



June 3, 2013

Meg Sedlak, Environmental Scientist
San Francisco Estuary Institute

VIA EMAIL

Dear Meg,

I am writing to follow up on our recent conversation regarding the current funding status of the award-winning *ESTUARY News Magazine*, which the San Francisco Estuary Partnership has been publishing for over 20 years.

As you are aware, because of recent sequester-driven funding cuts at the US EPA, the Partnership's printing and publication budget has been severely reduced. Without new sources of support for the magazine, we will be unable to keep publishing this well-regarded clearinghouse for news about the projects and programs that affect the Bay Delta system.

We are heartened to know that you and the other staff of the Regional Monitoring Program believe in the importance of good news coverage about issues facing the Bay Delta system and are considering becoming one of the key sponsors for 2014 and 2015. Of course, *ESTUARY* already has a long relationship with the RMP and SFEI, having published numerous stories about the work of the Institute and the RMP efforts.

Here are some facts about the publication that you may find interesting.

Readership. 3000+ Currently the magazine goes out hard copy to over 1700 individuals, and in PDF to another 500 individuals. The list includes elected officials, and staff from state, federal and local agencies, as well as consultants, businesses, nonprofits, and the public from the 12 Bay Delta counties. Another 500 copies are placed in staff mailboxes or in reception areas at USCOE, SFBCDC, SFBRWQCB, USEPA, Coastal Conservancy, Delta Council (as you know), among others. Many of our readers forward the PDF to colleagues, or pass it around the office. In sum, we maintain a small but clean and targeted distribution list, and frequently update it so that decision makers at all levels of government continue to receive the magazine. Finally, with the recent revamp of our website, stories are now more searchable and magazine pages have gotten more than 1,000 hits since January.

2011 Reader Survey: We know from years of feedback that the magazine is highly regarded by our readers and are often told "this is the one publication I end up reading cover to cover." We also know that many people continue to value the magazine as a print

publication. In a 2012 survey of readers, we found that: more than 75percent of respondents read it whenever it comes out and more than 70percent learn of an unexpected connection between projects or subjects while reading.

Editorial Board. The 30-member editorial board for the magazine serves as a diverse source of story ideas, and represents an array of perspectives about Bay-Delta issues. Current members include Steve Moore [SWRCB]; Rainer Hoenicke [Delta Science Program]; Tim Ramirez [Central Valley Flood Protection Board/SFPUC]; Chuck Batts, retired water quality engineer; Leo Winternitz, TNC; key staff from the various agencies, environmental leaders, and others. This is an excellent time to expand the Board to include more RMP staff, as we move to broaden publication support for the magazine. Board participation would help the magazine stay up to speed with the results of the RMP and the interests of SFEI.

Editorial Policy. *ESTUARY* enjoys a unique reputation as a long-standing “neutral” source of credible, fact-checked information. It emphasizes insider news on the thorny issues and research questions being discussed in agency hallways, and favors public information over public relations. It is the magazine’s policy to send draft stories back to sources for accuracy review, though the editors retain full editorial control over the end product. *ESTUARY* has a particular strong reputation for good science reporting, and describing the complex interactions intrinsic to water management and estuarine ecology. A leading local wetland engineer recently wrote that reading *ESTUARY* over the years has made her a “better restoration practitioner.” All stories are written by independent, freelance journalists. Our editor, Ariel Rubissow Okamoto, is herself an award-winning author, having just received the 2013 Harold Gilliam Award for Excellence in Environmental Reporting.

Proposal. We are updating our annual budget to reflect an effort to minimize costs and maximize opportunities for our potential new partners to get good coverage. While the details are still being filled in, we anticipate a \$75,000 per year budget including quarterly 16-page print issues, combined with monthly updates on our main web page, and additional marketing to gain a stronger distribution.

We suggest that the RMP contribute \$10,000 per year for two years. For this, we could:

- Reserve 2-4 pages quarterly within each print/pdf issue for contaminant, water quality and storm water and other RMP/SFEI- related issues.
- Repackage stories as requested for wider distribution on your own web pages and other outlets.
- Write and post monthly news and calendar briefs on the magazine’s web page if desired.

To keep our current publication schedule up we would much appreciate hearing back from you on this proposal at your earliest convenience. As this funding strategy would apply for

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2014 and 2015, we would not need funds until later in the year but would greatly appreciate knowing we have agreement on this new, expanded partnership in place.

Please feel free to call me, or our editor Ariel, with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Judy A. Kelly". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "K".

Judy A. Kelly, Director
(510)622-8137

Cc: Ariel Rubissow Okamoto
415.989.2441 or 415.922.1130