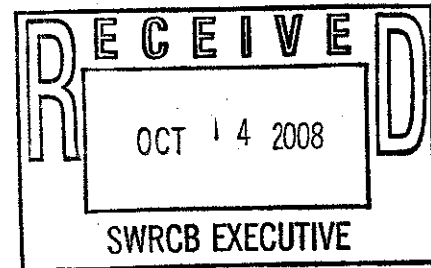




October 14, 2008

Jeanine Townsend  
Clerk to the Board  
Executive Office  
State Water Resources Control Board  
1001 I Street, 24<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95812-0100



Re: Urban Water Conservation Regulatory Program

Dear Chair Doduc and Members of the Board:

The Northern California Golf Association (NCGA) welcomes the opportunity to supply comments to the Board as they contemplate whether or not they should develop a regulatory program to address urban water conservation.

Based on the worksheet that was handed out in the breakout sessions, the NCGA has these comments based on the three questions.

- 1) **Are current local and state programs effective in promoting or enforcing water conservation?** In our opinion there is some great work being performed around the state. Is it uniform across the board? No. Local agencies are able to get feedback and buy-in from their constituents. It is not mandated from the state or a state agency.

**What are the problems or weaknesses in the current programs?** The main obstacles are the enforcement of such programs, the lack of education across all ages regarding conservation, and the equipment necessary to achieve some of the conservation goals. Boil that all down to one word – expense. Do the agencies have the funds necessary to provide enforcement? Do various agencies across the cities or region have monies available to conduct a public awareness campaign for water conservation? Are all the agencies offering rebates on toilets, showerheads, smart controllers, etc?

- 2) **What, if any, should the involvement of the Water Boards be with respect to water conservation?** In the opinion of the NCGA, the Water Board should facilitate a public awareness campaign for water conservation and provide funding towards the implementation of urban water conservation measures. NCGA believes that voluntary water conservation should be encouraged and facilitated, and that regulatory enforcement used only as a last resort. The Board casts a large shadow across a number of agencies

and organizations and a consistent message from the Board would have a significant impact in developing a central slogan or campaign for water conservation across the state.

**What is the real need and what problems could the Water Boards potentially help solve?** The real need is accurate and reliable data regarding water use. The State Board needs to work independently or with CUWCC to develop a clearinghouse of information and record keeping. This information should be unbiased and scientifically based to insure validity and transparency. By having this type of information at one location, agencies or cities can determine if their conservation programs are working by comparing the data submitted by cities of similar size. All Board programs should work together to promote the efficient and most effective use of water which includes conservation and water quality parameters (i.e. ocean plan, recycled water policy and a storm water plan that are complimentary to each other). The Water Board has to have the public's trust and best interest as their primary motive. Although positions by agencies or special interest groups should be considered by the Board, final decisions on programs or regulations should be grounded in practicality and the ability to be implemented in a timely manner.

- 3) **If a regulatory approach is needed, how should an Urban Water Conservation Regulatory Program be structured? Water Rights Permit Provisions, Targeted enforcement of waste of unreasonable use, or Prescriptive or Performance-Based urban supplier mandates?** NCGA submits that the State Water Board should not promote a regulatory program regarding urban water conservation. The Board should encourage the urban suppliers to practice the BMP's set forth by CUWCC and should assist or provide funding to implement voluntary water conservation. "One-size-fits-all" prescriptive mandates will not be successful on a state-wide scale until more data and information is developed to assess the technical and financial variability that exists around the state. Performance based programs from the suppliers or agencies will promote creativity and flexibility for the end user and should be encouraged.

Encourage agencies and organizations to be active in water conservation programs at the local level by providing or funding water conservation programs. Local officials have a much greater feel as to what programming efforts are working and their effectiveness.

In conclusion, a state-wide regulatory program implemented by the State Water Board for urban water conservation is not the most effective means to promote water conservation at the state level at this time. Support of existing water conservation efforts by other organizations and agencies is recommended. The State Water Board should consider becoming the champion for a state-wide water conservation public awareness campaign and should be a funding resource.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment,



Mike McCullough  
Director of Environmental and Water Resources  
Northern California Golf Association