



April 28, 2015

Ms. Felicia Marcus, Chair
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 958

Dear Chair Marcus:

In our April 22, 2015 letter we addressed the portion of the Draft Regulation for Urban Water Conservation that places a 20 percent threshold of agricultural water deliveries urban water suppliers would have to meet in order to remove commercial agricultural use from their water production totals. It is our belief that removing the 20 percent threshold and including all commercial agricultural water use is the fair standard to adopt.

The following are responses to reservations that may exist on this matter:

Individuals could “game” the system by passing themselves off as commercial agriculture. To be defined as commercial agriculture water users should be required to meet a high burden of proof. All commercial agricultural water users file their income taxes as farmers and most often hold one or more licenses or permits issued by the County Agricultural Commissioner. Also, commercial farmers are enrolled in irrigated lands monitoring groups. These and other measures, including visual inspections, can be used. The opportunity to game the system might actually be greater in the water districts meeting the 20 percent threshold simply because of the large number of farms. In the more urban districts the farms are few and very visible, making them easy to quantify. Also, retail water districts have a strong incentive to push back against gaming because those individuals provide some of the greatest opportunity for urban water use reductions.

A burden will be created for the retail water districts. In San Diego County, the retail water districts have expressed support for an all-inclusive agricultural regulation. That has been exhibited through comment letters submitted on the draft regulations and in conversations with our office. In those districts the volume of water is small, as is the number of farms, making for easy discovery and tracking.

A burden will be placed on State Board staff. We believe state staff can mitigate the impact by creating a simple to use reporting framework for the retail agencies that have smaller agricultural water deliveries. This could include allowing those districts with smaller agricultural deliveries to submit joint Agricultural Water Management Plans or a less intense urban agricultural water management plan.

Those districts can support agriculture locally by placing a greater conservation requirement on urban water users. This places an unfair burden on urban users that won't be felt by urban users in those districts that meet the 20 percent threshold. Urban districts with limited agriculture will be hard pressed as it is to meet the mandated use restrictions because much of their population resides in dense neighborhoods with limited outdoor irrigation. Also, urban farms face challenges already and should not be placed in a position of essentially asking for charity from their neighbors.

Agriculture needs to cut their share. Agricultural water use in San Diego County has dropped 52 percent in the past seven years as documented by the San Diego County Water Authority. At the same time agricultural production has increased. The reduction in water use has come from extensive investment in water saving technology, crop selection, and changed cultural practices. In addition to the reductions accomplished so quickly, on May 14, 2015, the San Diego County Water Authority is expected to require agricultural water use reductions of 15 percent based on supply allocations and previous agreements with farmers.

The farms imbedded in the urban water districts not meeting the 20 percent threshold are an important part of the mix that makes San Diego County both urban and agricultural. These farms are often long-standing and have persevered despite the urbanization that surrounds them. They should not be considered to be less valuable due to the political boundaries of water districts that have changed from agricultural to urban. Attached to this letter are a number of examples of farms that find themselves in districts with less than 20 percent agricultural water deliveries. In fact, some are in districts with deliveries as low as 2 percent.

Please reconsider the 20 percent threshold and allow all urban water suppliers the opportunity to certify that the agricultural uses they serve meet the definition of Government Code Section 51201(a) and be allowed to subtract the amount of water

supplied to the qualifying commercial agricultural uses from their water production totals.

Thank you and please feel free to call on us if you have any questions.

Regards,

Eric Larson
Executive Director

cc. Vice Chair Frances Spivey-Weber
Board Member Dorene D'Adamo
Board Member Steven Moore
Board Member Tam Doduc
Undersecretary Gordon Burns

San Diego County Agricultural Water Use

Water districts meeting the State Water Resources Control Board's proposed 20 percent use threshold:

- Valley Center Municipal Water District
- Rainbow Municipal Water District
- Yuima Municipal Water District
- Fallbrook Public Utility District
- Ramona Municipal Water District

Water districts serving less than 20 percent for commercial agricultural use and sample farms:

- Carlsbad Municipal Water District (2% of water to agriculture) – strawberries, flower bulbs, vegetables
 - Carlsbad Strawberry Company – early season strawberries
 - The Flower Fields – flower bulbs, cut flowers, large tourist attraction
 - Valdivia Farms – vegetables for local farmers markets
- City of Escondido – avocados, citrus, cut flowers, nursery
 - Henry Avocado Company – regional grower, packer & shipper of avocados
 - Mountain Meadow Mushrooms – largest local supplier of fresh mushrooms
- City of Oceanside (6.3%) – strawberries, fresh herbs, avocados, citrus, nursery, wine grapes
 - Rocket Farms – packaged fresh cut herbs
 - West Coast Tomatoes – nation's largest producer of vine-ripe tomatoes
 - Mellano & Company – Southern California's largest supplier of cut flowers
- Olivenhain Municipal Water District (5%) – lemons, vegetables, nursery
 - Chino Farm – important supplier of farm-direct vegetables for local restaurants
 - Anderson's Seed Company – production of seed including California native plants
- Santa Fe Irrigation District (8.5%) – lemons, vegetables, wine grapes
 - Approximately 300 acres of lemons in multiple ownerships
- San Dieguito Water District (3%) – cut flowers, vegetables
 - GoGreen Agriculture - greenhouse hydroponic production of lettuce and kale
 - Dramm & Echter – one of the few remaining domestic greenhouse cut flower growers
- Vallecitos Water District (8.8%) – avocados, vegetables, nursery, citrus, olives
 - Home Town Farms – greenhouse hydroponic production of vegetables
 - Fresh Origins – nation's largest producer of microgreens
 - Altman's Plants – world's largest producer of succulent plants
- Vista Irrigation District – strawberries, blackberries, tomatoes, bromeliads, vegetables
 - Kent's Bromeliad Nursery – world leader in development of bromeliads
 - Solutions Farms – innovative hydroponic production of fish and vegetables

**Carlsbad Municipal Water District
Carlsbad Strawberry Company**



**Carlsbad Municipal Water District
Valdivia Farms**



City of Escondido
Henry Avocado



**City of Escondido
Mountain Meadow Mushrooms**



City of Oceanside
Rocket Farms



**City of Oceanside
West Coast Tomatoes**



City of Oceanside
Mellano & Co



Olivenhain Municipal Water District
Chino Farm



**Olivenhain Municipal Water District
Anderson Seed Company**



Santa Fe Irrigation District



San Dieguito Water District
GoGreen Agriculture



San Dieguito Water District
Dramm & Echter



**Vallecitos Water District
Home Town Farms**



Vallecitos Water District
Fresh Origins



**Vallecitos Water District
Altman's Plants**



Vista Irrigation District
Kent's Bromeliad Nursery



Vista Irrigation District
Solutions Farms





Sam Abed
Mayor
201 North Broadway, Escondido, CA 92025
Phone: 760-839-4610 Fax: 760-839-4578

April 22, 2015

Ms. Felicia Marcus, Chair
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95810

Delivered via email to Jessica.Bean@waterboards.ca.gov

Dear Ms. Marcus;

The City of Escondido thanks the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) for its consideration of past comments submitted by the City concerning the Draft Emergency Drought Regulations. The changes made for the last issue of the draft regulation on April 18 demonstrate that the Board is sincere in its effort to develop equitable and practical regulations.

The City strongly recommends the following changes to the draft regulations issued on April 18 in addition to the comments made concerning the draft regulations issued on April 7.

1. **Delay the effective date of the Final Regulations until July 1, 2015** to allow retail agencies sufficient time to implement their own necessary Code changes and to allow sufficient time for customers to come into compliance.
2. **Allow urban water suppliers to omit from water production totals, all water delivered to commercial agricultural customers.** The draft regulations issued on April 18 allow this omission only for urban water suppliers that deliver 20% or more of their total production to commercial agriculture. The City believes this cutoff point to be arbitrary and recommends that all qualifying commercial agriculture should be omitted.

The City thanks you for your consideration of these comments. If you have any specific questions regarding this letter, please contact Christopher McKinney, the City's Director of Utilities, at 760-839-4090 or cmckinney@escondido.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sam Abed".

Sam Abed
Mayor, City of Escondido



CITY OF OCEANSIDE

WATER UTILITIES DEPARTMENT

4/22/2015

State Water Resources Control Board
Attn: Jessica Bean, Jessica.Bean@waterboards.ca.gov
1001 I Street, 24th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Ms. Bean and Members of the State Water Resources Control Board:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Board's proposed regulatory framework to achieve a 25 percent statewide reduction in potable urban water use.

The City of Oceanside is an urban water supplier serving 44,000 customers in San Diego County. We appreciate the immediacy of the Governor's call to action and the State's efforts to balance water needs with increasingly challenging water supply projections. Clearly, the need to save water and improve efficiencies is becoming more important every day. However, after reviewing the Board's proposed framework, we have several concerns and would like to offer the following feedback for consideration.

- 1. The proposed 2013 baseline for water reduction targets punishes those who have conserved and rewards those who have not.** Between 2007 and 2011, Oceanside's per capita water use declined by 26 percent and we have a sustained reduction of 17 percent as of 2015. By failing to account for this conservation, the proposed framework punishes those who have conserved (including Oceanside) and rewards communities that have not made sustained commitments to conservation.
- 2. The proposed framework punishes those who have invested in producing their own alternate water supplies while rewarding those who have not.** The current approach does not recognize nor give any credit to agencies or regions that have made substantial and costly investments in drought resistant and sustainable local water supplies in order to free up water for the rest of the State.

The City of Oceanside has invested heavily in the planning, securing and production of additional water supplies. Those projects include Indirect Potable Recharge (IPR), studies into Seawater desalination, and advancement of our recycled water plant improvements and pipeline conversion. In addition to Oceanside's own local investments, the San Diego region has also made significant investments in regional sustainability including the following:

- The Carlsbad Desalination Plant creates drinking water supplies from limitless ocean water.
- The San Diego County Water Agency entered into an agreement with the Imperial Irrigation District to free water supplies by paying farmers to fallow fields. This program is funded on the take-or-pay basis requiring County residents make payments regardless of ability to utilize freed supplies.

- All American and Coachella Canal Lining preserves water from the Colorado River that would otherwise be lost due to groundwater seepage.
 - The San Vicente Dam raise allows County residents to store precious water supplies from both Northern California and the Colorado River in order to weather extreme drought conditions.
3. Regulations should not discourage new supply development, but rather recognize such efforts and investments in keeping with the direction in Governor's California Water Action Plan. Under the Board's proposed regulations, Oceanside ratepayers would experience no water supply reliability benefit from the water produced by the City or regionally through the SDCWA.
 4. **The proposed framework threatens industrial and commercial production and local agriculture.** We recommend the State Board remain focused on reducing discretionary outdoor water use and not impose potentially crippling cutbacks to industrial and commercial production as well as local agriculture which are critical to maintaining the livelihood of businesses and of our local economy.
 5. **Lastly, we recommend that the State Board allow regional drought management through existing drought management plans that have been in place and used successfully during previous droughts to manage water supply and demand.** We further request that San Diego County water agencies be given the consideration of a regional cutback goal of 12% and not an agency by agency cutback approach.

I appreciate the opportunity to submit our response to the proposed drought regulatory framework and would welcome any questions or requests for further input or elaboration.

Sincerely,



Jason Dafforn
Interim Water Utilities Director

cc: Michelle Skaggs-Lawrence, Interim City Manager
Oceanside Mayor and Members of the City Council

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General Manager
Kimberly A. Thorner, Esq.
General Counsel
Alfred Smith, Esq.

April 22, 2015

Felicia Marcus, Chair
State Water Resources Control Board
P.O. Box 100
Sacramento, CA 95812-0100

VIA EMAIL: jessica.bean@waterboards.ca.gov

Chair Marcus,

Olivenhain Municipal Water District is a public agency in northern San Diego County that provides 80,000 customers with water, wastewater, recycled water, hydroelectric, and recreational services. OMWD currently purchases all of its potable water supply from the San Diego County Water Authority, which in turn is a member agency of Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, a State Water Contractor.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide comment on the SWRCB's proposed action in response to the governor's Executive Order issued April 1, 2015. Though the recommendations in our April 13 letter were largely unincorporated into the draft regulations, OMWD wishes to again express its serious concern as to the implications at the local level of the SWRCB's proposed actions, and to introduce important points for the SWRCB's consideration.

Foremost among these points is that responsible agencies throughout the state have been heeding the call for extraordinary conservation upon declaration by the governor of a statewide drought emergency. The governor was Arnold Schwarzenegger, and the year was 2009. That drought conditions have largely continued to this day should not reset the clock on conservation efforts; the 2013 baseline ignores the significant investments and returns in reducing per capita water use prior to 2013. Keeping the 2013 baseline and adding additional tiers by no means accurately reflects past conservation; rather, it blatantly ignores quantifiable reductions in per capita water use over the last several years that have been submitted to *and accepted by the state* in individual agencies' Urban Water Management Plans. Again, by failing to account for this conservation, the proposed regulations punish those who have conserved and rewards communities that did not make such early and sustained commitments to



1966 Olivenhain Road • Encinitas, CA 92024
Phone (760) 753-6466 • Fax (760) 753-1578 • www.olivenhain.com



conservation. **Please consider using an average from 2009 to 2014 (five-year average) as the base comparison to give a small credit to reflect past conservation.**

The SWRCB unfortunately determined that though recycled water, desalinated water, and other supplies are “key to a more sustainable water future,” they are not worthy of consideration during the drought emergency in which California finds itself. OMWD understands that alternative water supply sources such as recycling and desalination are water supplies that need to be managed judiciously, but the fact remains that while some local agencies have invested heavily in alternative supplies, there are other localities in the state that have invested so little in water supply that they have only recently begun to meter their customers’ potable water use. A credit for the development of local supplies in the statewide mandate should be considered versus agencies that rely entirely on imported supply.

OMWD ratepayers trusted my agency and our wholesaler, San Diego County Water Authority, to invest their dollars in local supply development so as to increase their water reliability. Ignoring the fact that we have developed local supply, at an increased cost to our ratepayers, sends a message to ratepayers that their trust, and the development of these projects, was for naught. If the regulations in their current form are to be achieved in my service area, customers will be called on to conserve almost **31 percent** more than the supply that is actually available this year when local supplies such as desalination, recycled, and other local supplies are factored into the 15% cut from Metropolitan Water District. **Please give some type of credit for local supply development that reduces reliance on imported supplies. We pay more for these supplies to increase reliability. We suggest a 50 percent credit for the development of local supplies to reflect an agency’s genuine efforts to comply with and achieve the California Water Action Plan and sustainable water management.**

It is unclear how the SWRCB determined that only some agricultural use is beneficial and will be exempt from the total water use subject to the SWRCB’s conservation standard. The 20 percent agricultural threshold appears arbitrary. If agricultural use is deemed a beneficial use, all agricultural water use should be considered as such and should be exempted. Farmers across the street from each other will be treated differently based on the current regulations, merely because they have a different water provider. All agriculture should be exempt, not just agriculture that falls within an agency that serves 20 percent or more agricultural deliveries. **Please remove the requirement that the urban water agency has to serve 20 percent or more agricultural water to apply for the exemption. Any urban agricultural water should be exempted. A farmer is a farmer no matter where their farm is located.**

Felicia Marcus, Chair
April 22, 2015
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Additionally, please allow agencies to come together as a region to collectively achieve a conservation target. A suggestion would be to permit agencies to form a region similar to the process for SB X7-7 region formation and/or via a regional wholesaler.

Please also note that many local water agencies have no jurisdiction over properties that they do not serve and are thus unable to enforce the proposed 25 percent reduction required of properties not served by a water supplier. The enforcing party should be specified.

Finally, the restrictions on outdoor water use will exacerbate fire hazards in communities already at risk for wildfires. OMWD would like the SWRCB to consider including wildfire and fire-wise landscape education when developing drought outreach materials.

Thank you for consideration of these comments. We appreciate the hard work and efforts by the State Water Resources Control Board and your staff. A recent webinar held with ACWA was very informative and helpful. Thank you. OMWD understands the need for conservation and looks forward to implementing a fair and equitable plan that ultimately benefits all of California. If you or your staff should need any additional information regarding our assessment of the proposed framework responsive to the governor's Executive Order, please contact the undersigned at 760-753-6466.

Sincerely,



Kimberly A. Thorner
General Manager

cc: Olivenhain Municipal Water District Board of Directors
Maureen Stapleton, San Diego County Water Authority

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David A. Drake, President
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*A Public Agency Serving the
Greater Escondido Valley Since 1954*

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Board Secretary

Thomas Butler

General Counsel

Redwine and Sherrill

April 22, 2015

Ms. Felicia Marcus, Chair
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

(Delivered by e-mail to: Jessica.Bean@waterboards.ca.gov)

Subject: Comments on Revised Mandatory Conservation Proposed Regulatory Framework Released on April 18, 2015

Dear Ms. Marcus:

On behalf of the Board of Directors and ratepayers, Rincon del Diablo Municipal Water District (Rincon Water) appreciates this opportunity to comment on the State Water Resources Control Board (Water Board) staff's "Revised Mandatory Conservation Proposed Regulatory Framework" (Regulatory Framework) and the draft table entitled "Urban Water Suppliers and Proposed Regulatory Framework Tiers to Achieve 25% Use Reduction" (Conservation Standard/Tiers Table) released on April 18, 2015. We understand that this is a difficult task and appreciate the State Board's open dialogue with multiple agencies who may have contradictory perspectives. Rincon Water also appreciates the Water Board's efforts to accommodate earlier stakeholder recommendations by making several changes to the first iteration of proposed regulations.

As noted in our previous letter of April 13, 2015, Rincon Water customers have been very receptive to the call to conserve, as illustrated by the Water Board's own data that shows Rincon Water has saved 14% overall from June 2014 to February 2015 as compared to same period of 2013. Yet, based on the revised R-GPCD criteria of April 18th, we are again arbitrarily and capriciously being assigned a conservation standard of 32% as our standard to comply with.

In response to the Revised Proposed Regulatory Framework for Mandatory Conservation of April 18, 2015, the following additional items are provided for comment/inclusion:

1. **Flexibility in meeting conservation goals.** The revised methodology of assigning tiers based on R-GPCD for July - September 2014 is arbitrary and still does not adequately represent the efforts of urban water agencies in reducing water use. In fact, it still penalizes agencies who have been religiously reducing water use and demand over the last year(s), as well as those who developed sustainable local supplies. Several alternatives are being proffered that make it more equitable for all agencies include:
 - a. **Preferred Alternative to base agency conservation requirements on percent saved for Jul 2014 – Feb 2015 compared to same period of 2013.** This method would recognize and include the savings gained during the "Voluntary" reduction period of Jul 2014 to Feb 2015, and any agency that did not meet the

original request would need to conserve the difference between the Governor's mandated 25% and that earlier saved. An example would be an agency that attained 12% total savings over the Jul-Feb period would need to attain an additional 13% during this next 7-8 month period (those agencies who did not reduce or barely reduced would thus carry the heavier burden, which is more equitable and fair). This process would continue to build from earlier conservation efforts and still attain the quantity savings per the Governor's Executive Order. In addition, this re-aligns the process with each agency's UWMP, Drought Response Plans and appropriate Drought Ordinances, which is standardized and understood across the state. During the ACWA sponsored conference calls with the Water Board, the Water Board staff stated numerous times it was up to individual agencies to obtain the savings/reductions. Thus, by using this methodology it would allow agencies to use their existing ordinances, mandates and tools, and would be less confusing to the millions of customers. This also removes the one size fits all inequity of the R-GPCD criteria that does not take into account geography, location, climate, economics, housing density, etc. If deemed necessary, the State Board could use the R-GPCD as a quality assurance check against the percent reduction standards agencies are to attain.

- b. **A lesser preferred alternative is to use the Jan or Feb 2015 R-GPCD as basis of Tier rating and required percent reduction.** This alternative is similar to (a) above in that it is more reflective of past conservation efforts. The Jul-Sep 2014 data does not reflect the conservation attained over the entire period, as water agencies and customers were in the initial stages of meeting the 20% voluntary conservation goal, as evidenced by majority of agency data reported. For instance, in Rincon Water's case, our R-GPCD has gone from the average 179.2 for Jul-Sep 2014 (previously 182 for September 2014) to an R-GPCD of **95** in February 2015. That is a near 50% reduction in R-GPCD over a 7-month period, and during record heat and little to no rainfall. Rincon Water also reduced overall potable water usage **14%** during that period, on top of the trend of reducing potable water use the District has been undertaking for over 10 years (more than 33% reduction in potable water use in less than 10 years).
 - c. **Least preferred Alternative would be to use the average R-GPCD of the entire reporting period Jul 2014 – Feb 2015.** Similar to the Water Board's current revised methodology of only using Jul-Sep 2014 average, use the average of the entire reporting period. Though this does not represent the true conservation savings attained, it better reflects the conservation efforts of the agencies and customers as compared to the Jul-Sep 2014 period.
2. **Exempt all Commercial Agriculture from the Regulations.** According to the Governor's Executive Order, all commercial agriculture is to be exempt. Remove "20 percent" from Section 865, (e) of the Proposed Text of Emergency Regulations. This is an arbitrary number and does not conform to the Governor's Executive Order or Government Codes.
 3. **Delay Implementation of Final Regulations to July 1, 2015.** Recommend changing Section 865 (d) (1) to read "Beginning **July 1, 2015**, each urban water supplier..." instead of June 1, 2015, of the Proposed Text of Emergency Regulations. By delaying

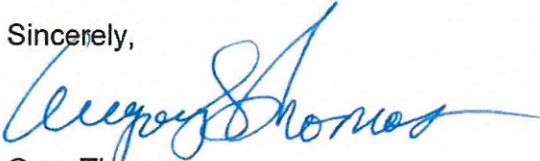
the implementation of the regulations to this date, the State will allow water agencies and customers to adjust to and initiate appropriate actions and measures to meet the required standards and goals. In addition, Metropolitan Water District has implemented Level 3 – 15% allocation reductions, effective July 1, 2015, and our regional supplier, San Diego County Water Authority, is determining the impacts to retail suppliers. By delaying implementation to July 1, the Water Board will allow retail and wholesale agencies to understand all impacts to our entire customer base and proceed with clear guidance and direction. This will lessen the economic impacts on businesses still recovering from the recent Recession. This will also allow time for the Water Board to review all recommendations and draft regulatory guidelines that are clear and concise. Last, agencies will still continue to push and enforce water conservation, thus efforts will not be lost in meeting the goals of conserving 25% by February 2016.

4. **Recognize Regional and Local Efforts.** Considerable investment and creation of sustainable water supplies at the local and regional levels has been undertaken throughout San Diego and other regions. This has been accomplished based on lessons learned from previous droughts and water supply issues to improve supply reliability and diversity, as well as reduce reliance on imported water sources from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. It is recommended that the State recognizes these investments and provide a credit to the agencies and ratepayers that have invested heavily in these alternative supply systems.
5. The proposed Regulations are placing a significant onus on retail urban water suppliers while completely ignoring the larger users of overall State water. Rincon Water requests that the State re-assess how water is managed and how this impacts the requirement to save 25% overall. For instance, a significant amount of water is released to accommodate environmental conditions, such as various spawning runs of salmon and other environmental considerations to fish. This then becomes a single use of this water, wherein, all water released from storage should be done so with multiple benefits, ie, the release of Shasta Reservoir water for a single season salmon run should then be diverted back to storage for secondary use for agriculture or human consumption before flowing out to the ocean, lost forever. Would multiple beneficial use of water not support the requirement “to prevent waste and unreasonable use of water” as defined in the Water Code?
6. The State Board is involved with expanded water reuse, to include future IPR and DPR, to which we commend the State Board for championing and being on the forefront in leadership. One item that could greatly reduce the use of potable water for irrigation is to immediately authorize the use of recycled water on front lawns and landscapes, especially for those communities that have recycled water pipes already installed and providing recycled water to common areas. Children, adults, and pets already use common areas such as parks, sports fields and dog parks irrigated with recycled water, so there are no reported health issues that should be of concern. Proper engineering and construction standards for pipe separation would need to be followed, as currently in place.

Rincon Water understands the dire situation the State of California faces with this severe drought and its impacts across multiple spectrums related to health, safety, economy, and our way of life. Rincon Water has enthusiastically been promoting conservation and reduction in water use for many years, to include advocating and advancing the use of recycled water in place of potable demands. Rincon Water has also been a signatory to the CUWCC since 1991 and following established BMPs.

Rincon Water thanks the Water Board for consideration of our comments. We appreciate the hard work and effort being expended to meet the Governor's goals and balance appropriate regulations against the constraints of the drought. We look forward to working with your staff and fellow agencies to develop fair and equitable regulations that help the state weather this crisis. Please contact the undersigned at 760-745-5522 ext 606 or gthomas@rinconwater.org for any further information.

Sincerely,



Greg Thomas
General Manager

Cc: Rincon Water Board of Directors
Maureen Stapleton, General Manager, SDCWA
Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr
Senator Dianne Feinstein
Senator Barbara Boxer
Congressman Duncan Hunter
Assemblymember Marie Waldron
State Senator Joel Anderson



1391 Engineer Street • Vista • California 92081-8840
Phone: (760) 597-3100 • Fax: (760) 598-8757
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April 13, 2015

Felicia Marcus
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Comments on the State Water Resources Control Board's Proposed Water Use Restrictions

Dear Chair Markus:

On behalf of the Vista Irrigation District, a public agency that provides water service to over 124,000 people in the city of Vista, and portions of San Marcos, Escondido, Oceanside, and unincorporated areas of San Diego County, I would like to submit the following comments regarding the State Water Resources Control Board's (State Board) proposed framework for meeting Governor Brown's mandate for a 25 percent reduction in urban water use statewide.

Clearly, the need to save and use water more efficiently is becoming more important every day, and we appreciate the State Board's efforts in trying to balance water needs with available supplies. However, after reviewing the State Board's proposed framework, we have some serious concerns. Our concerns are summarized below.

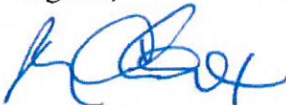
1. The proposed baseline for water reduction targets punishes those who have conserved and rewards those who have not. The District's per capita water use has declined by 34 percent since 1990, and it has declined 20 percent since 2007. By setting the baseline for conservation at 2013 levels, the proposed framework punishes those who have conserved, like the District's customers, and rewards communities that have not made sustained commitments to conservation.
2. The proposed framework punishes those who have invested in producing their own alternate water supplies while rewarding those who have not. The current approach does not give any credit to agencies or regions that have made substantial investments in water supply reliability in order to free up water for the rest of the state. Under the Board's proposed regulations, the ratepayers in San Diego County (including those in our service territory) who have funded water supply reliability projects, such as the Carlsbad Desalination Project, would experience no water supply reliability benefit from the water produced.

3. The proposed framework threatens commercial and industrial production as well as local agriculture. The proposed regulatory framework will hamper economic recovery in San Diego and statewide because it treats economic uses of water the same way as ornamental landscapes. Unlike agriculture in other areas of the state such as the Central Valley, agriculture in San Diego County is treated just like residential landscapes under the proposed regulations.

A better approach may be to continue to focus on severely reducing discretionary outdoor water use. This could be accomplished by establishing stricter statewide landscape restrictions taking into consideration differing climates. This approach achieves immediate savings and helps protect the economy by focusing on lower priority uses water.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide input on the proposed framework and hope the State Board takes our comments into consideration when developing the final framework. Please feel free to contact me with any questions that you may have regarding our comments.

Regards,



Roy A. Coox
General Manager