



August 1, 2011

The Honorable Anthony Cannella
Chairman
Senate Committee on Agriculture
State Capitol Room 3048
Sacramento, California 95814

The Honorable Mark DeSaulnier
Chairman
Senate Committee on Transportation
State Capitol Room 5035
Sacramento, California 95814

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Roelof van Ark
CEO

Dear Senator Cannella, Dear Senator DeSaulnier,

I would again like to thank you for arranging the joint Agriculture / High-Speed Rail hearing in Merced on July 15, 2011, and for allowing our delegation an opportunity to inform the committee and the public on the status of high-speed rail in California. During the meeting the issue of the Agricultural Working Group was discussed, and as the members had not yet all been informed, you requested us to give you an update on this activity at a later date. The aim of this letter is to both inform you on the process the Authority has adopted to accomplish this working group, and to inform you of the members who now are involved.

So here, firstly the process which was followed:

- The Authority had been in consultation with Ag representatives to address Ag impacts. Holly King, co-chair of a Wasco-Shafter Ag group in Kern County agreed to work with the Authority to provide recommendations for the group.
- In April the Authority was able to obtain the services of Mr. John Diener, a well-respected farmer of the region, to join the team. Mr. Diener worked with the Authority to determine potential participants.
- Early May – A request was directed at the County Agriculture Commissioners of Merced, Madera, Fresno, Tulare, Kings and Kern Counties to participate on the Ag Working Group and to nominate technical experts. This was sent on 5/9 and a response was requested by 5/23. This letter also proposed a meeting date of June 1st to discuss the nominations.
- Late May – After conversations the Authority had with the Ag Commissioners, they requested to collectively discuss providing a list of resource specialists/experts for each of the issues/concerns after the San Joaquin Valley Agriculture Commissioners Association meeting in Stockton which was planned for 6/23 & 6/24.
- Late June – After the Ag Commissioners met on June 24, 2011 it was the conclusion of the group to have Carol Hafner, the Fresno County Ag Commissioner send us a list of their recommendations. These were received on June 28th.

JERRY BROWN
GOVERNOR



- At the time, unfortunately, the Ag Commissioners could not confirm that they themselves would participate on the Ag panel, as they seem either to have budget or time limitations.
- This list of names was combined with those gathered before that date. Contacts have been made and many agreed to meet on July 29 2011 to learn about the project and understand what their role would be. Their long term commitment to participate for many is undetermined.
- Attached is the list of participants contacted. Unfortunately due to the vacation period, quite a few candidates could not participate, and as you can see, the attendance was even lower at the actual meeting which took place on July 29.
- Some candidates from the UC system have not yet had the opportunity to secure authorization from their dean or chancellor and are attending to gather the information needed to do so.
- The Authority will continue to convene these meetings in an attempt to resolve many agricultural related issues.

Should you have the ability to persuade some of the Ag Commissioners to participate personally that would be much appreciated.

Thank you for the opportunity to share this information with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Roelof van Ark', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Roelof van Ark

cc: Sen. Lowenthal: Chair, Senate Select Committee on High-Speed Rail
Assemblymember Galgiani: Chair, Assembly Committee on Agriculture

Mr. Jeff Abercrombie: California High Speed Rail Authority

PRELIMINARY INVITEES FOR AGRICULTURAL WORKING GROUP

MEETING OF JULY 29, 2011

SPONSORED BY THE HIGH-SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY

<u>NAME/REPRESENTING</u>			<u>Attendance confirmed</u>	<u>Actual Attendance</u>
Shannon Mueller	UCCE, Fresno		Yes	Yes
Dr. David Zoldoske	CSU, Fresno		Vacation	Yes
Jim Tischer	CSU, Fresno		Yes	Yes
Stephen Vasquez	UCCE, Fresno		Yes	No
Steve Sibbett	UCCE, Tulare	Retired	Vacation	Vacation
Mario Viveros	UCCE, Kern	Retired	Vacation	Vacation
Seyed Sadredin	SJV Air PCD		Vacation	Vacation
Tom Jordan	SJV Air PCD		Yes	No
John Karlik	UCCE, Kern		Yes	Yes
Kurt Kilburn	Tulare Co Ag Comm. staff		Yes	No
Marilyn Kinoshita	Tulare Co Ag Commissioner		Yes	No
Stevie McNeill	Tulare Co Ag Comm. staff		Vacation	Vacation
Gerald Higginbotham	UCCE, Fresno		Yes	Yes
John Diener	Chairman		Yes	Yes
Cheryl Lehn	Public Outreach		Yes	Yes

Additional participation will be sought as needed. Some additional participants have been contacted but are deciding on their participation.