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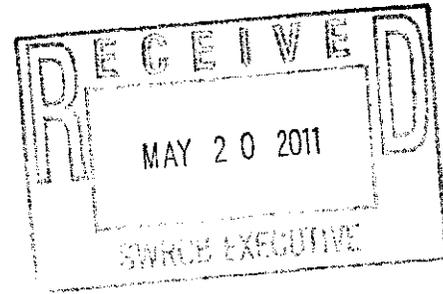
Jose Mejia
Director

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Public Cmt./Wrkshp (1/31 & 2/8)
CEQA Wetlands Policy & Reg
Deadline: 5/20/11 by 12 noon



May 18, 2011

Jeanine Townsend
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I St., 24th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: State Water Board action on Wetlands Definition

Dear Ms. Townsend:

The California State Council of Laborers has learned about a recent proposal by the State Water Board to change the state definition of "wetlands." The proposed change is pre-emptive of a recently-convened federal discussion on wetlands and could have significant impacts on transportation and other development projects throughout the state. As an organization representing workers in the construction industry, along with the many contractors we work with throughout the state, this gives us great concern with the many jobs that can potentially be affected.

The proposed change not only substantially broadens the lands that could potentially be affected, but – **because it would be substantially out of sync with a well-established federal definition of wetlands** – it might possibly have a major impact in the permitting process for projects, including transportation, roads or rail, development whether private or public and the many projects funded and to be funded by the sale of state bonds.

Currently, in California we now have authority to enter into Public-Private-Partnerships at least for a limited time frame for the purpose of private investment for the financing of infrastructure and anything we do that may be perceived as an obstacle to invest in our state would have major consequences for job creation!

We need to make every effort to attract investment and not the opposite. Real people need real jobs! We are currently experiencing rates of unemployment higher than can be compared to in recent history! Please contact me at (916) 447-7018 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Jose Mejia
Director