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August 15, 2012

Ms. Michelle K. Shouse, Biologist
USGS - Delta Science
Pacific Southwest Area
Sacramento, CA 95819

Re: Nomination of Kathy Boyer for Brown-Nichols Science Award

Dear Ms. Shouse:

This letter is to support of the 2012 Brown Nichols Science Award nomination of Dr. Kathy Boyer of San Francisco State University's Romberg Tiburon Center for Environmental Studies. Kathy's work is broadly interested in the ecology of coastal habitats, with a focus on tidal marshes and seagrass beds. Her lab works at the interface of basic and applied ecology, with the philosophy that restoration and conservation activities will be most effective when there is an understanding of the processes that govern natural communities. Her work is largely experimental, conducted in the field, bay, greenhouse, and mesocosm settings.

While I know that Kathy has been very active in a multitude of research and conservation projects across marsh and eelgrass habitats within San Francisco Bay, my experience working with Kathy has been primarily focused on seagrass interactions. I have had opportunities to collaborate with Dr. Boyer on a handful of efforts within the Bay, including a pilot eelgrass restoration program, Subtidal Goals development for eelgrass habitat, and assessment of damages to seagrass from the Cosco Busan spill. Through these interactions, I have found Kathy to be a committed scientist, focused on critical issues of resource conservation facing San Francisco Bay today and in the decades to come.

Dr. Boyer is a great candidate to be recognized through the Brown-Nichols Science Award. Kathy possesses an extremely collaborative spirit that makes her a pleasure to work with. Her ability to remain faithful to application of hard science in resource conservation policy and practice while still working within the real world constraints of budgets, schedules, and regulations is refreshing. Having collaborated with Kathy for several years and through working with her students at various times, I believe her scientific and conservation qualities are well fostered through her mentoring of the next group of scientists and policy makers

Sincerely,

Keith Merkel
Principal Ecologist