



Statement from Tom Francis, Acting Chief Executive Officer, Before the State Water Resources Control Board (State Board) in Regards to their “Draft Final Bay-Delta Plan Update,” Which Could Severely Reduce the Water Supply for Residents and Businesses in Alameda, San Mateo, and Santa Clara Counties

August 21-22, 2018

BAWSCA is a state-authorized agency that represents the interests of the 26 water suppliers who purchase two-thirds of the water produced by the San Francisco Regional (Hetch Hetchy) Water System (System), which is operated by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC).

BAWSCA supports the objective of the State Board’s Bay-Delta Plan, opposes the Board’s proposed unilateral Plan for the Tuolumne River, and is encouraged to see the Board defer final action on the Plan as that can give time for a voluntary, negotiated settlement agreement to be reached.

On July 6th, the State Board released its “Draft Final Bay-Delta Plan Update.” If implemented, the Plan’s proposal for 40% unimpaired flow would seriously reduce water supply during the next drought; forcing severe water reductions for the 1.8 million residents, 40,000 businesses and community agencies in Alameda, San Mateo, and Santa Clara counties. Analysis indicates that if that proposal is implemented, BAWSCA member agencies would be required to reduce their water use by as much as 50% during drought years.

BAWSCA member agencies are already low water users. For some, a 50% reduction equates to an average per person water use of 25 gallons per day or less. A severe water cutback could threaten jobs as business activity might be reduced or prevented. Community development might be delayed, and new housing might not be built. A community without enough water for fully operational businesses, hospitals and public institutions is unsustainable.

Fortunately, there is a sound, reasonable alternative to the State Board’s Plan. The SFPUC has proposed, and BAWSCA supports, a science-based alternative that will meet the Board’s environmental objectives without compromising water supply for the current users of the water. BAWSCA believe the SFPUC’s alternative plan can serve as a basis for a negotiated settlement agreement.

BAWSCA appreciates the opportunity to speak today and is pleased that the SWRCB has deferred a decision on the Plan. BAWSCA asks that that deferral continue until a voluntary settlement agreement is negotiated.

#####