities such as youth and Tribal communities. Similar to TERC, if funding is prematurely halted and reinstated in the future, significant start up costs can be expected, resulting in a more costly research effort.

The Committee supports a continuation of funding for the TERC and CRC research efforts. The information stemming from this research will assist in creating more sustainable physical *as well as* economic environments for Clear Lake and its surrounding communities. We appreciate your careful consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Eric Sklar
Committee Chair