



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 a reinstatement of funds for the long-term Clear Lake water quality monitoring and sampling conducted by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR). 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 1968, DWR has conducted ambient water quality monitoring and sampling of Clear Lake. Data derived from this sampling allows the State, County and other impacted local and tribal organizations to identify and track key nutrients and potential contaminants. This publicly available water quality information is essential for making water quality management decisions for Clear Lake and dependent downstream areas, including the Cache Creek Watershed and ultimately, the California Delta. It is also supportive of California's effort to increase monitoring on streams as part of SB 19 (2019).

Although we are acutely aware of challenges posed by the economic downturn and the COVID-19 pandemic, a relatively small investment in a consistent water quality monitoring program has significant management and research implications. Without the consistent efforts and expertise of DWR, it is unlikely sampling will occur on a regular basis for the foreseeable future. This will likely impact not just County water quality management efforts, but also the 17 public and private drinking water supplier operations around Clear Lake, downstream water users, and the environment.

Furthermore, ongoing research to create a full understanding of environmental challenges facing Clear Lake is structured to heavily rely on this ambient monitoring to create accurate models. In conjunction with the efforts of the Committee, these models are expected to provide a first ever scientific understanding of in-lake and watershed processes. Models will be used to develop specific management actions and projects to improve water quality conditions and the environment of California's largest natural lake. This monitoring will also be needed to assess post management action success, an essential tool to evaluate and maximize Blue Ribbon Committee, and other water quality improvement efforts.

The Committee supports a reinstatement of funding for a continuation of monitoring and sampling in Clear Lake and believes DWR's expertise and history of implementing the effort is invaluable. The information stemming from this sampling effort will assist in creating a more sustainable water supply for County residents and create opportunities for the restoration and enhancement of one of California's most unique water bodies in the face of ever-increasing environmental pressures. We appreciate your careful consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Eric Sklar
Committee Chair