

Brown-Nichols Award Committee  
Delta Science Program

27 July 2012

Dear Judges

It is a pleasure to write a letter of support for the nomination of Dr. Wim Kimmerer for the 2012 Brown Nichols Award. I have known Wim since the mid 1990's when we worked on different components of national ecosystem research program funded by the National Science Foundation. There, as in the rest of his career, he showed a broad curiosity about the nature of functioning of estuarine ecosystems and an ability to discuss, in an informed and often provocative manner, topics from estuarine physics to salt marsh dynamics. I owe my own engagement in some aspects of Bay-Delta issues to Wim as he invited me to become a member of the Ecosystem Restoration Program science board almost 15 years ago.

Over these years I have seen Wim make seminal contributions to Bay-Delta science that bring key aspects of system dynamics together, work in the science-management trenches, and not least, continue to train and mentor a cadre of young scientists who are now themselves making major contributions both to science and management. There is so much to describe from my knowledge of role and engagement that I will describe just a few illustrations of the variety of contributions he has made:

- Scientifically his research on foodwebs and zooplankton is beyond my expertise. However, his careful statistical analysis of long-term data sets provided such a clear picture of how changes occurred as result of clam invasions, that it was apparent to even coastal geomorphologist like myself. His 'opus' on Open Water Processes published in SFEWS in 2004 continues to be the go-to place for solid and thorough descriptions of how the system works. Only two weeks ago I sent it as a 'must read' to an out of state scientist sitting with me on his first Bay-Delta review panel. Wim's approach is to use the knowledge we have to the best of our abilities and use it to explore the difficult issues. His work on modeling - striped bass and then delta smelt - illustrate the way he can bring teams together and push the envelope. While he is a 'scientist's scientist' in many respects his contribution in synthesizing and using information toward management problems is rare in the Bay-Delta and in other large ecosystems.
- His work, with Randy Brown, in support of the Environmental Water Account is just one example of how he has rolled up his sleeves and worked directly with managers in how they use information in decision making. He has a respect for water managers and the decisions they have to make gained from working in areas like this. He may not always agree with the decisions but will work with managers to try and improve them where he can. As the aforementioned ERP science board sunset in 2005 Wim pulled together a summary of all the recommendations we had made - wanting to leave the essence of endless discussions in ways that could be readily accessed by those responsible for

restoration. These are just two examples of the 'behind the scenes' hard work Wim has put in over the years to try to make science, and the thoughts and opinions of scientists, more useful.

- Despite being a senior scientist, Wim has always been great with students and post-docs in terms of letting them take credit for their work, publishing it in a timely manner, and working hard with them to strive for success. His lab currently includes post-docs, research associated and graduate students - as it has done for many years. People who now make a central contribution to understanding bay-delta issues got their start in Wim's lab as master's students. Lenny Grimaldo would be a great example.

I recognize that the criteria for selection for the award indicate a preferred contribution to public education and outreach. To my knowledge this is not an area where he has spent a lot of effort. Wim is a 'soft money' professor who relies on grants and contracts to both keep his lab going and pay his mortgage. It is extremely difficult for one in this type of position to spend a lot of time on public education which rarely brings in funds. I do not think this should be held against someone who is otherwise an excellent candidate.

In summary I consider Dr. Wim Kimmerer to be an excellent candidate for the 2012 Brown-Nichols award. He worked very closely with Randy Brown and I think in many ways has tried to continue to work on important relevant issues as part of Randy's legacy.

I look forward to the announcement of the awardee.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Denise Reed". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Denise J. Reed, Ph.D.  
University Research Professor