



As Delivered to Commission

Gustav Larsson, Vice Chair of BAWSCA's Board of Directors, Says BAWSCA Strongly Supports a Tuolumne River Voluntary Agreement, Based on the Science-based Tuolumne River Management Plan, to Protect Fish and the Water Supply for BAWSCA's Constituents

November 30, 2020

Good afternoon President Maxwell and Commissioners. My name is Gustav Larsson. I currently serve as BAWSCA's Board Vice-Chair.

Both legally and contractually, San Francisco has an obligation to provide a reliable supply of high-quality water at a fair price to the BAWSCA member agencies and their customers. Additionally, SFPUC is required by California law to identify and notify the State every year of "new sources of water" for the customers it serves.

Unfortunately, the Bay Delta Plan developed and adopted by the State Water Resources Control Board would seriously reduce water supply during droughts for 1.9 million residents, 40,000 businesses and community agencies in Alameda, San Mateo, and Santa Clara counties, whose water interests BAWSCA represents under state law.

If implemented, the State Board's adopted plan could threaten jobs, delay community development, and thwart new housing construction. Communities will suffer if there is not enough water for fully operational businesses and public institutions.

BAWSCA understands the value of the Bay-Delta ecosystem and that the status quo is not sustainable. For this reason, we are working alongside the SFPUC to protect water quality in the Bay-Delta for humans, fish and wildlife.

BAWSCA strongly supports a Tuolumne River Voluntary Agreement (TRVA) based on the Tuolumne River Management Plan, which is a science-based alternative developed by the Modesto and Turlock Irrigation Districts in coordination with the SFPUC. The TRVA strikes a responsible and sustainable balance between water supply reliability and increased young salmon populations in the Tuolumne River.

The TRVA provides a path forward to avoid a potential regulatory stalemate and continued litigation that could prove contentious, expensive, and lengthy. BAWSCA believes that the TRVA is a platform for serious and responsible negotiations to reach a good settlement. Thank you.

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As Delivered to Commission

Statement by Alison Cormack, BAWSCA Director and Palo Alto City Council Member, Says a Tuolumne River Voluntary Agreement Based on the Science-based Tuolumne River Management Plan Will Provide More Water for Fish in the River and Protect the Water Supply for Residents, Businesses and Communities

November 30, 2020

Good afternoon President Maxwell and members of the Commission. My name is Alison Cormack.

It is a privilege for me as a Member of the Palo Alto City Council and as a Director of the Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency to speak with you briefly today about a shared and better future for the Tuolumne River.

While I am not a water expert, I have a background in business, and appreciate the multiple challenges that this water-supply issue must address simultaneously: to maintain needed water for our residents, businesses, and communities, and to create a better environment for fish and other wildlife in and near the River.

I am interested and involved in a variety of environmental issues confronting our communities and am a firm believer in solving them in partnership with others in our region. I am specifically concerned about climate change -- how our physical infrastructure will need to change and the significant impact it will have on our water supplies.

Issues related to the Tuolumne River are clearly both historic and strategic at their core, and the best way to solve them is with a voluntary agreement. There already is one proposed for the Tuolumne River, the Tuolumne River Voluntary Agreement (TRVA), based on the science in the Tuolumne River Management Plan, prepared by the Modesto and Turlock Irrigation Districts and you, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, each of which has long-term water rights on the River. The TRVA is ready to go and will improve the habitat for salmonids.

Voluntary agreements are supported by Governor Newsom for California's many water issues and also by Felicia Marcus, former Chair of the State Water Resources Control Board and currently a Visiting Fellow at Stanford University. A voluntary agreement will be much better and ultimately more acceptable than a forced legal resolution for all who rely on the Tuolumne River. This is actually an opportunity to lead the way in California, since we are far from the only region in the state that faces this issue.

How to share the water is clearly a challenging problem, and the proposed TRVA is a cooperative, strategic, and science-based plan that is ready to go. If the voluntary agreement needs more improvements, by all means let's consider them and get going.

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Statement from Nicole Sandkulla, Chief Executive Officer, to the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC), About San Francisco's Obligations to Provide a Reliable Supply of High Quality Water at a Fair Price to its Wholesale Customers in Alameda, San Mateo, and Santa Clara Counties

November 30, 2020

San Francisco has existing legal and contractual obligations to provide a reliable supply of high-quality water at a fair price to the BAWSCA member agencies and their customers.

In 2018, the State Water Resources Control Board adopted the Bay Delta Plan. If implemented, this Plan would unacceptably reduce the water supply available to the 1.9 million residents, more than 40,000 businesses, and hundreds of communities, including most of Silicon Valley, in the three counties that rely on water from the Hetch Hetchy System and whose water interests BAWSCA represents under state law.

The SFPUC has estimated that the adopted Bay Delta Plan could result in a loss of 90 million gallons per day of water. It could require a 50% reduction of water for residents in BAWSCA's service area and corresponding reductions for businesses and community agencies that support them.

Losing that much supply would severely impact people, businesses, and communities that rely on the System. Furthermore, the SFPUC must make a decision by 2028 about permanent customer status for San Jose and Santa Clara.

California law requires the SFPUC to identify and notify the State every year of "new sources of water" for the customers it serves. Given the uncertainties with the reliability of the existing system due to the Bay Delta Plan and other issues, BAWSCA has supported and the SFPUC has initiated, development of a strategic plan to identify and develop new sources of water to meet its legal obligations and to deliver a reliable water supply to its wholesale customers.

BAWSCA has consistently communicated its concerns and provided documentation to the State Water Board about the significant impacts on residents, businesses and community agencies, if the Bay Delta Plan is implemented as adopted.

Instead, BAWSCA strongly supports a Tuolumne River Voluntary Agreement (TRVA) based on the Tuolumne River Management Plan, which is science-based alternative developed by the Modesto and Turlock Irrigation Districts in coordination with the SFPUC, that will meet environmental objectives without endangering the water supply for humans and fish.

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Statement as Delivered from Nicole Sandkulla, Chief Executive Officer, to the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC), Supporting a Tuolumne River Voluntary Agreement Based on the Science-based Tuolumne River Management Plan

November 30, 2020

BAWSCA has been and continues to be actively involved in the scientific work during the development of the SFPUC's proposed Tuolumne River Management Plan (TRMP) and the Tuolumne River Voluntary Agreement (TRVA), both in the State Board and FERC proceedings.

BAWSCA and its member agencies have reviewed both the State Board's Plan and the TRMP, most recently through review of the State and Federal environmental documents. BAWSCA's position is a result of this work and analysis.

Under the State Board's plan, the 1.9 million water users that BAWSCA represents could be forced to reduce average-per-person-per-day water use to 41 gallons a day during a drought, from the recent pre-drought level of 79 gallons per day, and for some people, to 25 gallons per day or less. In their comment letters to the State Board, the BAWSCA agencies cited health and safety concerns from these mandated reductions in their water supply. A community without fully operational businesses, hospitals or public institutions is unsustainable.

BAWSCA has consistently communicated its concerns and provided documentation to the State Board about the significant impacts on residents, businesses and community agencies, if its Plan is implemented as adopted.

As an alternative, the SFPUC has proposed, and BAWSCA supports, a Tuolumne River Voluntary Agreement (TRVA) based on the Tuolumne River Management Plan, which is science-based alternative developed by the Modesto and Turlock Irrigation Districts in coordination with the SFPUC and built on Tuolumne River-specific monitoring, data, and multiple scientific studies.

A voluntary agreement is the best and most durable path forward to provide the desired environmental benefits for fish and other wildlife, while ensuring a reliable water supply that is essential for residents, businesses and community organizations.

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