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May 9, 2011

Ms. Marilyn Kinoshita
Tulare County Agricultural Commissioner
4437 S Laspina Street
Tulare, CA 93274

Dear Ms. Kinoshita:

As you may know, the California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) has been evaluating various alternative alignments for the High-Speed Rail project in the Central Valley. After meetings with various agriculture representatives, our CEO, Roelof van Ark, made a commitment to continue working with the agriculture community throughout the planning of this project. He has reiterated this commitment at multiple agricultural forums held in late 2010 and earlier this year. As part of this commitment, he conveyed the desire to develop an Agricultural Technical Working Group (ATWG).

The CHSRA would like to invite you to serve on the Agricultural Technical Working Group or select a representative from your office. We have compiled a list of concerns from the agriculture community based on numerous meetings with agricultural stakeholders. The CHSRA would appreciate it if you could review this summary list attached and provide any additional topics or concerns not in the attachment.

Next we are asking you to develop the list of resource specialists that will be relied upon for information as each concern is reviewed by the ATWG. The CHSRA has received some recommendations for technical experts from various agricultural stakeholders. But we are looking for your input as well and welcome any recommendations that you may provide. We encourage you to engage your county's farm bureau, agricultural commodity groups and other agricultural organizations when recommending technical experts.

The goals of the Agriculture Technical Working Group are to:

Goal 1: refine the list of issues and concerns within the agriculture industry;

Goal 2: use the agricultural expertise of the resource specialists to ensure the EIR/EIS process adequately addresses potential agricultural impacts, including social impacts, due to physical changes caused by the project;

Goal 3: use resource specialists to develop mitigation measures and guidance guidelines to minimize agricultural impacts during construction and implementation of the high-speed rail project

I would appreciate it if you could provide this information by May 23, 2011. Please send your comments to Cheryl Lehn via e-mail at Cheryl_Lehn@URSCorp.com or via FAX to 559-256-1478. I wish to start the ATWG meetings with a review of the topics and concerns, and the list of Technical Specialists recommended on June 1, 2011 at 10:00 am. A location has not been determined but teleconferencing capability will be provided. The goal from there will be to begin engaging the Technical Specialists on the list of topics in order of priority beginning as soon as June 8, 2011.

I look forward to working with you to develop the Agriculture Technical Working Group and to work together on the important issues that may impact agriculture.

Sincerely,

Jeff Abercrombie
Area Program Manager Central Valley
California High Speed Rail Authority
559-801-1164
jabercrombie@hrs.ca.gov

cc: Tulare County Farm Bureau
Attachment: Agricultural Topics, Issues, Resources/Contracts, May 2011