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To: Board@valleywater.org

Cc: "Marcus, Felicia@Waterboards" <Felicia.Marcus@waterboards.ca.gov>

Subject: Participation of SCVWD in CA Water Fix

Honorable Chair Varela and Directors:

I have spent the last 45 years trying to get the SCVWD to rely more on local resources and to protect the GW basin, as our most valuable natural capital.

The existing contracts with the SWP and the CVP create asset inertia, that seems impossible to overcome. We shell out \$40 MILLION a year for those connections, regardless of how much water is delivered to the County.

I have long felt that what we get from the Delta is very poor water quality, which we then have to "renovate" at great cost to render it acceptable drinking water. In times past, that created great health problems for our residence when they were served a carcinogenic stew of trihalomethanes (THMs), haloacetic acids (HAAs), bromate, and chlorite formed by using chlorine as a disinfection agent. We'll be paying more in water rates for switching to the safer alternatives of ozone and UV disinfection.

I envy the quality of EBMUD and SFPUC sources they tap well upstream of the Delta. I applaud the SWRCB for their proposed Bay Delta Water Quality Plan that finally brings them into the solution for protecting the Delta ecosystems.

The hypocrisy of the region's opposition for improving the water pumped from the southern Delta has always bothered me. Contra Costa WD and Napa County both improved their water quality while the CA Water Fix was in process, but there is no other alternative but the upstream diversion point to aid the SWP and CVP users' water quality.

My main concern for SCVWD's participation in the CA Water Fix is the opportunity cost. I have been an advocate for using recycled water for over 45 years. From years of support for importing water from Sierra watersheds, inadvertently, opposition to recycling became part of the culture of the SCVWD. Even with the 40-year agreement with SBWR to implement IPR or DPR finally in place after forty years of effort, the SCVWD is still considering to build or fund other Delta water projects like Los Vaqueros expansion or the new Pacheco Reservoir.

While all these projects are capital-intensive engineered solutions, the staff seems to have completely ignored the available Prop 1 funding available to protect the Coyote Valley GW basin forebay and have yet to seriously discuss applying for any funds to help buy conservation easements on the areas with the highest recharge potential on the Valley floor. Could this be because this "project" has no engineering design fees attached to it and has therefore never become a District priority?

In the big picture, I feel the Delta Islands will not survive sea level rise, so increasing the height of 1100 miles of levees, as the Mercury News advocates, is a waste of money, and the creation of

the islands was the first and greatest stressor of the natural ecosystem. The second greatest stressor was creating a full time fresh water environment with 5 million acre-feet of reservoir releases ("carriage water") to repel the salinity from the daily tidal flows. The native species evolved in a fluctuating salinity environment that no longer exists.

I know that there are claims and counter-claims about what will improve the habitat for the fisheries. I know this is not an exact science, and we have moved somewhat beyond hubris by shifting to the term "adaptive management." Maintaining the status quo is not the answer, although it seems that's what the Delta farmers want. With dual conveyance, we have the better chance to meet the dual goals of ecosystem restoration and water supply reliability. Most urban contractors are honestly and aggressively trying to reduce their reliance on Delta water. I'd like to believe SCVWD belongs in that group.

In summary, I'm not sure I either absolutely support or oppose the CA Water Fix. I do absolutely support more local water recycling, stormwater capture and improved groundwater storage and protection. My fear is that our cost share of the tunnels will reduce our ability to fund the local projects, that should be our first priority.

Thanks for your dedicated service to all the water users of Silicon (Santa Clara) Valley.

Patrick T. Ferraro, retired SCVWD director