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July 14, 2014



Ms. Jeanine Townsend
Clerk to the Board
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: 7/15-16/14 BOARD MEETING (Emergency Regulations for Water Conservation)

Dear Ms. Townsend:

The Rancho California Water District (RCWD) Board of Directors reviewed the State Water Resources Control Board's (State Board) **Notice of Proposed Emergency Rulemaking, "Prohibition of Activities and Mandatory Actions During Drought Emergency,"** at its meeting held July 10, 2014 and authorized me to provide comments on a number of issues related to this Proposed Rule. Thank you for the opportunity to provide our comments as follows:

1. The prohibitions in Section X.1 (a) are similar or identical to prohibitions already in effect in the RCWD service area.
2. The text of the Emergency Regulations should clarify in Section X.1 (b) whether the fine, up to \$500/day, included therein may be imposed by the local water purveyor or only by the State Water Board. The regulations are not clear as written with respect to this point.
3. The proposed monthly reporting will be a significant administrative burden. Keep in mind that we have limited staff, as does the State Board, and these staff are engaged in productive activities administering our water use efficiency programs and related grants. In order to better manage this, we suggest the following measures:
 - a. Consider quarterly reporting. During the term of the order, this would result in three (3) quarterly reports versus nine (9) monthly reports.
 - b. Use the same methodology that is already in place for the SB7x7 20x2020 calculations and reporting. Most agency staff would be familiar with this method and would have already developed some of the reporting information protocols internally. An entirely new format would add unnecessary additional work and not result in any greater benefit.

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4. Our Board is concerned that RCWD and its customers' significant and ongoing investment in water use efficiency will not be recognized by the approach the State Board is taking. For example, using a 2013 baseline essentially zeroes out prior efficiency investments and puts us on the same bases as agencies that have done far less up to this point. The example of agencies that do not yet even have meters and/or volumetric water rates was noted. [Should the \$500/day fines be imposed on these water agencies?]. While we understand the urgency of the State Board's action, we must note that future actions or conclusions should not be grounded in this unequal comparison. Demand hardening is a real issue. As agencies install indoor water efficient devices, implement water budget tiered rates, implement model landscape ordinances, and install outdoor irrigation retrofits with smart irrigation timers and efficient spray nozzles, the potential for additional water savings is reduced. This demand hardening results in less future potential water savings when compared to agencies that have done less.
5. The urgency of the Governor's call for voluntary conservation and the State Board's proposed Emergency Regulations provides a striking contrast to the inability of successive administrations to provide viable and durable solutions to the State's water resources needs. We'd like to see similar urgency applied to implementing those solutions.

Sincerely,
RANCHO CALIFORNIA WATER DISTRICT


Matthew G. Stone
General Manager

