



Westlands Water District

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 15, 2010

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STATEMENT Westlands Water District BDCP Status Documents

The “Highlights of the BDCP” released today by the California Natural Resources Agency is an excellent summary of the progress made to date on a proposed habitat conservation plan/natural communities conservation plan for the Delta and the potential for restoring the Delta ecosystem and the water supplies of more than 25 million Californians and three millions of acres of highly productive farm land. The plan described in the Highlights document is the product of diligent efforts by State and Federal resource agencies, environmental organizations, water contractors, and others to develop a comprehensive program to improve the Delta ecosystem and restore California’s water supplies

On November 22, 2010, Westlands Water District announced that it would withdraw from the Bay Delta Conservation Plan process. This decision was based on the District’s perception that the Department of the Interior had become unwilling to let science dictate the result of analyses concerning long-term operational criteria to protect at-risk fish species. Rather, Interior was focused on what it perceived to be acceptable levels of water exports.

The document released today by Interior, entitled “Interim Federal Action Plan Status Update for the California Bay-Delta,” provides a degree of optimism that Interior is in fact committed to the dual objectives of the BDCP. However, whether Westlands reverses its decision will depend on how Interior acts going forward, not the words in this document.

Westlands is committed to carrying this important work forward, building on the success we have shared so far in developing a plan that will fulfill the coequal goals of environmental restoration and an adequate, reliable water supply to meet the public’s needs. But the path forward is dependent on having reliable partners in Washington who will support these coequal goals.

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