

RESOLUTION NO. 60,189-N.S.

SUPPORTING PROTECTION OF THE BAY/DELTA ESTUARY

WHEREAS, the health of the San Francisco Bay/Delta estuary and the diverse ecosystems it supports are fundamental to the environmental well being of the entire Bay Area; and

WHEREAS, much of the Bay Area's economic vitality is supported by the Bay/Delta estuary, including industries such as tourism, recreational and commercial fishing; and

WHEREAS, the Bay/Delta estuary's health is in rapid decline, manifested by various indicators including dramatic reductions in fish populations, and due to a variety of devastating impacts, including the diversion of over 50 percent of its flows from the watershed's rivers, the loss of over 85 percent of historic wetlands, and the discharge of 40,000 tons of pollutants into the Bay; and

WHEREAS, since 1994 the Federal Government and the State of California, in conjunction with agricultural, urban and environmental stakeholders, have undertaken an effort to address the remarkably complex water resource issues of the Bay/Delta ecosystem through a process known as CalFed; and

WHEREAS, in the CalFed process the current public comment period for the Draft Programmatic EIR/EIS provides a critical opportunity for input on the issues affecting the San Francisco Bay/Delta estuary.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Berkeley does hereby identify that the following essential elements must be incorporated into future policies and programs undertaken by the CalFed process:

A guarantee that there will be adequate freshwater flows into the Bay – The San Francisco Bay/Delta estuary's historic freshwater flows have been reduced by half. Currently there exists a need for science-based standards that establish minimum flows of freshwater into the Bay. Adequate flows will benefit the entire estuary in diverse ways, including improving water quality, supporting biological diversity, and the health of all of the Bay/Delta estuary's ecosystems.

Water conservation by all users – Equitable water conservation practices must be required and enforced for all users throughout California. Managing demand through conservation practices and greater water efficiency can eliminate or substantially reduce the need to construct new storage facilities. Until conservation practices and demand management have been implemented and monitored, the construction of new storage facilities should not be initiated.