



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex
1 Marshlands Road
Fremont, California 94555

March 4, 2015

Douglas Bosco, Board Chairman
State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612

Re: 3/26/15 Board Authorization for 2015-16 Funding for San Francisco Estuary Invasive Spartina Project

Dear Mr. Bosco,

On behalf of the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex, I would like to offer my strong support for the San Francisco Estuary Invasive Spartina Project: 3/26/15 Request for Board Authorization for 2015-16 funding. The Invasive *Spartina* Project (ISP) Control Program, the purpose of which is to eradicate invasive *Spartina* in order to protect the long-term health of the native marsh ecosystem and restore the affected habitats of the San Francisco Estuary, is a successful project to date and continued funding is critical to completing eradication of invasive *Spartina* from the San Francisco Estuary.

This authorization would enable the Conservancy to continue critical ongoing planning, management, revegetation, monitoring, and permit compliance activities needed to support treatment activities through March 31, 2016 and to carry out treatment and eradication work by grantees through the 2015 treatment season. This work protects habitat function, habitat diversity, and native ecological structure over more than 25,000 acres of tidal marsh and 20,000 acres of mudflats bay-wide. It's a critical step in ensuring the future success of multiple large-scale tidal wetland restoration projects, including Hamilton Wetlands, the South Bay Salt Ponds Restoration Project, the Bair Island Restoration Project, and many others.

We support the ISP because it helps to reach our regional goals of restoring native, diverse wetland habitats bay-wide for a variety of species in San Francisco Bay, including areas within our Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge and the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge. ISP also contributes toward the recovery goals outlined in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's *Recovery Plan for Tidal Marsh Ecosystems of Northern and Central California*. We have been an ongoing partner and stakeholder in this effort, and highly value the key leadership role that the Conservancy has played in organizing dozens of landowners, resource managers, restoration ecologists, stakeholders, scientists, non-profits, and citizens in this effort. The project is a recognized success, and continued funding is critical at this stage in the eradication with only 29 net acres left to treat in the estuary.

Sincerely,

Anne Morkill
Refuge Complex Manager

Cc: Marilyn Latta, Project Manager