



Statement from Nicole Sandkulla, Chief Executive Officer, About the State Water Resources Control Board (State Board)'s "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

July 18, 2018

Released on July 6th, the State Board's "Draft Final Bay-Delta Plan Update" could seriously reduce water supply during the next drought; forcing severe water reductions for the 1.8 million residents, many of the 30,000 businesses and thousands of community agencies in Alameda, San Mateo, and Santa Clara counties; to provide more water for the environment, including fish.

BAWSCA's analysis of this plan indicates that, if implemented, water users could be required to reduce their average per person water use to 41 gallons a day during a drought, from the recent pre-drought level of 79 gallons per day, and for some water users, to 25 gallons per day or less.

This severe water cutback could also threaten jobs as business activity might be reduced or prevented, and some businesses might have to move elsewhere. Community development might be delayed, and new housing might not be built. A community without enough water for job growth and fully operational businesses, hospitals and public institutions is unsustainable.

The average water use of residents in the three counties at the height of the most-recent drought was 56 gallons per day, one of the lowest levels in California. Obviously, the opportunity for these residents to conserve more water is very limited.

In earlier comments to the State Board on the prior draft plan, 11 of the 26 BAWSCA agencies, which distribute water to users in the three counties specifically cited health and safety concerns from mandated reductions in their water supply. The State Board indicated that it believes this vital water for residents and businesses can be easily replaced. But no replacement supply exists or can be identified for this amount of water.

Fortunately, there is a good, reasonable alternative to the State Board's plan that could provide adequate water for people and businesses, as well as for wildlife and the environment without draconian reduction measures. That alternative is a negotiated settlement of the water issues. This alternative has been recommended to the State Board by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, which operates the Bay Area Regional Water System, and by other water providers in the area.

From the beginning of the State Board's process, Governor Brown also has supported a negotiated settlement to resolve the issues. A voluntary settlement agreement would be the most logical, helpful, and responsible way to proceed, rather than a unilateral order from the State Board.

BAWSCA supports the objective of the State Board's Bay-Delta Plan, opposes the Board's proposed unilateral Plan for the Tuolumne River, and strongly favors the idea of a negotiated settlement.

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