



December 2, 2015

Jeanine Townsend, Clerk of the Board
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street, 24th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: “Comment Letter – Urban Water Conservation Workshop”

Dear Ms. Townsend:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments regarding potential changes to the Emergency Regulation for Statewide Urban Water Conservation to the State Water Resources Control Board. I appreciate the Board’s efforts to achieve increased water conservation during drought conditions through the current Emergency Regulation.

The current regulation’s focus on achieving the state’s water reduction standards solely through conservation does not allow regional or local water agencies to realize the benefits of their investments in water supply reliability – investments in self-reliance that are consistent with Governor Brown’s Water Action Plan. For example, here in the Bay Area we have supported our water agencies as they have made billions of dollars in investments in projects like the Daly City Recycled Water Project, the Los Vaqueros Reservoir Expansion, and the Silicon Valley Advanced Water Purification Center—each specifically designed to make our region less vulnerable to droughts and devastating water supply cutbacks. However, the current regulations strip away the much of the drought protection these supplies provide by not allowing the region to benefit from these investments. This approach threatens to discourage ratepayers from supporting future water supply investments, stunting California’s ability to meet the needs of its growing population amid a changing and more challenging climate.

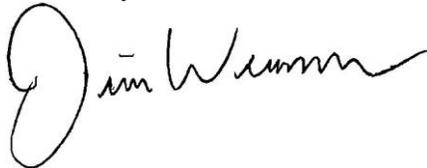
The imposition of demand reduction targets as the state’s primary drought response places California at a competitive disadvantage in terms of business attraction and business expansion. Businesses are unlikely to relocate to, or expand their businesses in California under prolonged water use reduction mandates that ignore the availability of sustainable water supplies to meet our state’s economic needs. These businesses and industries need to be convinced that the state is doing everything in its power to develop new and drought-resilient water supplies to serve their businesses. One of the things the state can do now is amend the regulation to provide credits for new supply development.

The emergency regulation has also contributed to rising water rates for residents and businesses, as local water agencies are forced to meet their revenue requirements on lower sales. With the desired conservation targets already largely met in the state, the

regulation only serves to undermine public support for ongoing conservation and continued investment in sustainable water supplies and infrastructure.

It is critical to maximize the water reliability benefits of drought-resilient and sustainable water supplies. That's why the Bay Area Council supports modifications to the Emergency Regulation to allow water agencies to meet reduction targets through a combination of conservation and sustainable drinking water supplies, such as improved groundwater storage, potable reuse and sustainable transfers of conserved water. This is a more balanced, more flexible approach to drought management will help save water now given our current supply challenge and better prepare California for future droughts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Wunderman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "J".

Jim Wunderman
President & CEO
Bay Area Council