

**BAY AREA WATER SUPPLY AND CONSERVATION AGENCY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

October 4, 2018

Correspondence and media coverage of interest between September 21, 2018 and October 1, 2018

Correspondence

Date: September 26, 2018
To: Al Mendall, Chair, BAWSCA
From: Spreck Rosekrans, Executive Director, Restore Hetch Hetchy
Subject: Additional Water Supply Opportunities for San Francisco and its wholesale customers

Media Coverage

Calaveras Dam:

Date: September 21, 2018
Source: Mercury News
Article: Largest Bay Area dam built in 20 years is finally finished

Date: September 21, 2018
Source: San Francisco Chronicle
Article: \$823 million, 31 billion-gallon Calaveras Reservoir dam ready for debut

Date: September 21, 2018
Source: KTVU Fox 2 News
Article: Calaveras dam finally complete, seismically retrofitted

Date: September 21, 2018
Source: KQED Science
Article: New South Bay Dam Could Save Lives

Date: September 21, 2018
Source: ABC 7 News
Article: New Calaveras Dam to safeguard water supply even after earthquakes

Date: September 21, 2018
Source: East Bay Times
Article: Time Lapse video: See a 220-foot Calaveras Dam go up in 1 minute

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Date: September 21, 2018
Source: KPIX 5
Coverage: Construction of New East Bay Dam Wraps Up

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Date: September 21, 2018
Source: KCBS Radio:
Editorial: Delta hearing opens door to twin-tunnels water grab

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Bay-Delta Plan:

Date: September 25, 2018
Source: Modesto Bee
Article: Feinstein urges voluntary water agreements ahead of vote by State Water Board

Water Supply Conditions:

Date: October 1, 2018
Source: Union Democrat
Article: Water-year whiplash: on heels of below-average rain and snow, expect wet or dry extremes

Infrastructure:

Date: October 1, 2018
Source: Sacramento Bee
Article: Proposition 3 will pay for a multitude of water needs

Date: September 24, 2018
Source: Sacramento Bee
Article: Prop. 3 promises more California water projects. Too bad so many are the wrong projects

Date: September 23, 2018
Source: Sierra Sun Times
Article: Economic Analysis Shows Value of Investing in WaterFix: California Water Users Will See Benefits Far Exceeding Costs, DWR Reports.

Date: September 22, 2018
Source: The Sentinel
Article: Officials kick off Prop. 3 campaign

Date: September 20, 2018
Source: YubaNet.com
Article: Congressman Garamendi Asserts Delta Tunnels LOI is Dishonest in Letter to EPA

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September 26, 2018

Mr. Ike Kwon, President, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
Mr. Al Mendall, Chair, BAWSCA
Mr. Harlan Kelly, General Manager, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
Ms. Nicole Sandkulla, General Manager and CEO, BAWSCA

Subject: Additional Water Supply Opportunities for San Francisco and its wholesale customers

Dear President Kwon, Chair Mendel, GM Kelly, and GM/CEO Sandkulla:

This letter is a follow up both to the Bay-Delta Plan discussion at yesterday's San Francisco Public Utilities Commission meeting and to our previous letter, sent August 29, 2018.

Again, Restore Hetch Hetchy takes no position on the State Board's proposal to require substantial increases in the flow of the lower Tuolumne River. We recognize, however, that under the terms of the "Fourth Agreement", San Francisco's Regional Water System will be responsible for meeting the majority of any flow increase.

While San Francisco continues to advocate for a different plan, it would only be prudent to assume the SWRCB will indeed require significant increase in flow on the lower Tuolumne River. As staff notes, the State Board's proposal has varied little over the past 6 years.

Staff estimates the additional water supply needs may be large – equivalent to 100 MGD or an increase in storage of 900,000 acre-feet – 2.5 times the size of Hetch Hetchy Reservoir.

Over the past few decades, many California water agencies have made substantial adjustments and investments to accommodate efforts to restore the State's rivers, wetlands and the Bay-Delta estuary. Urban customers of the State Water Project have been affected by many factors, including the 1995 Water Quality Control Plan and rulings under the Endangered Species Act in 2006 and 2007. In these cases, there was very little advance notice that available supplies would be reduced.

A selected list of water supply investments implemented by California Water agencies over the last 25 years is attached as Table 1 (compiled in 2013). Some of these investments were made necessary by the need to comply with the aforementioned environmental programs.

At yesterday's Commission meeting, staff presented a limited set of alternative potential supplies for the SFPUC system – many with a long timeline for

President Kwon, Chair Mendel, GM Kelly, and GM/CEO Sandkulla:

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implementation. Other potential alternatives, including water transfers and groundwater banking, were deemed infeasible due to lack of interest among available partners in and near the Tuolumne watershed.

Other urban water agencies have successfully negotiated and executed numerous agreements with Central Valley parties, either to purchase water supplies or to exchange supplies through groundwater banking. Many of these agreements are made possible through use of the California Aqueduct. San Francisco's ability to engage in such agreements is limited because its principal aqueduct provides access to far fewer partners.

San Francisco should continue to pursue transfers and groundwater banking, both in the Tuolumne watershed and statewide. It should continue to pursue mutually beneficial agreements with the Turlock and Modesto Irrigation Districts in particular. SFPUC Commissioners should personally discuss these opportunities with the Districts' board members.

San Francisco should also strongly consider building an intertie to the California Aqueduct to increase its flexibility. It would need to negotiate terms of use with the State Water Project. Capacity is generally available, however, during the times when San Francisco would need it.

Using supplies from the aqueduct would require advanced treatment, as San Francisco does not currently filter its supplies from the Tuolumne River. Water could be filtered at the site of the new intertie before putting it into San Francisco's pipeline or all supplies could be filtered at San Francisco's existing (and possibly expanded) Sunol Plant whenever the intertie is used. Water quality would be diminished during times that such an intertie would be used, but customers may prefer a supply with lower quality to a diminished supply.

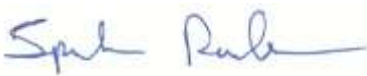
Semitropic Water Storage District, for example, is presently advertising that it has available capacity of 474,750 acre-feet, which would be available to San Francisco through an intertie to the California Aqueduct. See <http://www.semitropic.com/BankingPartners.htm>

Table 1 also includes water recycling programs in urban southern California – both existing and planned expansions. These can be slower to implement, as staff has noted, but should also be considered by the SFPUC and its customers.

The SFPUC, BAWSCA and BAWSCA member agencies provide essential services to much of the Bay Area. It is incumbent to continue providing those services, even if made more difficult due to increased environmental requirements.

Restore Hetch Hetchy well understands the vital importance of providing a reliable water supply to all SFPUC customers. We look forward to seeing potential projects and programs for closing the gap between supply and demand, and we stand ready to play a productive role in their development and implementation if it is helpful.

Sincerely,



Spreck Rosekrans
Executive Director

Table 1: Selected urban water supply investments in California since 1990

Utility	Program or Project
Contra Costa Water District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction and Expansion of Los Vaqueros Reservoir -160,000 acre-feet • Middle River Intake and Pump Station
East Bay Municipal Utility District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freeport Regional Water Facility to access contract supplies with the Bureau of Reclamation • Ongoing discussions with Placer County and others to “firm up” supply through Freeport
Zone 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semitropic water bank – 65,000 acre-feet of storage
Alameda County Water District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semitropic water bank – 150,000 acre-feet of storage
Santa Clara Valley Water District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semitropic water bank – 350,000 acre-feet of storage • Will double production of recycled water by 2035 (from 14,000 acre-feet per year to 29,000 acre-feet per year)
Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (on behalf of all customers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diamond Valley Lake – 810,000 acre-feet of storage • Semitropic Water Bank – 350,000 acre-feet of storage • Arvin Edison Water Bank – 350,000 acre-feet of storage • Kern Delta Water Bank – 350,000 acre-feet of storage • Local Groundwater Storage (Long Beach, Chino, Orange County, Compton etc.) – 212,000 acre-feet • Water transfers to MWD through State Water Project and Colorado Aqueduct – 331,000 acre-feet per year (average 2008-2010, average cost \$218 per acre-foot)
San Diego	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water transfers through Colorado Aqueduct - 124,000 acre-feet per year (average 2008-2010, average cost \$688 per acre-foot)
MWD customers (other than San Diego)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water transfers through the State Water Project - 77,000 acre-feet per year (average 2008-2010, average cost \$267 per acre-foot)
Orange County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Municipal Water Districts of Orange County currently use 40,000 acre-feet of recycled water per year and expect to increase the amount to 60,000 acre-feet per year by 2035
West Basin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently recycles 30,000 acre-feet per year - plans to expand to 70,000 acre-feet per year by 2035
Los Angeles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently recycles 5,000 acre-feet per year - plans to expand to 59,000 acre-feet per year by 2035
San Diego	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently recycles 27,931 acre-feet per year - plans to expand to 49,998 acre-feet per year by 2035

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Largest Bay Area dam built in 20 years is finally finished

Mercury News | September 21, 2018 | Paul Rogers

SUNOL — After toiling away in the remote hills east of Interstate 680 on the Alameda-Santa Clara county line for seven years, hundreds of construction workers have finally finished the largest dam built in the Bay Area in 20 years.

The 220-foot tall dam at Calaveras Reservoir — as high as the roadway on the Golden Gate Bridge soars above San Francisco Bay — replaces a dam of the same size, built in 1925. State dam inspectors flagged the older dam in 2001 as at risk of collapse in a major earthquake on the nearby Calaveras Fault. If it had failed, state officials estimated it could have sent a 30-foot wall of water into Fremont and neighboring communities, potentially killing thousands of people.

The new dam, a tightly compacted earth-and-rock structure a quarter-mile wide at its base, can withstand a 7.25 magnitude quake on the Calaveras Fault, engineers say.

“The improvements are 100-fold over the old dam. We expect this one to be here for another 100 years,” said Dan Wade, director of water capital projects for the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, which owns the reservoir.

The new dam is the tallest such structure built in the Bay Area since Los Vaqueros Reservoir in Contra Costa County was completed in 1998. It is an important part of the Hetch Hetchy water system, which provides drinking water to 2.7 million people in Alameda, Santa Clara, San Mateo and San Francisco counties.

The project also represents the final piece of a wider, \$4.8 billion effort, ordered by the state legislature in 2002, to harden the Hetch Hetchy water system in the Bay Area against earthquakes. That project involved upgrading drinking water treatment plants, replacing pipelines and even boring a massive tunnel under San Francisco Bay to replace a rickety series of leaking metal pipes that once brought water from the East Bay to the Peninsula.

The new dam was an engineering headache, however, beset by delays and cost overruns.

In 2009, the project was expected to cost \$409 million and be completed in 2015. Now the cost is \$823 million. The final pieces, including paving seven miles of nearby roads and installing electrical equipment and sensors in the dam, are expected to be finished by the spring of 2019, more than three years late.

The reason for the delays? Once they started digging, construction workers found two ancient landslides in the 20 million-year-old geologic layer cake nearby, forcing them to carve away millions of tons of rock and sediment to better anchor the new dam on more solid footing. They also had to shore up hillsides more than expected, and were delayed three months during the flooding winter of 2016-17.

“Despite all the challenges, we’ve come a long way,” said senior project manager Susan Hou. “I feel good. It’s been a long journey.”

Outside experts say the delays were an unfortunate, but unavoidable, reality.

“They didn’t do anything wrong,” said Nicole Sandkulla, a civil engineer and CEO of the Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency, an organization of 26 cities and water districts from Daly City to Hayward that purchase Hetch Hetchy water from San Francisco.

“It’s like home remodeling. When you buy an old home, the walls all look sound,” she said. “But when you go to replace the windows, you realize you have dry rot. But you still have to fix it.”

Most Bay Area residents know that Hetch Hetchy water comes from Hetch Hetchy Reservoir in Yosemite National Park. But that pristine snow melt provides only 85 percent of the system’s water. The rest comes from five Bay Area reservoirs, of which Calaveras is the largest.

When full, Calaveras holds 96,850 acre-feet — about 31 billion gallons — enough for roughly half a million people’s needs a year.

After state inspectors found earthquake risks, they ordered Calaveras Reservoir to be lowered to no more than 40 percent full. The reservoir is 25 percent full now. When winter rains start, it will begin to fill again.

“If we have a wet winter, it can fill in one year,” Wade said. “But it could take four years. Or if we’re in a drought, it could take longer.”

In a state with a growing population where water is always short, some have wondered why San Francisco wouldn’t enlarge Calaveras Reservoir, since it was replacing the dam anyway. Sandkulla’s group, which represents two-thirds of Hetch Hetchy customers, and whose water bills were tripled to pay for for the seismic upgrades, wanted a larger reservoir.

Sandkulla said San Francisco officials chose the status quo size because they worried about lawsuits and the difficulty of getting permits from state and federal agencies.

Wade noted that the clay core and other features of the new dam will allow it to be raised 150 feet some day, if future generations decide, which would quadruple the reservoir’s size. He said San Francisco officials decided against doing that as part of this dam project because the only way to fill such a large reservoir would have been to pipe in water, requiring a costly re-engineering of the whole system, rather than relying on water from nearby creeks flowing off Mount Hamilton and the Diablo Range, the way it is now.

Jeff Miller, executive director of the Alameda Creek Alliance, an environmental group, said 68 environmental groups signed a letter in 2005 telling the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission it needed to help bring back endangered steelhead trout, and if it didn’t, it would face lawsuits. In the end, San Francisco agreed to build a fish ladder on the Alameda Creek Diversion Dam nearby, and not expand the reservoir, he said.

The project also gained attention after the roughly 300 workers began digging up huge teeth from Megalodon sharks 20 million years ago, along with hippo teeth, fossilized palm trees and whale skulls. They all were donated to the UC Berkeley Museum of Paleontology.

Before San Francisco was required to upgrade the Hetch Hetchy system, studies showed a major quake could cut off water for 60 days, causing significant health problems and fire risks. Now, the system is strong enough so that 70 percent of customers will have water within 24 hours after the Big One.

“It’s a huge deal,” said Sandkulla. “This dam represents a significant increase in reliability for all the customers. It is a major investment in local storage, which is really important in droughts and seismic events.”

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\$823 million, 31 billion-gallon Calaveras Reservoir dam ready for debut

San Francisco Chronicle | September 21, 2018 | Dominic Fracassa

After nearly two decades of planning and construction in the rolling, sun-baked hills of the Sunol Valley, crews are finishing a new, \$823 million dam that will be the showpiece of a major overhaul to the Bay Area's water delivery system.

At the northernmost tip of the Calaveras Reservoir, the clatter and roar of heavy machinery fills the air as earthmovers and bulldozers, cutting deep treads in soft soil, line the dam's sloping walls with riprap — big chunks of blueschist rock blasted off a nearby hillside that will defend the earthen structure against erosion.

It's among the last items on the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission's checklist before the dam undergoes final tests to ensure that it's ready to begin holding back about 31 billion gallons of water.

On Friday, the SFPUC celebrated the completion of a milestone: After nearly two years of work building the dam vertically, crews brought it to its planned peak height of 220 feet last month.

The dam represents by far the most ambitious aspect of the SFPUC's \$4.8 billion Water System Improvement Program, a cluster of more than 80 projects that began in 2002 to upgrade huge portions of a system that provides drinking water to about 2.7 million people in San Francisco and other parts of the Bay Area.

When it's full, Calaveras is the largest reservoir of the SFPUC's local water supply — the portion that doesn't get piped in directly from the Hetch Hetchy Reservoir in Yosemite.

Water from Hetch Hetchy Reservoir makes up 85 percent of the SFPUC's overall supply. But local supplies can be critical in drought years when the SFPUC has to taper its reliance on Hetch Hetchy water, said Dan Wade, the SFPUC's director of the Water System Improvement Program.

Reserves like the Calaveras Reservoir would become even more critical in the event of a major emergency that cuts off Hetchy water.

The Calaveras Reservoir and dam are "extremely important in the overall regional water system, because if Hetch Hetchy were cut off for any reason — if there was a wildfire that caused water quality concerns or a major earthquake that disrupted the delivery of Hetch Hetchy water — Calaveras would be the primary source of water to 2.7 million people in the Bay Area," Wade said.

The new dam will replace its 93-year-old predecessor, which sits just 1,000 feet away, but it will be vastly more resistant to seismic activity. That's particularly important, considering the dam sits just 1,500 feet from the Calaveras Fault, which is capable of producing earthquakes in excess of magnitude 7. The new dam is designed to take such a quake in stride, and that has Wade and other San Francisco water officials excited.

Since 2001, the state's Division of Safety of Dams has required that the SFPUC keep water levels in the reservoir to 40 percent of capacity over concerns that the old dam could fail if hit by a big enough earthquake. Given the new dam's resiliency, the SFPUC is planning to restore the reservoir to its pre-2001 levels, meaning it can store more water at one time.

“Our operators are really anxious to get back to that historic capacity for that reason,” said SFPUC spokeswoman Betsy Lauppe Rhodes. The new dam will also be outfitted with sensitive instruments that will measure the precise level of water in the reservoir and the movement of the dam itself.

Water officials anticipate the dam will be finished by next spring, but its seismic reliability has already been tested. Over the Labor Day weekend, a 3.4-magnitude quake rippled beneath the reservoir but didn’t cause any damage to dam or its accompanying structures.

“That was a good reminder of what this fault is capable of,” Wade said.

While excavating more than 12 million cubic yards of soil for the project — enough to fill four Levi’s Stadiums — crews uncovered artifacts left over from the old dam’s construction, many of which are being preserved.

Because mules did much of the heavy lifting when the old dam was built in 1913, crews found mule shoes, in addition to old dynamite and various electrical components. They also found fossilized whale skulls, shark teeth, crab claws and other marine deposits between 15 million and 20 million years old.

Getting the reservoir filled back up — a process called “impounding” — will take time, possibly months. Once construction is completed, the SFPUC, with oversight from the state’s dam safety officials, will begin allowing water — mostly rainwater — to fill the reservoir. Technicians will be checking the dam’s performance during that process.

When the dam is complete, it will also mark the end of a project involving more than 1,400 workers who contributed around 1.4 million total hours to date.

The dam has become a kind of second home for John Rocca, the project’s field operations manager, who has been working at the site for eight years. He has an encyclopaedic familiarity with seemingly every inch of the work site and can identify different mounds of materials that, to the untrained eye, look like dirt in different shades of gray and brown.

Winding down the dam project, the most intensive of his career, “will take some adjustment,” Rocca said.

“My wife will have to get used to me being home more.”

#

Calaveras dam finally complete, seismically retrofitted

KTVU Fox 2 News | September 21, 2018 | Cristina Rendon

SANTA CLARA COUNTY, Calif. (KTVU) - The new Calaveras dam, on the border of Alameda and Santa Clara counties, is finally complete.

The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission built the new dam to replace the existing Calaveras dam, because it was seismically unsafe. The SFPUC is the owner and operator of the Hetch Hetchy Regional Water System.

"This is really a key component water supply for the 2.7 million customers that we serve in the Bay Area, which is San Francisco, San Mateo County, northern Santa Clara and even up to Alameda," Steven Ritchie, Assistant General Manager of the Water Enterprise, of the SFPUC.

The old Calaveras dam was built in 1925. In 2001, state dam officials inspected it and feared a collapse, which gave way to the Calaveras Dam Replacement Project. The SFPUC had to reduce the water levels by two thirds when construction crews broke ground in 2011.

"This is the largest local reservoir that gets blended with Hetch Hetchy water to deliver to customers every year, every day," Nicole Sandkulla, CEO of the Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency, said.

Ritchie said the dam is 16 years in making. It took seven years of construction due to unexpected delays. Crews found two ancient landslides in unstable material meaning they had to move a lot more dirt than originally expected. Thousands of fossils from 15 to 20 million years ago were carefully removed.

The project came in at double the original budget at more than \$820 million, but officials said if there is ever an earthquake, the dam is expected to withstand the big one.

"It's actually designed for a 7.25 earthquake which is very large and that's on the Calaveras fault," Sharon Tapia, Division Chief for the California Division of Safety of Dams, said. "Seismic safety is a concern for the dams in California and we been working for decades to evaluate them."

Sandkulla said if there is ever a disruption to the Hetch Hetchy supply, their agencies will be fully relying on the water from the Calaveras Reservoir.

"Now that it's fixed, the rains hopefully are going to come. It will get filled up this year. It will be a great year for a banner water year. We'll have a lot more reliability," Sandkulla said.

The dam was built with a bigger base and a bigger top. It will allow the SFPUC to raise the dam many more feet and store more water due in there is ever a need to survive through a drought. When full, it will hold roughly 30 billion gallons of water.

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New South Bay Dam Could Save Lives

KQED Science | September 21, 2018 | Brian Watt



A photo of the new Calaveras Dam, which sits near the Santa Clara-Alameda county line. (San Francisco Public Utilities Commission)

Residents in the city of Fremont face one less threat from a big earthquake today, with the opening of the new dam at the Calaveras Reservoir.

Fifteen years ago, engineers realized the 93-year-old dam could fail in a major earthquake, sending a gush of water onto nearly a quarter-million people living downstream. Today, the reservoir, which sits near the Santa Clara-Alameda county line, has a new, 220-foot-high dam that can withstand a 7.2 magnitude earthquake.

For more on the new dam, KQED's Brian Watt spoke with Paul Rogers, managing editor at KQED Science and environmental writer at Mercury News.

Brian Watt: Can you tell us why this dam needed to be done?

Paul Rogers: Yeah, you know, this reservoir, Calaveras Reservoir, it kind of is hidden. It sits back in the hills behind I-680 in a rural area near the Alameda-Santa Clara County line, and it's been there since 1925. About 15 years ago, state engineers realized it wasn't really up to modern earthquake standards and that if a big quake happened on the Calaveras Fault, which literally runs right through the middle of the reservoir, it could break the dam and send a 30-foot-high wall of water into downtown Fremont.

Q: So when you decide to rebuild something like this, it strikes me as the kind of project that is a lot more involved than maybe you know at the outset.

Paul Rogers: Absolutely. It's like buying an old house, and you start to go into the walls and you realize there's dry rot and all sorts of problems there. The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, which owns this dam and the Hetch Hetchy System, they thought this project to replace the dam was going to be done three years ago. They thought it was going to cost \$400 million. It's ended up being three years late and costing \$800 million, and it wasn't really their fault. They found all of these ancient landslides and other just pieces of a geologic layer cake out there in the mountains when they started to dig away.



Q: So we're talking about fossils?

Paul Rogers: Well, there were all sorts of cool faults and things like that, which ended up being a problem for them, but there were also amazing fossils, like shark teeth from 50-foot-long megalodon sharks 20 million years ago that used to swim around here. They found 20 whale skulls. They found fossilized palm trees. All sorts of amazing stuff which is now up at the UC Berkeley Museum of Paleontology.

Q: Can you put this dam rebuilding in the context of all that is happening in the San Francisco Bay Area to shore up the water supply system?

Paul Rogers: Sure. After the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake, a lot of people were really worried that we had a pretty old water system in the Bay Area, and particularly the Hetch Hetchy System, which serves 2.7 million people in four counties, that a big quake like Loma Prieta could cut off water supply to large sections of the Bay Area for up to 60 days. So the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission went to the people in 2002. There was a vote. The voters agreed to triple their water bills, essentially, and do a \$5 billion upgrade,

that's billion with a B, of the water system all throughout the Bay Area. They've done almost all of that work. It's more than 80 projects. They built a tunnel under the Bay to move water, they've

upgraded not wastewater, but regular drinking water treatment plants, all sorts of cool projects, and this Calaveras project is the biggest final piece of all that.

Q: So this sounds a little bit like going to the dentist. You don't want to do it, it's expensive, but you kind of know you have to do it. You have to push through it.

Paul Rogers: Absolutely. You have to suffer, you have to pay the bill, and in this case, it means we'll have a more reliable water supply for the next hundred years.

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New Calaveras Dam to safeguard water supply even after earthquakes

ABC 7 News | September 21, 2018 | David Louie

SUNOL, Calif. (KGO) -- A major milestone has been reached in the East Bay to protect drinking water supplies in the event of a major earthquake. A new dam has been completed at the Calaveras Reservoir, east of Interstate 680 in the Sunol area.

Calaveras is one of five Bay Area reservoirs that supplies drinking water to 2.7 million customers in four Bay Area counties. It's also the largest.

However, its capacity has been reduced to 40 percent due to the existing dam's seismic vulnerability.

The Calaveras Fault runs within 1,500 feet of the reservoir, and the 93-year-old dam was deemed unsafe.

A new dam has been under construction for the past two years and has now reached its full height of 775 feet. It's designed to withstand a 7.25-magnitude earthquake.

"An earthen dam like this actually has the ability to wiggle a little bit so that if there is shaking, it won't fracture because of the alignment of the fault, it should be in good shape following a really major earthquake here on the Calaveras Fault," said Steven Ritchie, Assistant General Manager of Water for the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission.

The project ran into delays and major cost overruns because of ancient landslides discovered on the site that required extensive fill work to stabilize. That doubled the cost of the dam to \$823 million.

A lot of material had to be moved around to create the new dam and the environs -- enough material that it would actually fill Levi's Stadium four times.

Now that the dam is completed, the reservoir can be filled to capacity for the first time in 15 years. It promises reliability to millions of customers if Hetch Hetchy water from the Sierra is interrupted. The dam was also built wide at the base so that in future years, it can be built higher to expand storage capacity if needed.

The new Calaveras Dam is just part of \$4.8 billion being spent on repairing, upgrading and making safer the Hetch Hetchy system. The goal of these projects is to restore water service to 70 percent of Hetch Hetchy customers within 24 hours after a major earthquake.

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Time lapse video: See a 220-foot Calaveras Dam go up in 1 minute
East Bay Times | September 21, 2018 | Paul Rogers



[Click here](#) for the timelapse

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Construction crews this week finished building Calaveras Dam, a 220-foot high structure at Calaveras Reservoir on the Alameda-Santa Clara County line. The \$823 million project is the largest dam built in the San Francisco Bay Area in 20 years.

The first 42 seconds of the video shows the old dam, which was built in 1925, in the background as the new dam is constructed in the foreground over a six-year period from 2012 to 2018. The old dam, which was seismically unsafe, will be mostly left in place, with a large notch carved in the middle to allow the reservoir water to pass through it.

The final 38 seconds of the video is the same project, shot from a different angle, showing the hillside being carved away and the dam's new spillway being built. More than 12 million cubic yards of dirt and rock was moved in the project — enough to fill the San Francisco 49ers Levi's Stadium four times.

The entire project is part of a \$4.8 billion earthquake upgrade that state lawmakers ordered in 2002 for the Hetch Hetchy water system, which serves 2.7 million Bay Area residents.

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Construction of New East Bay Dam Wraps Up

KPIX 5 | September 21, 2018 | Don Ford

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Construction of the Calaveras Dam, seven years in the making, has just been completed. Don Ford reports. (9-21-18)

[Click here](#) to watch video

Or go to <http://bawasca.org/about/board/agendas/> October 10, 2018 Correspondence

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Builders Celebrate Milestone in New Calaveras Dam Construction

KCBS Radio: On-Demand | September 21, 2018

Construction on the largest dam built in the Bay Area in 20 years is nearing completion after the earth and rock structure has reached its full height. KCBS Radio reporter Keith Menconi was on hand for a Friday ribbon cutting ceremony celebrating the milestone.



[Click here](#) to listen

Or go to <http://bawsca.org/about/board/agendas/> October 10, 2018 Correspondence

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Feinstein urges voluntary water agreements ahead of vote by State Water Board

Modesto Bee | September 25, 2018 | Ken Carlson

Sen. Dianne Feinstein and some state representatives in the Bay Area are calling for voluntary settlement agreements, rather than a State Water Board proposal, to bolster the salmon population in tributaries of the San Joaquin River.

In a letter Friday to water board chairwoman Felicia Marcus, Feinstein said a voluntary settlement will achieve more in restoring fish in the Tuolumne, Stanislaus and Merced rivers.

The water board is slated for a Nov. 7 vote on a Bay-Delta water quality update, which would require 40 percent runoff from the watersheds to remain in the rivers to revive chinook salmon migrations through the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Approval of the flow requirement is expected to trigger lawsuits by irrigation districts in Stanislaus and Merced counties and southern San Joaquin County.

Opponents predict the flow regime will have serious economic impacts in the Northern San Joaquin Valley. More severe water rationing in dry years and rate increases are predicted for Bay Area cities that rely on water from Hetch Hetchy Reservoir on the upper Tuolumne River.

“We are concerned that the board’s proposal would drastically reduce the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission’s ability to provide water to meet the basic needs of 2.7 million people in the Bay Area,” state Sen. Scott Wiener wrote in a letter last month also signed by assemblymen Phil Ting and David Chiu. All three are Democrats from San Francisco.

They urged the board to postpone a vote until agreements are negotiated with the San Francisco PUC and Modesto and Turlock irrigation districts. The three agencies say their alternative plan would more quickly restore the salmon fishery and yield better outcomes for the environment.

Feinstein wrote that a voluntary settlement would bring substantial funding from the water districts for science and restoration work. “I believe a voluntary settlement ... will accomplish more in fishery restoration over the next decade than a flows objective dictated from Sacramento,” the senator wrote.

Leaders of Modesto and Turlock irrigation districts have said the state board has ignored their plan for well-timed flows, habitat restoration and control of nonnative bass that prey on young salmon. District-funded studies on the Tuolumne found that predation eliminates more than 90 percent of juvenile salmon before they can reach the lower San Joaquin River and delta.

With the districts’ approach, more water would remain in reservoirs for agriculture, city customers and other needs.

An MID spokeswoman said the districts are active participants in discussions with the state. “Senator Feinstein’s letter adds to the growing list of elected officials that are encouraging the parties to seek a voluntary agreement and further bolsters the district’s position that a comprehensive, science-based approach is vital to meet the fishery goals set by the state,” the MID said.

The State Water Board has expressed concern the salmon population is in serious decline. About 70,000 fall-run adults returned to spawn in the San Joaquin tributaries in 1984, but the number was just 8,000 in 2014.

A state report in 2010 concluded that 60 percent flows in the San Joaquin tributaries from February through June would support native fish species in the delta. In setting the flow standards, the State Water Board is obligated to protect the beneficial uses that rely on water including cities, agriculture, industry and the environment.

According to a statement from the State Water Board, the settlement talks are confidential and conducted with the state's Natural Resources Agency. "The board feels that voluntary settlements can provide the most durable and effective ways to protect fish and wildlife at the least water cost to water users," the statement said.

The proposed delta plan update is structured to provide a discount on flows to water districts that come up with significant proposals, the board said. River flows could be reduced to 30 percent or raised to 50 percent, depending on whether goals are met for doubling the salmon population.

The water board's statement cited the Yuba Accord, a product of protracted litigation, as a robust agreement that balanced the needs of fish and wildlife, water districts, agriculture and electrical power generation on the Yuba River.

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Water-year whiplash: on heels of below-average rain and snow, expect wet or dry extremes

Union Democrat | October 1, 2018 | Guy McCarthy

“Dry, Hot, and On Fire” is how state water authorities are describing the water year that ended Sunday, and outlooks for the 2018-19 season come laden with concerns about post-fire erosion in recently burned areas, including the Donnell Fire burn in the Middle Fork Stanislaus watershed.

For watersheds in Calaveras and Tuolumne counties, including the Stanislaus and Tuolumne watersheds, precipitation for the 2018 water year totaled 29.7 inches, more than 10 inches below the 1966-2015 average of 40.2 inches.

It's too early to predict how the 2018-19 water year will unfold. Forecasters with the state Department of Water Resources this week say people in the Central Sierra and the rest of California should prepare for both possibilities: a wet year or a dry year.

Statewide, the 2018 water year was a return to dry conditions and it came on the heels of California's second-wettest year on record. The 2017 water year ended a five-year drought period and storage from 2017 helped ease shortage concerns over the past 12 months.

The last significant rains in the Mother Lode came more than five months ago, before April 15, and as of Monday, most major reservoirs in Calaveras and Tuolumne county watersheds were still more than half full.

New Hogan on the Calaveras River was 51 percent full with 162,112 acre-feet impounded. On the Middle Fork Stanislaus River, Donnell Reservoir was 78 percent full with 50,434 acre-feet, Beardsley was 36 percent full with 35,316 acre-feet, New Melones was 74 percent full with more than 1.7 million acre-feet, and Tulloch was 90 percent full with 60,224 acre-feet.

On the Tuolumne River, Hetch Hetchy Reservoir in Yosemite was 82 percent full last week with 295,336 acre-feet, and Don Pedro Reservoir was also 74 percent full with more than 1.5 million acre-feet.

Lyons and Pinecrest reservoirs, principal storage facilities for Tuolumne Utilities District, are at normal levels for this time of year, said Lisa Westbrook of TUD public affairs. Lyons was holding 70 percent of its average, 1,500 acre-feet, and it's expected to rise to 100 percent of average by Dec. 31. Pinecrest was holding 12,900 acre-feet, which is 100 percent of its average.

One acre-foot of water is enough to flood a typical American football field 12 inches deep.

Before the current devastating fire season kicked into gear, April 1 statewide snowpack measurements showed just 58 percent of average, far less than 159 percent of average on the same date in 2017.

Department of Water Resources staff say water year 2018 illustrates how California is transitioning to a warmer climate and record-breaking wildfires. At the same time, the past 12 months included incidents of significant precipitation.

A March 22 storm dumped more than 8 inches near Groveland and 5 inches at Priest Reservoir above Moccasin. Runoff tore up businesses, utility infrastructure and Mary Laveroni Community Park in Groveland, it overwhelmed Moccasin Dam and the state's Moccasin Creek Hatchery, it

tore out sections of Highways 49 and 132, and two people died in storm-related incidents in Mariposa County.

That was followed by an atmospheric river event in April that brought new records for precipitation and produced the 10th largest flood on the Merced River in Yosemite National Park.

“The recent record-breaking drought was followed by the second-wettest year on record in 2017, followed by another dry year,” Karla Nemeth, the director of the state Department of Water Resources, said in a statement Monday. “Climate change models predict extreme variability in precipitation to be the new norm, which requires us to be ever more vigilant in our flood and drought preparedness.”

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Contact Guy McCarthy at gmccarthy@uniondemocrat.com or 588-4585. Follow him on Twitter at [@GuyMcCarthy](https://twitter.com/GuyMcCarthy).

Proposition 3 will pay for a multitude of water needs

Sacramento Bee | October 1, 2018 | Jerry Meral

California needs clean, safe and reliable water supplies. We also would greatly benefit from the improved flood management Proposition 3 would provide.

The measure on the Nov. 6 ballot includes \$400 million to implement the Central Valley Flood Control Plan and repair Oroville Dam. Climate change is worsening the threat of floods. Sacramento is the nation's second most flood-prone city after New Orleans. We need all the help we can get to improve our levees, widen the floodplain to accommodate higher Sacramento River flows and improve and repair upstream flood control dams such as Oroville.

Providing clean water for disadvantaged communities is a high priority for California. It is hard to imagine that in our wealthy state there are hundreds of thousands of people who do not have safe drinking water. Proposition 3 provides \$750 million to provide safe drinking water to these communities.

By providing year-round water, Proposition 3 helps prepare our region from inevitable droughts, made worse by climate change. Our Sierra watersheds are being devastated by wildfire and climate change. Proposition 3 includes hundreds of millions of dollars to restore watersheds, improve the quality and quantity of watershed runoff and prepare and recover from fires.

Proposition 3 includes \$30 million to make badly needed improvements along the American River Parkway. Invasive plants are crowding out native plants, increasing fire danger. The walking and biking path needs repairs. Access should be improved, and damage caused by homeless encampments needs to be repaired.

The salmon and steelhead populations of the Sacramento and American rivers are a local treasure. Prop. 3 provides hundreds of millions of dollars to boost their populations.

There is a highly innovative proposal to use wastewater to recharge groundwater in the agricultural area in southern Sacramento County. Proposition 3 includes more than \$1 billion that could be used for this important project.

With all these needs, it is fortunate that the state's economy allows us to approve a new water bond. The general fund is enjoying a major surplus, and only a few new state bonds have been approved in the last 10 years. As a bond, Proposition 3 does not increase taxes.

None of the funds in Proposition 3 can be used to build or operate the controversial Delta tunnels, or to increase water exports to Southern California. The people and environment of the Sacramento region will greatly benefit with the passage of Proposition 3.

The measure has broad support from such diverse groups as National Wildlife Federation, California Chamber of Commerce, the Planning and Conservation League, Agricultural Council of California, Community Water Center and hundreds of others. Locally, the American River Parkway Foundation, American River Conservancy, Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency and the Sacramento Urban Streams Council also urge voters to support Proposition 3.

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Jerry Meral is California water program director for the Natural Heritage Institute and the main proponent of Proposition 3. He can be contacted at jerrymeral@gmail.com.

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Prop. 3 promises more California water projects. Too bad so many are the wrong projects

Sacramento Bee | September 24, 2018 | Sacramento Bee Editorial Board

We must do more to protect the future of California's water, but that doesn't mean just pumping in more money without making sure the investments will have widespread benefits for the public.

Proposition 3 – the \$8.9 billion bond on the Nov. 6 ballot – fails that test. Voters should say “no.”

The measure promises money for quite a few local agencies, nonprofits, private water companies and others, which is great for them. It's not clear, however, that these are the projects that California needs most right now, or that they couldn't get the money elsewhere.

For example, clean drinking water is an urgent issue, with more than 1 million Californians potentially exposed to unsafe water. But Proposition 3 isn't the solution. Only \$750 million is specifically aimed at safe drinking water and wastewater disposal in poor communities, mainly in the Central Valley.

Another big strike against Proposition 3: It doesn't call for as much oversight as many previous statewide water bond issues.

For instance, the California Water Commission required storage projects seeking money from Proposition 1, the \$7.5 billion water bond approved in 2014, to prove they had public benefits, such as flood control, recreation and environmental improvements. While supporters of the Sites reservoir and other projects chafed, it made their proposals stronger.

By contrast, the Proposition 3 money would continuously flow into more than a dozen different state departments, which would pass on the dollars in the form of grants, according to the independent Legislative Analyst's Office.

Opponents, led by the Sierra Club, make a compelling case that Proposition 3 amounts to “pay to play.” Some beneficiaries – including a who's who of agriculture companies and trade associations – are the biggest contributors to “yes” campaign committees, which have raised well more than \$4 million so far.

And although he isn't publicizing his opposition, Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon is among the critics of Proposition 3 because of what his office calls a lack of oversight, an absence of statewide priorities and a surplus of special interest projects for Central Valley agriculture.

Besides the bonds, the measure also would directly benefit the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, the Contra Costa Water District, the San Luis and Delta Mendota Water Authority and the state Department of Water Resources by giving them state cap-and-trade revenue to offset higher electricity costs. The LAO says that could total tens of millions of dollars a year.

Since 2000, voters have approved about \$31 billion in general obligation bonds for water and environmental projects, the LAO says. As of June, about one-third was still available, including \$4 billion that was in Proposition 68, approved by voters in June and put together by the Legislature after public hearings.

Proposition 3 would authorize general obligation bonds that would be repaid out of the state's general fund. If all the bonds are sold, it would take an average of \$430 million a year for 40 years to pay them off. Gov. Jerry Brown, who has made it a priority to reduce the state's debt and put money into reserves to prepare for the next recession, is staying neutral on this measure.

Jerry Meral, a former Brown administration water official, crafted Proposition 3. He says Proposition 68 didn't go far enough, and says that opponents are trying to pit agriculture against urban water users and environmental groups.

The measure divides the money into six major categories: watersheds and water quality; water supply; fish and wildlife habitat; water infrastructure; groundwater; and flood protection. There are important projects on the list, including \$750 million to repair the federal Madera and Friant-Kern canals, so it's understandable why many Central Valley groups back Proposition 3.

But this is not how water spending should be done in California. While the state's water politics and finances are immensely complicated, they come down to who pays and who benefits.

On Proposition 3, all taxpayers would have to repay the bonds. But the list of beneficiaries is far smaller – not enough to deserve voters' support.

#

Economic Analysis Shows Value of Investing in WaterFix: California Water Users Will See Benefits Far Exceeding Costs, DWR Reports

Sierra Sun Times | September 23, 2018 | DWR

September 23, 2018 - SACRAMENTO – Last week, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) released a Benefit-Cost Analysis for California WaterFix by Dr. David Sunding, a professor of natural resource economics at UC Berkeley, that finds WaterFix could bring billions of dollars in benefits to Californians who obtain their water from participating State Water Project (SWP) contractors. These benefits include improved water quality, more reliable water supplies, enhanced disaster preparedness, and climate change resilience.

“The analysis described in this report demonstrates that investment in the California WaterFix results in positive net benefits for the SWP urban and agricultural contractors,” Sunding wrote in the report prepared for DWR.

The economic analysis summarized in the report goes beyond what is legally required for WaterFix and is consistent with methods described in the department’s “Economic Analysis Guidebook.”

The analysis concludes that the WaterFix benefits to SWP water agencies are substantial. SWP urban agencies could see about \$3.1 billion in net benefits. SWP agricultural agencies could see about \$400 million in net benefits.

“Without WaterFix, State Water Project contractors will see the continued deterioration of their water supply reliability,” Sunding said. “This analysis shows there is substantial benefit for both urban and agricultural water users throughout the state, and that the project will be more affordable for consumers than local alternatives such as desalination and recycling.” He added that the analysis also indicates that “CVP south of Delta contractors would realize positive net benefits were they to utilize and pay for access to the new north Delta conveyance facilities.”

The report compared the benefits and costs of WaterFix in relation to what would likely occur if WaterFix were not built, including further restrictions on existing SWP and CVP operations designed to minimize harmful reverse flows and protect species.

A notable feature of the report is that it monetizes the cost of climate change impacts and the benefits of offsetting those impacts. “WaterFix helps mitigate the impacts of climate change on the state’s water supply system,” Sunding said. “This feature of the WaterFix alone is worth several billion dollars and is an important rationale for implementing the project.”

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The economic analysis is available [here](#). More on California WaterFix is available [here](#).

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Officials kick off Prop. 3 campaign

The Sentinel | September 22, 2018 | Julissa Zavala

FRIANT — Central Valley leaders from both sides of the aisle gathered Thursday near the Friant-Kern Canal to kick off the “Yes on Proposition 3” campaign.

Proposition 3 is an \$8.8 billion water bond initiative that dedicates funds for projects in the areas of infrastructure repair and long-term drought relief.

The measure, called the Water Supply and Water Quality Act of 2018, would fund new technologies for local water supply such as water reuse and storm water capture, safe water for disadvantaged communities, watershed restoration, fish and wildlife protection, sustainable groundwater management and repair of existing dams and canals.

Proponents of the bipartisan effort say the statewide water bond would benefit every region of California.

“Prop. 3 goes a long way in fixing our state’s water system,” Congressman Jim Costa (D-Fresno) said, adding the measure would be an investment in the future of the state.

Prop. 3 benefits for the Central Valley include:

- \$500 million for safe drinking water
- \$250 million for wastewater treatment for disadvantaged communities
- \$50 million for agriculture water conservation
- \$200 million for Sierra Nevada watershed restoration
- \$100 million into Central Valley flood management and flood-plain restoration
- \$750 million for San Joaquin Valley water conveyance improvements — including Friant-Kern Canal and Madera Canal repairs

Officials and representatives from the cities of Fresno, Kingsburg, Parlier, Farmersville, Firebaugh and other agencies attended the kickoff campaign.

Congressman David Valadao (R-Hanford) said the Central Valley has been left out of too many bonds for far too long. He said he is supporting Prop. 3 because it actually delivers direct money for the Valley without the Sacramento bureaucracy involved.

Valadao pointed out the \$750 million for improvements to the Friant-Kern Canal as an important factor to continue delivering water south to all the rural communities along the east side of the Valley.

“This is a critical investment for the future of our economy and farming communities,” Valadao said.

“Prop. 3 is good for the whole state,” Senator Andy Vidak (R-Hanford) said. “Water is the critical lifeblood of everything we do. Without water you don’t have anything.”

Vidak said the proposition is not just about water, but about human health, the environment and jobs. Along with being able to get water down to the south Valley to recharge basins in southern Tulare and Kern counties, he said the most important thing the bond could do is bring safe and clean drinking water to disadvantaged communities.

“We’re the richest state in the union and yet we have Third World water systems for so many of our people,” Vidak said. “It just breaks my heart.”

Bruce Blayney, mayor pro tem for the nearby city of Kingsburg, attended the event to show his support for the campaign because he believes it’s the right thing to do for the people of the Central Valley. He said he likes Prop. 3 because it was drafted by non-governmental entities and bypasses any bureaucracy, with funds going directly to the proper sources.

“Water is vital to not only the eastside cities, such as Kingsburg or Parlier, but it’s water to [agriculture] and the Valley.” Blayney said. “We are still an ag economy and that’s what it’s all about.”

Blayney is especially concerned about the Friant-Kern Canal, which he said is critical water conveyance.

“If it doesn’t continue to function and function well, we will lose our capacity to manage the water that we have,” Blayney said.

California residents will vote on Prop. 3 during the Nov. 6 general election.

#

Congressman Garamendi Asserts Delta Tunnels LOI is Dishonest in Letter to EPA

YubaNet.com | September 20, 2018 | Restore the Delta

September 20, 2018 – Congressman John Garamendi (D-CA 3rd District) recently sent a letter to Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator, Andrew Wheeler describing the “misrepresentations” present in the Delta Conveyance Finance Authority (DCFA) Letter of Interest (LOI) for the Delta Tunnels project, formally known as the California WaterFix.

The Congressman’s letter asserts that the WaterFix LOI overestimates the amount of jobs the tunnels project would create, does not address the lack of federal participation in the project, and misrepresents the status of essential permits and environmental reviews for the project. Congressman Garamendi concludes his letter noting that the Delta tunnels project has already “bilked” the public, as evidenced by state and federal audits published last fall.

Osha Meserve, counsel for local farming and environmental groups with serious concerns about the Delta Tunnels project, said, “Congressman Garamendi has identified several major flaws in Letter of Interest submitted by the nascent Delta Conveyance Finance Authority for billions in WIFIA loans. The material misrepresentations by the Finance Authority regarding the status of the Delta Tunnels’ permitting and environmental review are alarming and irresponsible. The EPA, which administers the WIFIA loan program, has expressed ongoing concerns about the project’s negative effects on Delta water quality due to reductions in freshwater flows, and those concerns have still not been addressed. This environmentally damaging project should not receive federal assistance.”

Executive Director of Restore the Delta, Barbara Barrigan-Parrilla said, “We are grateful to Congressman John Garamendi for sending his letter to the Federal EPA regarding the WIFIA loan Letter of Interest submitted by the Delta Conveyance Finance Authority, the finance joint powers authority for WaterFix. The DCFA’s LOI, prepared not by their own executive officer, but instead by Brent Walthall, assistant general manager for Kern County Water Agency, was riddled with errors and misstatements. In fact, at the last DCFA meeting on August 16, the LOI was not included in the board packet or made available to the public as part of the DCFA’s board packet. We learned of Mr. Walthall’s preparation of the document when he claimed responsibility for its preparation as questions arose during the meeting. This certainly was not a credible launch for the DCFA.”

“An additional glaring error made in the WIFIA loan LOI not mentioned in Congressman Garamendi’s letter is that it claims that water diversions from the tunnels would benefit economically distressed communities in the South San Joaquin Valley. However, as demonstrated in our recently released report, “The Fate of the Delta,” Stockton has more residents (percentage-wise) living in economic distress of any major city in California, and will be burdened with degraded water quality for economic, environmental, and human use, as a result of the tunnels project.

“The WIFIA LOI is not an honest document. It fails to acknowledge that the Delta Tunnels would sacrifice Delta environmental justice communities to allegedly help other communities. In fact, the Delta Tunnels fail to provide environmental justice protections for the entire state and would saddle environmental justice communities hoping to receive water from the project with enormous debts they can’t afford without improving their water supplies.”

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