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## Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

**TO:** Pamela C. Creedon  
Executive Officer

**FROM:** Janis Cooke  
Patrick Morris  
Mercury TMDL Unit

**DATE:** 11 October 2013

**SUBJECT: DELTA MERCURY EXPOSURE REDUCTION PROGRAM (MERP)  
WORKPLAN TRANSMITTAL**

The Delta Mercury Control Program, adopted by the Central Valley Water Board on 22 April 2010, requires entities to develop and implement a mercury exposure reduction program (MERP) that will reduce human exposure to mercury-contaminated Delta fish. Workplans for exposure reduction activities are due to the Executive Officer by 20 October 2013. Attached for Executive Officer approval is the MERP Workplan for entities ("MERP participants") that elected to participate in a collective workplan rather than submitting and implementing individual workplans. Staff is transmitting the attached Workplan on behalf of the MERP participants.

### Background

Because reducing fish methylmercury levels in the Delta will take a long time, activities are needed in the interim to address the mercury-related health risks to consumers of Delta fish. State Water Resources Control Board Resolution 2005-0060 directed the Central Valley Water Board to "investigate ways, consistent with their regulatory authority, to address public health impacts of mercury in San Francisco Bay/Delta fish." To comply with Resolution 2005-0060, the Delta Mercury Control Program required the formation of a Delta-specific mercury exposure reduction program to reduce human exposure to contaminated Delta fish.

The Delta Mercury Control Program requires entities identified in the Basin Plan to either individually or collectively develop and implement a MERP. In 2012, Board staff worked with stakeholders to develop a strategy to form and fund a collaborative exposure reduction program. The November 2012 MERP Strategy outlined a plan to develop an exposure reduction workplan and a funding strategy.

The attached a MERP Workplan (Workplan) represents the workplan for the agencies and other entities who have indicated they plan to participate in the collective program. The Board has received letters of intent to participate from each of the MERP participants listed in Appendix A of the Workplan.

This Workplan is based on the elements and funding requirements described in the MERP Strategy. This Workplan is being funded by monetary contributions from individual agencies and other entities participating in the program and from the State Water Board's Cleanup and

Abatement Account. The Cleanup and Abatement Account is funding \$370,000 for the project, and the Workplan participants have committed to funding about \$180,000. In addition, several State and federal agencies are providing in-kind services.

The MERP Strategy estimated about \$870,000 is needed to fully fund the program for a six year period, and the Workplan is written for this six year period. The program will be fully funded for the first three to four years, and the Workplan identifies a budget and actions for the last two to three years when additional funding becomes available. Staff will continue to pursue additional resources to fully fund the program.

#### **Next Steps- MERP Implementation**

After Executive Officer review and approval of the Workplan, staff will prepare contracts for a project manager and health coordinator to implement the workplan. The Program manager will convene a steering committee in early 2014 and develop the first year's exposure reduction activities and budget. The steering committee meetings will be open to interested stakeholders. Board staff will sit on the steering committee.