



BAWSCA JOINS OTHER WATER AGENCIES IN LEGAL ACTION TO HALT THE STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD (STATE WATER BOARD)'S BAY-DELTA UPDATED PLAN (Plan)

February 13, 2019

BAWSCA filed to intervene in legal action today in Tuolumne County Superior Court “to protect the water interests” of its 26-member water agencies in Alameda, San Mateo and Santa Clara counties against actions adopted in December 2018 by the State Water Board.

BAWSCA joins the City and County of San Francisco, Santa Clara Valley Water District, and other water suppliers with a long list of complaints related to the State Water Board’s recently adopted Plan for the San Francisco Bay-Sacramento San Joaquin Delta Estuary. The Plan includes the Tuolumne River, which is the source of 85 percent of the water for the San Francisco Regional (Hetch Hetchy) Water System (System), which in turn provides two-thirds of the water used by BAWSCA’s agencies.

If implemented, this Plan would significantly reduce the water supply available to the 1.8 million residents, more than 40,000 businesses, including Silicon Valley, and community organizations in the three counties that rely on water from the Hetch Hetchy System. 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 this Plan is adopted.

BAWSCA respects the State Water Board and its Board members and supports the objectives of the Plan. However, BAWSCA cannot support the Plan as adopted. As part of its action last December, the State Water Board expressed its support for ongoing negotiated, voluntary-settlement discussions and indicated its willingness to consider an alternative. However, the success of those negotiations remains unclear at this time. Therefore, BAWSCA must take necessary legal action while it can to protect the interests of the water customers.

Governor Gavin Newsom and former Governor Jerry Brown urged the State Water Board a few months ago to pursue a negotiated voluntary settlement for this challenge of more water at critical times for fish and the environment while protecting the needs of all water users. They were joined in this effort by State Senator Jerry Hill (San Mateo) and Assembly Members Kevin Mullin (San Mateo), and Bill Quirk (Alameda), whose constituents are water customers in the three counties and whose interests BAWSCA represents under California law (AB 2058).

BAWSCA, which the State Legislature authorized to be a water-supply provider, has strongly supported the negotiation of a voluntary settlement agreement. It continues to believe that such an 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.

We will vigorously fight for a reliable high-quality water supply at a fair price that is needed to support more jobs, increased low-cost housing, successful businesses, and public organizations supplying vital human services in the three counties.

BAWSCA recognizes the need for a healthy Bay Delta environment and will continue to support efforts to negotiate a voluntary settlement agreement as the preferred alternative to achieve its objectives and to provide critically necessary water for all the water users it represents.

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