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**Public Comment**  
**2016 Bay-Delta Plan Amendment & SED**  
**Deadline: 3/17/17 12:00 noon**

March 17, 2017

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



VIA EMAIL: [commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov)

**Re: Comment Letter – 2016 Bay-Delta Plan Amendment and Substitute Environmental Document**

Dear Ms. Townsend,

On behalf of Olivenhain Municipal Water District, thank you for the opportunity to provide the State Water Resources Control Board with input on the 2016 Bay-Delta Plan Amendment and draft Substitute Environmental Document. OMWD provides 84,000 customers in northern San Diego County with water, wastewater, recycled water, hydroelectric, and recreational services.

The State Board staff proposal, which bases new water quality objectives for the San Joaquin River and its tributaries on a "percentage of unimpaired flows," could lead to widespread fallowing of agricultural land and negatively affect water reliability for much of the state's population. It also would undercut the state's groundwater sustainability goals and cripple implementation of the Brown Administration's California Water Action Plan. These impacts are not in the public's interest and are inconsistent with the Brown Administration's water policy objectives.

OMWD respectfully requests that the State Board set aside the unimpaired flows approach and heed Governor Brown's call for negotiated settlements, which have proven successful in achieving positive ecologically sensitive outcomes while maintaining water supply reliability. We urge the State Board to embrace this approach and allow adequate time for it to yield results, recognizing that the best outcome can be achieved through comprehensive, collaborative approaches that include "functional flows" as well as non-flow solutions that contribute real benefits.

Please consider the following when considering the 2016 Bay-Delta Plan Amendment and draft Substitute Environmental Document:

- The State Board's "unimpaired flows" approach for the San Joaquin River and its tributaries is not the path to achieve the desired ecological outcomes. It is inconsistent with established state policies, such as the California Water Action Plan, the coequal



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goals defined in the Delta Reform Act of 2009, the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014, and the Human Right to Water Act.

- This proposal would undermine investments in storage, adversely impact the drinking water quality of disadvantaged communities, increase groundwater overdraft in a part of the state where groundwater basins are already out of balance, and put large acreages of agricultural land out of production.
- Any strategy that would result in vast amounts of agricultural land going out of production and ultimately reduce water supply reliability for the majority of Californians is irreconcilable with the policy of coequal goals and the State Board's statutory obligation to protect all beneficial uses of water when establishing water quality objectives.

Finally, the State Board should embrace a collaborative process to develop water quality objectives that incorporates the best available science, utilizes comprehensive solutions that address multiple variables, aligns with established state policies, considers economic impacts, and ensures that Bay-Delta Plan decisions enable rather than obstruct implementation of the California Water Action Plan.

If you or your staff should need any additional details pertaining to this assessment, please do not hesitate to contact me at 760-753-6466.

Regards,



Kimberly A. Thorner  
General Manager

CC: Kim Craig, Deputy Cabinet Secretary, Office of Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr.  
Assemblywoman Marie Waldron  
Assemblyman Rocky Chavez  
Assemblyman Brian Maienschein  
Assemblyman Todd Gloria  
Senator Pat Bates  
Senator Joel Anderson  
Senator Toni Atkins  
Mark Muir, Board Chairman, San Diego County Water Authority  
Tom Howard, Executive Director, State Water Resources Control Board  
Eric Oppenheimer, Chief Deputy Director, State Water Resources Control Board  
Planning and Performance  
Dave Bolland, Director of Regulatory Relations, Association of California Water Agencies  
Marie Meade, Social Media Specialist, Association of California Water Agencies