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To: California State Water Resources Board

Environmental Justice is a strong concern, and the implementation of the proposed tunnels constitutes a strong violation of Environmental Justice Executive Order 12898. One of the executive orders put forth by President Clinton in February 1994 and reinstated by Pres. Obama, it was all about making sure environmental racism was not tolerated. This was in response to the claim that the underserved and the minority rights were violated when environmental decisions were made detrimental to those minorities living in that area, neighborhood, or county.

And here we go....It is the 22nd anniversary of this Order, and Pres. Obama says he will "...empower those areas most strained by pollution." He uses a broad brush with this order, and in our case, our less advantaged and minorities who make up a great portion of our Delta. The following are why the tunnels are a violation of Environmental Justice—

There will be Increases in lung and breathing ailments such as asthma for vulnerable populations due to increased air pollution related to generators needed to run dewatering pumps paced every 50-75 feet, removing groundwater 24/7 around the perimeter of all construction sites during WaterFix's 14-year construction period. These populations of our neighbors, the farm workers, wear masks on the farms when working; what will they (and we) be wearing/breathing for the next 14 years?

Removal of up to 15,000 cubic feet per second of water (cfs) from the Sacramento River (6,000 cfs at Fremont Weir and 9,000 cfs at three new WaterFix intakes in North Delta) could increase the frequency and duration of blue-green algae bloom in Delta waterways, which would result in people who rely on fishing in Delta as a food source being unable to eat fish they catch —these are our neighbors we house, make a part of our families, and make sure they are kept safe while working on the farms and ranches. You present an environmental justice violation to them and to their food source.

The conversion (permanent and temporary) of approximately 5,500 acres of Important Farmland associated with the construction of water conveyance facilities and borrow, spoils, and much storage areas will preclude future agriculture, resulting in job losses primarily for the low-income Hispanic population in the Delta who are the predominant farm work force. The loss of farmland even for a "temporary" period of the 14-year construction and time it would take to rehabilitate the soils and re-connect irrigation systems will result in permanent loss of workers in the area. Without an existing public transit service available for commuting to jobs outside of the Delta, the loss of near-by jobs would likely force these workers to move in order to find employment: more transiency, more on welfare, children out of school—all from Environmental Injustice.

In conclusion, pollutants selenium and methyl-mercury that are expected, due to less Delta outflow in the Sacramento River, will cause serious health risks for this large population needing the river fish for food.

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Temporarily damaging the environmental conditions and health, with permanent change to living conditions of our Delta Estuary for the population of California who did not plan ahead for life in desert areas, puts our low-income and farm workers into what Environmental Injustice exemplifies. In addition, all of the above health risks are for everyone who lives in the Delta—including those who provide the jobs and sustainable community.

Sincerely, Jane F. Dickson