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Tunnel Opponents Criticize Incomplete BDCP Implementing Agreement, Financing & Operations Plans

Sacramento, CA- Restore the Delta (RTD), opponents of Gov. Brown's rush to build Peripheral Tunnels to drain the Delta and doom sustainable farms, salmon and other Pacific fisheries, today criticized the "incomplete" Implementing Agreement (IA) that lacks commitments from water exporters to make their financial payments, and contains no plan for operating the huge project. The plan contains no federal or state financing commitment to mitigate the damage of the project and provide for the required habitat restoration.

"There is no financial plan or agreement. There is no operations plan. The Brown Administration has rushed ahead to plan construction for the water-takers, but has no clear plan for paying for the required Delta restoration. The Implementing Agreement has only been released to the public after the public comment period on the BDCP and its EIR/EIS is nearly complete. They plan to use taxpayer-funded state bond monies to mitigate the damage, but we assure you that we will campaign to defeat any state bond measure that aids construction of these tunnels that will sound the death knell of the SF Bay-San Joaquin Delta and estuary. These tunnels mainly benefit a few hundred industrial mega-growers growing permanent crops for export on unsuitable land with subsidized water," said Barbara Barrigan-Parrilla, executive director of RTD. "How can the BDCP claim to be creating a project to the highest possible recovery standard when its documents reveal that fish species will decline with operation of the tunnels? And how can the BDCP claim to be a broad conservation plan when various science councils and panels have critiqued the documents for their lack of sound science?"

RTD noted that the Federal CVP Contractors are already falling behind in payments, and that is just during the planning phase. The BDCP's own charts show funds will be exhausted by July 2014. The Westlands Water District is not keeping up with its payments. "Without clear financing commitments, the taxpayers and water bill payers of California will get stuck with most of the bill, while getting no new water," said Barrigan-Parrilla.

Restore the Delta is a 15,000-member grassroots organization committed to making the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta fishable, swimmable, drinkable, and farmable to benefit all of California. Restore the Delta works to improve water quality so that fisheries and farming can thrive together again in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. www.restorethedelta.org