March 7, 2013

California Congressional Delegation (attached list)

CALIFORNIA'S COLLABORATION WITH NATIONAL MUSSEL WATCH PROGRAM

Dear Senator/Congressperson:

The State of California’s Water Quality Monitoring Council, an Advisory Board formed in compliance with California Senate Bill 1070 (Kehoe, 2006), is writing to recognize the support provided by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science Mussel Watch monitoring program.

Mussel Watch is nationally significant program that is even more important to California because it has partnered with state and local agencies (California State Water Resources Control Board, Southern California Coastal Water Research Project, and San Francisco Estuary Institute) to expand the program locally. That expansion has allowed Mussel Watch to grow beyond its historical focus to now include measuring contaminants of emerging concern (CECs), such as flame retardants, non-stick compounds, pharmaceuticals, water soluble pesticides, and nanoparticles. Through these efforts, we have learned that California has some of the highest levels of these contaminants in the nation, something of which regulatory agencies in California were largely unaware prior to partnering with the Mussel Watch program.

While the collaboration between Mussel Watch and California has been an unequivocal success, recent budget constraints jeopardize continuation of the Mussel Watch program. Discontinuing or reconfiguring Mussel Watch will have significant impacts on the management utility of this program to California. As the longest running continuous contaminant-monitoring program in U.S. coastal waters, Mussel Watch provides irreplaceable time series data that provide long-term context against which management actions can be understood.

Given the proven value of Mussel Watch to California, our hope is that the program receives continued support in the future.
Sincerely,

Jonathan Bishop, Chief Deputy Director
State Water Resources Control Board
Monitoring Council Co-Chair
Representing Cal/EPA

Dale K. Hoffman-Floerke, Chief Deputy Director
Department of Water Resources
Monitoring Council Co-Chair
Representing the Natural Resources Agency

cc: Holly Bamford, Assistant Administrator, National Ocean Service, NOAA/NOS
Kathryn Sullivan, Deputy Administrator, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Members of the California Water Quality Monitoring Council
Matthew Rodriguez, Secretary for Environmental Protection
John Laird, Secretary for Natural Resources
Tom Howard, Executive Director, State Water Resources Control Board
Senators:
  Dianne Feinstein
  Barbara Boxer

Congresspersons:
  Karen Bass
  Xavier Becerra
  Ami Bera
  Julia Brownley
  Ken Calvert
  John Campbell
  Lois Capps
  Tony Cardenas
  Judy Chu
  Paul Cook
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  Gary Miller
  George Miller
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  Raul Ruiz
  Linda Sanchez
  Loretta Sanchez
  Adam Schiff
  Brad Sherman
  Jackie Speier
  Eric Swalwell
  Mark Takano
  Mike Thompson
  David Valadao
  Juan Vargas
  Maxine Waters
  Henry Waxman