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Date: Jul 15, 2016 12:41 PM
Subject: Policy Statement
To: "deltaactioncommittee@gmail.com" <deltaactioncommittee@gmail.com>
Cc:

To: State Water Resources Control Board
Policy Statement

I am married to a man whose family has lived in the Delta on the same property for over 100 years. The Delta is very near and dear to us.

I am a retired Registered Nurse. I am very concerned about what I have read in the RDEIR/RDEIS about potential health threats from the construction and operation of the WaterFix. The health of those who live, work, and recreate in the Delta should be of primary concern, but as I read the RDEIR, many of these health threats seem to be written off as "significant and unavoidable." This is alarming.

Section 25.1.1.1, Public Health, in the RDEIR lists a number of potential threats to public health, including pathogens, *Microcystis aeruginosa*, mosquito-born diseases, and electromagnetic fields. Because of the limit of one page, I will focus on only one, *Microcystis*, a type of naturally occurring cyanobacteria, commonly known as blue-green algae, which can quickly multiply into a harmful bloom when conditions including light and temperature, levels of nutrients and lack of water turbulence are optimal, more often in warmer months. This blue-green algae produces toxins which can cause rashes, skin and eye irritation, allergic reactions, gastrointestinal upset, and serious illness or death at high levels of exposure. The toxins affect both humans and animals. Exposure can occur by ingestion, skin contact, and inhalation.

Several websites, including ca.gov/HealthInfo/environhealth/water and The Merck Veterinary Manual/Overview of Algal Poisoning have much more information if you would like to access them.

I would like to quote and paraphrase the RDEIR. It speaks for itself. It will show why there is concern that the WaterFix will produce the possibility of toxic blooms, and the ineffective mitigation procedures themselves. Care must be taken in dealing with blue-green algae blooms because destruction of the cells may release the toxins into surrounding waters.

As noted in the RDEIS, 25.19, "Water conveyance facilities operation activities...could change hydraulic times and increase water temperatures...which could cause an increase in the frequency, magnitude, and geographic extent of *Microcystis* blooms. This could result in negative effects on drinking water and recreational waters, which would represent a potential public health concern."

As noted on 25.79, "...it is possible that increases in *Microcystis* blooms would occur due to the operations and maintenance of the water conveyance facilities and the hydrodynamic impacts or restoration. Accordingly, beneficial uses, including drinking water and recreational waters would potentially be impacted and therefore, so would public health. Therefore this impact would be significant."

As noted on 25.80, in explaining mitigation measures, the RDEIR says that the effectiveness of these mitigation measures for reducing potential public health effects is uncertain, so therefore this impact would be "significant and unavoidable."

I find all of these potential impacts on public health significant and unacceptable, with the possibility of affecting humans, pets, livestock, and wildlife. As noted in ca.gov/Healthinfo, everyone should avoid blue-green algae blooms, including swimming, wading, and water-skiing. Children's exposure to blue-green algae will be higher than adults due to their small body weight, given the same volume of water intake, so children should especially avoid contact.

This information should make everyone take notice. Blue-green algae blooms are a distinct possibility with the WaterFix construction and operation.

Sincerely,
Barbara J. Damion
Delta resident