



SRWA
STANISLAUS REGIONAL
WATER AUTHORITY

Stanislaus Regional Water Authority

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July 27, 2018

State Water Resources Control Board
Attn: Jeanine Townsend, Clerk to the Board
1001 I Street, 24th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814
Email: LSJR-SD-Comments@waterboards.ca.gov

Dear Ms. Townsend:

The Stanislaus Regional Water Authority (SRWA) was formed in 2011 as a Joint Powers Authority enabling the Cities of Turlock and Ceres to develop a new surface water supply from the Tuolumne River in conjunction with the Turlock Irrigation District (TID). This new Regional Surface Water Supply Project (RSWSP) will operate in a conjunctive use manner that will largely replace the current groundwater supply with higher-quality surface water from the nearby Tuolumne River. Water rights for this new municipal and industrial (M&I) supply are currently held by TID under License 11058, and through Application 14127, TID is seeking a long-term water transfer of 30,000 acre-feet to the SRWA, a new point of re- diversion and purpose of use with the State Board Division of Water Rights.

The comments that follow are being provided on the revisions to the 2016 Draft Amendments (Draft Amendments) that are reflected in Revised Water Quality Control Plan of the Recirculated Substitute Environmental Document (SED). Particularly, the SRWA is concerned with the new and revised flow objectives for the Tuolumne River. Although the SRWA did not submit comments on the Draft Amendments, it supports the Draft Amendment comments provided by TID and the Cities and any comments provided by them on these proposed amendments. SRWA believes these proposed flow objectives will harm TID's water rights that are planned to provide SRWA with surface water for the RSWSP.

Comments on proposed language

The SRWA is not providing herein a technical criticism of the proposed amendments, but as stated above stands with TID in their responses provided in response to this Notice. Rather, the SRWA is focused on a critique of the State Board's manner of soliciting comments and consideration of sound science in settling Tuolumne River flow objectives and efforts to control local water supply planning decisions of Tuolumne River users. Commenters were only provided three weeks to prepare comments and at a very limited scope on Appendix K. Regardless of those constraints, the SRWA does submit specific comments in the following topics:

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Enforcement Powers Pg. 26

In its proposed amendments, the State Board intends to strengthen its enforcement powers by stating that it “will take actions to require implementation of the objectives” rather than to continue, as necessary and appropriate to determine the contributions from water right and permit holders needed to implement the plan. This language sends a strong message that the State Board is no longer willing to work with water rights and permit holders to implement flow criteria that will truly be based on scientific data to achieve the fish and wildlife protection objectives.

State of Emergency Pg. 34

The proposed amendments regarding a state of emergency has been changed to take away a local governing body’s ability to declare an emergency. This deletion strips a local agency utility of its ability to manage emergency situations that may have direct public health implications for its customers. Rather, the proposed language directs the local agency, like the SRWA and Cities to rely on burdensome processes that are completely out of their control. This is clearly one more effort on behalf of the State of California to impede, direct, manage and punish local agencies that have a direct responsibility to their customers health and welfare. This change makes local operational needs even more difficult to manage when faced with additional hurdles to conduct local decisions relative to human health, in favor of environmental priorities.

It is SRWA’s opinion that the proposed amendments will negatively affect SRWA’s efforts to deliver a surface water supply project of regional significance. The RSWSP is a monumental effort by the Cities to bring significant positive improvements in public health, the livability and viability of the region and positive environmental benefit at a significant financial burden on businesses and residents, many of which are economically disadvantaged. In addition, the RSWSP may be the most significant regional effort contemplated in a future Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) in accordance with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) to ensure groundwater management and recovery of the Turlock Groundwater Basin.

The financial investment in the RSWSP is estimated between \$180-\$195 million and will be paid for by the Cities’ customers through established water rates. It is imperative that this investment result in a long term, reliable water source to the Cities.

The SRWA hopes that these comments will be considered in any future decisions of the State Board. We ask that our concerns be heard and considered regarding the proposed new and revised flow objectives for the Tuolumne River and the possible negative consequences to a regionally significant water planning effort. Going forward, we ask that the State Board consider flow objective decisions that will support and not negatively

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impact the SRWA's RSWSP and the health and well being of the partner Cities and the Turlock Groundwater Basin.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Stanislaus Regional Water Authority Board of Directors.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Robert L. Granberg". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Robert L. Granberg, P.E.

General Manager

From: Robert Granberg <granbergassociates@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, July 27, 2018 10:59 AM
To: LSJR-SD-Comments@waterboards.ca.gov; WQCP1Comments
Subject: Comment Letter - Revisions to Proposed Bay-Delta Plan Amendments
Attachments: SRWA Comments - Revisions to Proposed Bay-Delta Plan Amendments rlg 072718.pdf

Categories: Red Category

Dear Ms. Townsend,

Attached are the comments to the Revisions to Proposed Amendments to the Water Quality Control Plan for the SF Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary and Final SED on behalf of the Stanislaus Regional Water Authority.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment.

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