



Tahoe City
Public Utility District

December 2, 2015



State Water Resources Control Board
Felicia Marcus, Board Chair
1001 I Street, 24th Floor
Sacramento CA 95814

Sent Via email December 2, 2015

Subject: **Comment Letter – Urban Water Conservation Workshop December 7, 2015**

Dear Chair Marcus:

The Tahoe City Public Utility District (TCPUD) submits these comments regarding the SWRCB's consideration of extension and modification of the existing Emergency Regulations for Statewide Urban Water Conservation (Emergency Regulations). These comments address some of the problematic issues we have been experiencing in implementing the current regulations and hope to avoid in establishing on-going regulations.

We urge the SWRCB to recognize that our use of ground water is “in-lieu” of our surface water rights to Lake Tahoe – therefore should be placed at the 4% conservation target for future regulations.

Since the 1990's, TCPUD has chosen to use ground water sources in-lieu of exercising our surface water rights. This avoids significant treatment costs, environmental impacts and increased greenhouse gas emissions, to comply with the surface water treatment rule. Our lake intakes remain operable and can easily be activated. Temporary treatment can be implemented cost effectively and quickly. Our ground water supplies have not significantly declined during the recent drought, and thus we haven't needed to rely on our surface water, but our ability to use Lake Tahoe should be recognized (*see attached letter submitted April of 2015*).

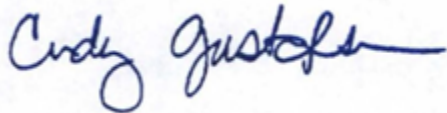
We have received many comments from our customers who realize that the drought's impacts and conservation mandates are not consistent across the State. The majority of our customers also have residences in other areas of the State. They are well-aware of lower conservation mandates based on adequate (4 year) surface water supplies and have questioned us on the regulations we have mandated on them despite the size of Lake Tahoe's reservoir. Overall they have been complying with our conservation regulations, as evidenced by our summer results, but they don't believe that there is a crisis at Lake Tahoe. It is critical that both the State and TCPUD preserve our credibility for times when we may need further conservation. We strongly request that future regulations recognize our surface water rights to Lake Tahoe.

We ask the SWRCB to exclude water used for snow making from a provider's total water production figures as compared to agricultural use in Section 865 [e] (1).

TCPUD feels that water for snowmaking, used on other lands defined in Government Code Section 51201, should be considered for exclusion at some level from a providers total water production figures. The importance and virtually sustainable impacts of snowmaking are highlighted in the Truckee River Operating Agreement (TROA). The identification of snowmaking in TROA and the fact that TROA provides for an 84% allocation credit for water used in snowmaking, support this. In essence, TROA only counts 16% of total water used for snowmaking to be counted towards the allocation targets. The need and quantity of water used for snowmaking varies dramatically from year to year, creating significant concerns when conservation targets are based on specific years. These simple facts, as well as the economic importance of the ski industry to California and Lake Tahoe in particular, highlight the need to consider water used for snowmaking for exclusion from a provider's total water production data.

Please consider these comments as well as those we have submitted jointly with the entire Tahoe-Truckee region. We respectfully ask that you continue to consider the unique factors of our region as you consider future regulations.

Sincerely,



Cindy Gustafson
General Manager

Cc: Senator Gaines
Assembly Member Dahle
Eric Oppenheimer, SWRCB