

California congressmen express concern over peripheral canal

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SACRAMENTO -- Five members of Congress say any “protection plan” for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta must actually protect the Delta and not merely be a new way to send more water to customers south of the Delta.

“Steps must be taken now to ensure that the BDCP (Bay Delta Conservation Plan) serves the best interests of our region, and I insisted that the voice of the Delta be heard,” says Rep. Jerry McNerney, D-Pleasanton.

Joined by Reps. Mike Thompson, D-Woodland; George Miller, D-Concord; Doris Matsui, D-Sacramento, and John Garamendi, D-Antioch, Mr. McNerney met with Jerry Meral, deputy secretary of the California Natural Resource Agency, to express “grave concern” over any Bay Delta Conservation Plan that would adversely affect the Delta Region. Mr. Meral is the senior state official who oversees the BDCP.

“I will continue to be a strong advocate for the people of the entire Delta region to ensure that the water resources and their quality remain in place,” says Mr. McNerney.

Since 2007, he has opposed a new “conveyance system” – the term bandied about for a peripheral canal or tunnel -- that would take large amounts of water from the Delta.

Last month, Mr. McNerney sent a letter to the Department of the Interior insisting that the final BDCP benefit the Delta region. The letter strongly opposed any aggressive measures that would adversely affect the Delta.

“As I made clear to the Bay Delta Conservation Plan officials, we will not accept a new canal that does not have the buy in of the Delta communities,” he says.

Mr. Thompson adds, “Needlessly rushing the scientific review of the Bay Delta Conservation Plan is simply irresponsible, and that is what I told the Bay Delta Conservation Plan officials today. We know all-too-well the consequences of bad water policy combined with impractical deadlines. In Humboldt and Del Norte Counties, expedited review of the Klamath River project resulted in the death of 68,000 Chinook salmon. Are we really considering walking down the same road again? We need sound, science-based solutions that don't harm our wildlife or environment.”