



THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Office of the Board of Directors

May 23, 2017

Mark Muir, Chairman
Jim Madaffer, Vice Chair
San Diego County Water Authority
4677 Overland Avenue
San Diego, California 92123

Dear Chair Muir and Vice Chair Madaffer:

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan) is in receipt of your May 2 letter sent to local elected officials throughout Metropolitan's service area criticizing our water planning efforts.

After the historic drought of 1991, Metropolitan took a variety of actions to better prepare the Southland region for future dry cycles in order to prevent water shortages that would otherwise threaten the economy of the entire region. For example, Metropolitan dramatically increased its storage network by 13-fold so that the Southland was able to take full advantage of capturing this winter's historic storm season in Northern California. And Metropolitan began to develop strategic plans to maintain supplies and demands in balance through our Integrated Resources Plan (IRP). Developed in close collaboration with you and our other 25 Member Agencies, our first IRP was developed in 1996 and has been periodically updated in order to reflect changes in both local and imported supplies. Targets for local supplies and conservation have been adjusted accordingly in subsequent IRP updates based on changed conditions.

I am proud to say that the level and sophistication of water planning in Southern California leads the state and is a major reason why we all survived this recent drought cycle without economic hardship. Yet your letter suggests that Southern California water planning is on a path to wasting billions of ratepayer and taxpayer dollars on unnecessary water investments. The alleged reason is that Metropolitan, via its IRP and Urban Water Management Plan, is overlooking water development that is planned at a local level.

You suggest that Southern California faces the prospect of too much water in the decades ahead despite the challenges of population growth, climate change, decreases in groundwater supply production, drought, increased regulation and unresolved challenges to our imported supplies. No other Member Agency shares this concern. I repeatedly hear concerns about precisely the opposite, the prospect of significant shortages due to these very same challenges. Your unique concern is based on a flawed analysis of Southland water plans conducted by one of your former employees.

In our IRP, Metropolitan's identifies real "wet water" (existing and supply projects under construction) and surveys all the future water initiatives provided by the Member Agencies - whether

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planned or conceptual - as potential projects. With this complete set of information, Metropolitan then sets regional targets for new local development and conservation. Your letter suggests that Metropolitan ignores proposed local supply projects in setting these targets. That is not true. Any and all of these projects are included as potential projects to meet the targets.

In 2010, your same consultant commented similarly that Metropolitan's planning needed to include more local supplies in its forecasts or risk overdeveloping supplies. This predicted overdevelopment did not occur when supplies were reviewed for the 2015 UWMP. Nor did rampant overdevelopment occur in 2000 and 2005 when the UWMP was similarly updated. By using existing and under construction local supplies to set a baseline, Metropolitan sets consistent targets without any assumptions as to which potential local projects will be successful. As one example, the SDCWA 2000 Urban Water Management Plan forecasted that 111,000 acre-feet of recycling and groundwater projects would be on line by 2015. In fact, only 33,000 acre-feet in recycling and groundwater projects were in production by 2015. Metropolitan's 2015 plan appropriately includes 33,000 acre-feet in its baseline of supplies – not 111,000 acre-feet as your consultant would have done.

These are the reasons why Metropolitan works closely with you and our other Member Agencies to frequently update our IRP and the UWMP so that the targets for imported water supplies, local supplies and local conservation are made with the best information possible. Because these documents are updated every five years, if development of local supplies accelerates, that fact will be captured in the 2020 UWMP and IRP with the targets adjusted accordingly. The concern that vast amounts of local supplies will be developed unnoticed and unaccounted for at the cost of billions of dollars is complete nonsense.

Since Metropolitan's inception, each generation has made the necessary investments so that the next generation can maintain a reliable water system. By working together in a spirit of collaboration, setting aside the false criticism, we will prepare Southern California for its water future through careful and realistic planning.

Sincerely,



Randy A. Record
Chairman of the Board

Attachment

cc: Metropolitan Board of Directors
Jeffrey Kightlinger, General Manager, Metropolitan
Metropolitan Member Agency Managers
San Diego County Water Authority Board of Directors
Maureen Stapleton, General Manager, San Diego County Water Authority
Melinda Cogle, Clerk of the Board, San Diego County Water Authority