

[INSERT DATE]

Gavin Newsom, Governor

_____, CA Senate

_____, CA Legislature

On behalf of the Blue Ribbon Committee for the Rehabilitation of Clear Lake (Committee), we are writing to respectfully urge your support for the Middle Creek Flood Damage Reduction and Ecosystem Restoration Project (Project).

Since 1995, the County of Lake has worked with Lead Federal Agency, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, in this ongoing effort to acquire 1,650 acres of reclaimed land at the North end of Clear Lake and restore it to wetlands.

Although the Project's stated goals are flood damage reduction and ecosystem restoration, substantial water quality improvement is anticipated. The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board describes the project as a key element in efforts to fulfill requirements of the Clean Water Act for Clear Lake.

Restored wetlands will filter water and intercept sediment from the Scotts Creek and Middle Creek Watersheds, which contribute an estimated 57% of the water inflow and 71% of the sediment load to the Clear Lake ecosystem. Sediment supplies 97% of Clear Lake's phosphorus, the critical plant nutrient that empowers the overgrowth of the ecosystem's plants, including Harmful Algal Blooms. Additionally, a projected 34% decrease in chlorophyll concentration would also upgrade the Lake as our drinking water source and improve water clarity for our tourism-dependent economy.

The return of the reclaimed land to marsh also supports traditional uses and actions by tribal groups in the area and serves as a significant step forward to implement the Governor's California Water Resilience Portfolio.

Since 2003, some \$12.7 million has been expended on purchase of over 725 acres in the project zone and on relocation of residences and businesses. A 2018 influx of \$15 million is allowing resumption of acquisitions. All funds, derived from Water Bonds, have been granted through the Flood Protection Corridor Program of the California Department of Water Resources in the State's Natural Resource Agency.

The Committee, initiated by AB 707 (Aguiar Curry), consists of fourteen individuals with a unique knowledge of Lake County and its history; our job is to provide actionable and reasonable recommendations for the rehabilitation of Clear Lake. We endorse the Project as a key measure to rehabilitate the Lake and achieve the goals of AB 707. The agencies and organizations we represent see it as a significant, worthwhile undertaking and urge again continued support for the Project from the State of California.

Sincerely,

Members of the Blue Ribbon Committee
[list all members with signatures]

Cc: Congressman John Garamendi
CA Assemblymember, Cecilia Aguiar-Curry
CA Senator Mike McGuire