

November 9, 2020

Chair Gloria Gray

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
700 N. Alameda Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Position: SUPPORT

The **Southwest California Legislative Council** is an advocacy coalition comprised of representative members of the Temecula Valley, Murrieta/Wildomar, Lake Elsinore Valley, and Menifee Valley Chambers of Commerce representing more than 3,500 employers dedicated to promoting job growth, economic expansion, and preserving the overall global competitiveness of California. Our businesses and residents rely on water provided by Metropolitan and the State Water Project, our best source of reliable, high-quality and affordable water.

To that end, **SWCLC strongly supports Metropolitan's funding** of the state's environmental review and planning process for the single-tunnel Delta conveyance project. The recommended funding share ensures the environmental review is advanced and necessary planning can proceed.

Metropolitan's tradition of leadership and strong stewardship starts with good planning. Continued investment in the environmental review and planning process for an updated Delta conveyance system ensures this process, which is essential for future decision-making, moves forward in a timely fashion and avoids further costly delays for this critically important project.

Nearly one-third of Southern California's water supply comes from the Sierra Nevada. This resource provides the backbone water supply for about 29 million people statewide, millions of acres of farmland, Southern California's \$1.6 trillion economy and our environment. Modernizing the aging system that delivers this water is vitally important. It will help ensure we are better prepared for the effects of climate change and earthquakes, and bring greater resilience to the Delta waterways and its ecosystem.

This is not an either/or situation; it is a both/and situation. Southern California is working diligently to reduce its reliance on the Delta. The Delta conveyance project is one of many steps we must take to ensure the region's water resiliency. Southern California is doing its part – actively diversifying its portfolio by developing local projects and investing in water efficiency. Still, the success of these local projects, including recycling projects, depends on a reliable supply of the higher quality water from Northern California.

For example, our local groundwater supplies are replenished with imported water – there isn't enough local rainfall to refill the groundwater basins. And recycling water for use again and again requires starting with high-quality source water, like that delivered by the State Water Project, to make it cost-effective. Local projects like *Diamond Valley Lake* and *Lake Skinner* provide valuable local resources, but must continue to be augmented with water delivered by the SWP.

Governor Newsom's Water Resilience Portfolio prioritizes a one-tunnel Delta conveyance system as essential to ensuring reliable water for generations to come. We continue to support efforts that advance this project because Southern California depends on the reliability the proposed Delta project will provide. With our largest and most affordable supply at risk, Metropolitan needs to provide funding now, ensuring the project continues to move forward with needed environmental planning and permitting work so that an informed decision on the project itself can be made in the future.

For these and other reasons, the **Southwest California Legislative Council** urges Metropolitan's Board of Directors to help fund the environmental review and planning process for the project. Making this investment now will avoid costly delays and allow Metropolitan's Board to make an informed decision in the near future on whether to fund construction of the project. With our largest and most affordable supply at risk, we need the reliability the proposed Delta conveyance project will provide. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



Adam A. Ruiz, Chair

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