STATE OF CALIFORNIA PETE WILSON, *Governor*

DELTA PROTECTION COMMISSION
14215 RIVER ROAD
P.O. BOX 530
WALNUT GROVE, CA 95690
PHONE: (916) 776-2290
FAX: (916) 776-2293

May 28, 1998

To: Delta Protection Commission

From: Lori Clamurro, Delta Protection Commission Staff

Re: Update on the Grasslands Bypass Project

A Grassland Bypass Channel Project Drainage Oversight Committee meeting this morning was held in Sacramento. Topics covered at this meeting included: a summary of monitoring results through the month of April 1998 (and estimated results for May 1998); the annual report which was circulated last month and subsequent recommendation of establishing a subcommittee to research and identify data gaps; implementation activities to date; the 1998 storm event (whether it can be classified as unforeseeable/uncontrollable); and methodology for evaluation of the drainage incentive fee.

The monitoring report for the month of March has not yet been received by the interested parties; it has been mailed out and is on its way. The contents of this report were revealed at the meeting; the selenium loads for March 1998 were 1440 lbs. of selenium, which exceeds the load value of 1066 lbs. by 35 percent. April's monitoring results were also released; selenium loads were 1377 lbs. of selenium, which exceeds April's load value of 799 lbs. by 72 percent. Finally, May's selenium loads were estimated based on the data they have accumulated for this month; the estimated selenium loads for May are 850 lbs. of selenium, which exceeds May's load value of 599 lbs. by 42 percent.

Penny Howard, BOR, stated that the data accumulated for the first year of the project supports proceeding to the second year. She also recommended that the Oversight Committee establish a subcommittee to identify data needs for the second year of the project. This subcommittee will probably be comprised of US Fish and Wildlife Service, CA Dept. of Fish and Game, US Geological Survey, and US Environmental Protection Agency representatives. Doctor Dennis Limley may also be included on this subcommittee, as he is the person who developed the matrix to evaluate selenium concentrations which would probably be used by the subcommittee in its evaluations.

Joe McGahan spoke on the behalf of Grassland Area Farmers (GAF), an organization which was formed to control drainage activities. In addition to addressing some of the institutional, regulatory, and implementation activities undertaken by this group, Mr. McGahan also spoke about some source control activities. Tiered water pricing, an Active Land Management Program, and a Tradeable Loads Program are a few of the source control activities which have been implemented by Grassland Area Farmers. Mr. McGahan went on to say that as a result of these activities, there has been a significant reduction in the amount of discharge (measured at the outflow of the Drainage Area) from water year 1996 to water year 1997.

The State Water Resources Control Board has issued a 319 grant to evaluate an economic incentives program for the Grasslands Bypass Project. This grant covers two main areas: the design and implementation of a Tradeable Loads Program; and the evaluation of tiered pricing. An Advisory Committee has been formed to evaluate the economic efficiency of these programs.

The Storm Event of February 1998 was discussed in the context of whether or not it could be classified as "unforeseeable/uncontrollable". A report will be circulated in which a recommendation is being made that the storm event should be classified as "unforeseeable/uncontrollable", in which case GAF will not be held responsible for the full amounts of selenium exceedance. The methodology for determining what portion of the exceedances GAF will be responsible for is as follows:

- Partitioning of drainage flows into four categories (Subsurface drainage from irrigation and base flows; Surface runoff from upper watershed; Surface runoff from the drainage area; and Subsurface drainage induced from local rainfall)
- Calculation of selenium loads
- Partitioning drainage flows and loads for the 1986 to 1994 base period
- Calculation of load credit

A factor of uncertainty will be weighed into the numbers obtained in this procedure.