



July 20, 2021

Therese McMillan, Executive Director  
MTC and ABAG  
Attn: Draft EIR Comments  
375 Beale Street, Suite 800  
San Francisco, CA, 94105  
eircomments@bayareametro.gov

Re: Comment Letter – Plan Bay Area 2050 Draft EIR (SCH# 2020090519)

Dear Ms. McMillan,

The City of Hayward (Hayward) submits the following comments regarding the programmatic Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) for the Plan Bay Area 2050 (proposed Plan) issued by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and made available on June 4, 2021. In addition, Hayward would like to incorporate by reference the attached separate comments submitted by the Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency (BAWSCA) that provide more detail about the proposed Plan's impacts on the Hayward's service area and the region.

Hayward is supportive of the proposed Plan's goal to make the Bay Area more affordable, connected, diverse, healthy, and vibrant for all residents, while also achieving regional greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets established by the California Air Resources Board. However, the approach taken neglects to adequately consider the impacts of the proposed Plan on the region's, including Hayward's water supply reliability, and the ability to accommodate water supply needs for projected increased population and housing.

Hayward provides drinking water for its 160,000 residents, with approximately 30% of its supply supporting the more than 8,700 businesses and non-residential customers, as well as higher education institutions like California State University – East Bay, Chabot Community College, and Life Chiropractic College West. Hayward is the second largest purchaser of wholesale water from the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC), which in turn draws from the Tuolumne River Basin (tributary to the San Francisco Bay and Sacramento/San Joaquin River Delta). Hayward is also among the lowest per-capita water use entities compared to other agencies that purchase water from the SFPUC - due in no small part to its long commitment to water conservation practices.

Specifically, the proposed Plan should:

- **Account for Phase 1 of the State Water Resources Control Board's (State Board) San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary Water Quality Control Plan Bay-Delta Plan (Bay-Delta Plan), which is an adopted regulation as of December 12, 2018,<sup>1</sup> that will directly impact Hayward's water supply during drought periods.**

---

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/plans\\_policies/docs/2018wqcp.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/plans_policies/docs/2018wqcp.pdf)

The Bay-Delta Plan requires the release of 30-50% of the “unimpaired flow” on the three tributaries to the San Joaquin River from February through June, which will significantly impact water supply availability from the Tuolumne River and the SFPUC’s Regional Water System (RWS), Hayward’s primary source of water supply. The Draft EIR does not account for the adopted Bay-Delta Plan, the resulting impacts, adequacy of existing water supplies to accommodate planned growth, and to meet Hayward’s customer needs during single- and multiple-dry years. As indicated on page 8-6 of the SFPUC’s 2020 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP), analysis by the SFPUC, which operates the RWS, indicates that during single-dry years, there would be system-wide shortages between 30% and 40%, and during multiple dry years, there would be shortages ranging from 30% to 49%.<sup>2</sup>

- **Account for the re-licensing requirements for the Don Pedro Reservoir on the Tuolumne River by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) (FERC Project Nos. 2299 and 14581) and associated Clean Water Act section 401 Water Quality Certification (WQC).**

The re-licensing of the Don Pedro Reservoir by FERC may require additional water to be released from the reservoir for the preservation of aquatic species in the lower Tuolumne River, potentially affecting the dry-year water supply yield of the RWS by reducing the balance of water stored in the water bank at Don Pedro Reservoir. The Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Don Pedro project was released by FERC on July 7, 2020 (FERC/EIS–0293F, July 2020).<sup>3</sup> On January 15, 2021, the State Board released the WQC for the Don Pedro project, which includes the 40% unimpaired flow objective from the Bay-Delta Plan amendment, as well as additional conditions that, if incorporated into FERC licenses would severely impact RWS water supplies.<sup>4</sup> In the City and County of San Francisco’s petition for reconsideration of the WQC dated February 16, 2021, data presented denotes that if the WQC were to be enacted, required rationing during single-year and extended periods of drought would range between 75% and 90% under present and future demand levels.<sup>5</sup> These related FERC regulatory requirements will significantly reduce water supply availability during drought periods from the RWS, Hayward’s source of water supply. The Draft EIR does not account for these impacts and the adequacy, or inadequacy of existing water supplies to accommodate planned growth, and to meet Hayward’s customer needs during single- and multiple-dry years.

- **Evaluate, as part of the impact analysis, how Hayward, as well as other BAWSCA member agencies, will respond to the water supply shortages.**

Impacts resulting from implementation of the Bay-Delta Plan, Don Pedro FERC re-licensing, WQC (e.g., increased groundwater pumping, increased use of local surface water, tree deaths, displaced growth to areas with available water, etc.) and subsequent environmental impacts should be analyzed.

---

<sup>2</sup> SFPUC Adopted 2020 UWMP: [https://www.sfpuc.org/sites/default/files/programs/local-water/SFPUC\\_2020\\_UWMP\\_2020\\_%20FINAL.pdf](https://www.sfpuc.org/sites/default/files/programs/local-water/SFPUC_2020_UWMP_2020_%20FINAL.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://elibrary.ferc.gov/eLibrary/idmws/common/OpenNat.asp?fileID=15576184>

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/docs/dplg\\_fwqc\\_complete\\_20210105.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/docs/dplg_fwqc_complete_20210105.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> City and County of San Francisco’s Petition for Reconsideration of 401 Water Quality Certification, submitted to the State Water Resources Control Board on February 16, 2021.

- **Reconsider the effectiveness of mitigation measures PUF-1 and PUF-2 to account for the drastic water supply impacts resulting from the regulatory requirements of the Bay-Delta Plan, Don Pedro FERC re-licensing, and WQC.**

The State Board intends to implement the Bay-Delta Plan in 2022. However, it is estimated that new (alternative) water supplies may take as long as 20 plus years to be developed and operational, which will not be in time to address the water supply impacts resulting from the Bay-Delta Plan, Don Pedro FERC re-licensing, and WQC.

- **Be updated to include the current information detailed in Hayward's 2020 UWMP in the proposed Plan's water supply analysis.**

This update should also reflect information regarding the adequacy of existing water supplies to accommodate planned growth and to meet Hayward's customer needs during single- and multiple-dry years as detailed in the 2020 UWMP (Public hearing and adoption hearing scheduled for 7/20/21). The Draft EIR uses outdated information from Hayward's 2015 UWMP. Hayward's adopted 2020 UWMP can be found at <https://www.hayward-ca.gov/documents/urban-water-management-plan>

As detailed in Hayward's 2020 UWMP, note the following:

- As a wholesale customer of the SFPUC that purchases 100% of its potable water supply from the RWS, water supply available to Hayward under the adopted Bay-Delta Plan could be reduced between 40%-50% in the event of a multi-year drought.
- This significant cut to water supply would force Hayward to take a number of significant actions including, but not limited to, a moratorium on new connections; limiting water allocations to public health and safety needs; and prohibition on landscape irrigation.
- Hayward currently provides water to its 160,000 residents, with its supply supporting a diverse businesses and non-residential customer base, as well as a number of higher education institutions. Potential consequences of the proposed Plan include health and safety concerns due to lack of potable supplies, major job losses during times of drought, slower economic growth, and delayed community development in Hayward's service area due to the lack of a reliable water supply.

Hayward requests that the proposed Plan evaluate and incorporate these impacts included in this letter, as well as those articulated in BAWSCA's comment letter incorporated here by reference. In addition, Hayward requests that the draft EIR be revised to address these significant concerns and be recirculated.

Sincerely,



Alex Ameri  
Director of Public Works

Attachment – BAWSCA Comment Letter – Plan 2050 Draft Environmental Impact Report, July  
20, 2021

cc: Hayward City Council  
Kelly McAdoo, Hayward City Manager  
Al Mendall, Hayward Planning Commissioner  
Nicole Sandkulla, Chief Executive Officer and General Manager, BAWSCA



July 19, 2021

VIA EMAIL

Therese McMillan, Executive Director  
MTC and ABAG  
Attn: Draft EIR Comments  
375 Beale Street, Suite 800  
San Francisco, CA, 94105  
Email: eircomments@bayareametro.gov

**Subject: BAWSCA Comment Letter – Plan 2050 Draft Environmental Impact Report**

Dear Ms. McMillan,

The Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency (“BAWSCA”) submits the following comments regarding the programmatic Draft Environmental Impact Report (“Draft EIR”) for Plan Bay Area 2050 (“proposed Plan”) issued by the Association of Bay Area Governments (“ABAG”) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (“MTC”) and made available on June 4, 2021. BAWSCA was formed in 2003 via legislative action (AB 2058) to represent the water interests of 26 member agencies in Alameda, Santa Clara, and San Mateo Counties that purchase water from the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (“SFPUC”). The San Francisco Regional Water System (“RWS”) supplies roughly two-thirds of the water required by the BAWSCA member agencies.

**Based on the significant findings highlighted in this letter, BAWSCA requests that ABAG and the MTC make the required changes and recirculate the Draft EIR.**

Eighty five percent of the RWS water supplies come from the Tuolumne River, including supplies from Hetch Hetchy Reservoir and a water bank at Don Pedro Reservoir. The Hetch Hetchy Reservoir water feeds into an aqueduct system delivering water 167 miles by gravity to Bay Area reservoirs and, ultimately, to Bay Area customers. Approximately two-thirds of SFPUC's total water deliveries are made to BAWSCA agencies - meaning BAWSCA agencies are the primary recipient of water from the RWS.

**1. The Draft EIR Is Inadequate Because It Fails To Account For And Analyze The State Water Resources Control Board’s (SWRCB) San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary Water Quality Control Plan (Bay-Delta Plan)**

Discussion and analysis of the impacts of the Bay-Delta Plan in the Draft EIR are insufficient. The Bay-Delta Plan was adopted by the SWRCB in December of 2018.<sup>1</sup> As written, the Bay-

---

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/plans\\_policies/docs/2018wqcp.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/plans_policies/docs/2018wqcp.pdf)

Delta Plan will significantly reduce water supply reliability to the RWS and for BAWSCA Member Agencies, particularly during times of drought. The Draft EIR fails to assess the water supply shortfalls and significant environmental impacts from the proposed Plan that would result if the SFPUC were compelled to drastically reduce water deliveries throughout the RWS service territory in response to the adopted Bay-Delta Plan. This critical omission constitutes an abuse of discretion because the Draft EIR fails to proffer any justification for why these impacts are not significant under CEQA, and, in fact fails to present any analysis whatsoever regarding such impacts. (Pub. Res. Code, §§ 21168.5, 21100(b)(1).) There is a total disconnect between the proposed Plan's anticipated growth in population, jobs, and housing and the RWS' ability to accommodate the planned growth given the significant water supply reductions resulting from the Bay-Delta Plan. A more comprehensive description is necessary as well as an analysis of the impacts from implementation of the Bay-Delta Plan.

### **1.1. Section 3.10.2 And 3.14.2 Are Incomplete Because They Do Not Include The Bay-Delta Plan In The Regulatory Setting**

Sections 3.10.2 and 3.14.2 of the Draft EIR provide the Regulatory Setting for the Hydrology and Water Quality (3.10) and Public Utilities and Facilities (3.14) impacts analysis. Neither section includes a description or an analysis of the impacts from implementation of the Bay-Delta Plan. BAWSCA requests that ABAG and the MTC revisit these sections to include a description of the Bay-Delta Plan in the respective Regulatory Setting sections. The description of the Bay-Delta Plan should include objectives, flow requirements, regulatory authority, and the timeline for implementation. BAWSCA offers the following language for consideration.

*In December 2018, the State Water Resources Control Board (“SWRCB”) adopted amendments to the Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary (Bay-Delta Plan Amendment) to establish water quality objectives to maintain the health of the Bay-Delta ecosystem. The SWRCB is required by law to regularly review this plan. The adopted Bay-Delta Plan Amendment was developed with the stated goal of increasing salmonid populations in three San Joaquin River tributaries (the Stanislaus, Merced, and Tuolumne Rivers) and the Bay-Delta. The Bay-Delta Plan Amendment requires the release of 30-50% of the “unimpaired flow” on the three tributaries from February through June in every year type.*

The Bay-Delta Plan states the February through June flow objectives will be fully implemented by the year 2022. (Bay-Delta Plan at p. 24.)

### **1.2. The Water Supply Analysis In Section 3.14 Is Inadequate Because It Fails To Consider The Impacts Of The Bay-Delta Plan**

Section 3.14: Public Utilities and Facilities fails to consider how implementation of the Bay-Delta Plan will impact water supplies. As stated above, the Bay-Delta Plan has been adopted and requires unimpaired flows between 30% and 50% (starting at 40%) on the Tuolumne River, the primary water supply source for the SFPUC and BAWSCA member agencies, and commits the SWRCB to fully implement the flow objectives by 2022. Therefore, ABAG and the MTC must

analyze the impacts of the Bay-Delta Plan on water supply reliability and the ability of water agencies to meet future water demands from increased population, housing, and jobs.

As described in Section 2 of the proposed Plan, “Project Description,” the regional growth forecast for the Bay Area projects that by 2050, the region will support an additional 2.7 million residents and 1.4 million jobs, resulting in 1.4 million new households. The Draft EIR identifies areas where: 1) there is an existing forecasted shortage in long-term supplies that would need to be met by imported water or additional water conservation, reuse, and recycling; or 2) where the proposed Plan projects population or jobs beyond what is assumed in current Urban Water Management Plans (UWMPs) and could result in a potential shortage. (Draft EIR at p. 3.14-36.)<sup>2</sup> However, this does not include the impacts and water shortages from the Bay-Delta Plan. The Draft EIR fails entirely to account for how the water shortages anticipated from the Bay-Delta Plan will accommodate the proposed Plan’s anticipated increased population and housing, or the resulting impacts from insufficient water supplies. As part of the CEQA Guidelines’ provisions governing the environmental setting, the Guidelines require an EIR to discuss any inconsistencies between the proposed project and applicable general plans, specific plans, and regional plans, including applicable water quality control plans like the Bay-Delta Plan. (CEQA Guidelines, §15125(d).)

In *Vineyard Area Citizens for Responsible Growth v City of Rancho Cordova* (2007) 40 Cal.4th 412, the Supreme Court identified specific requirements for an adequate analysis of water supply issues in an EIR. The Court explained that future water supplies identified and analyzed in an EIR must be reasonably likely to prove available. Speculative sources and unrealistic allocations do not provide an adequate basis for decision making. When a full analysis of future water supplies for a project leaves some uncertainty regarding the availability of future supplies, the EIR must discuss possible replacement or alternative supply sources, and the environmental effects of resorting to those alternative supply sources. Informational purposes are not satisfied by an EIR that simply ignores or assumes a solution to the problem of supplying water. The future water supplies identified and analyzed must bear a likelihood of actually proving to be available; speculative sources and unrealistic allocations are insufficient bases for decision making under CEQA. Finally, where, despite a full discussion, it is impossible to confidently determine that anticipated future water sources will be available, CEQA requires some discussion of possible replacement sources or alternatives to use of the anticipated water, and of the environmental consequences of those contingencies. (*Id.* at 432.)

Further, an EIR must identify and describe the project’s significant environmental effects, including direct, indirect, and long-term effects. (Pub. Res. Code, §21100(b)(1); CEQA Guidelines, §15126.2(a).) An EIR may include some degree of forecasting in evaluating a project’s environmental impacts. (CEQA Guidelines, §15144; *San Francisco Ecology Ctr. v City & County of San Francisco* (1975) 48 Cal. App.3d 584, 595.) Lead agencies must use their best efforts to find out and disclose all that they reasonably can, although they are not required to foresee the unforeseeable. (CEQA Guidelines, §15144.) The Draft EIR should be revised to account for the impacts from implementation of the Bay-Delta Plan.

With the Bay-Delta Plan implementation, it is projected that the SFPUC will be able to meet the projected water demands in normal years, but would experience supply shortages and require rationing in single dry years or multiple dry years. During single dry years, there would be an

---

<sup>2</sup> As discussed below, the Draft EIR does not use the most recent and updated UWMPs.

anticipated 30 to 40% shortage of RWS supplies. When allocated among retail and BAWSCA agencies and compared to RWS demand, this would result in a 14% to 25% shortfall for SFPUC retail customers, and a 36% to 46% shortfall to BAWSCA member agencies. In a multiple dry year event, there would be anticipated shortages in RWS supplies for all projected years, ranging from 30% to 49% shortages. When allocated among retail and BAWSCA agencies and compared to RWS demand, this would result in an anticipated shortfall up to 35% for SFPUC retail customers, and up to 54% for BAWSCA member agencies. These impacts are characterized and quantified in Section 8 of the SFPUC's 2020 UWMP.<sup>3</sup>

BAWSCA requests that ABAG and the MTC revisit Section 3.14 and include a complete analysis of the Bay-Delta Plan impacts on water supply reliability.

### **1.3. Impacts From Reasonably Foreseeable Methods Of Complying With The Bay-Delta Plan And Addressing The Resulting Water Supply Shortages Are Not Identified Or Analyzed**

Consideration of the impacts from implementation of the Bay-Delta Plan should include an analysis of reasonably foreseeable methods water agencies will use to comply with the Bay-Delta Plan, address the resulting water shortages, and the associated environmental impacts. As shown in the SFPUC and BAWSCA member agencies' 2020 UWMPs, implementation of the Bay-Delta Plan will result in RWS system-wide cutbacks between 30% and 49% in single and multiple dry years. This results in RWS cutbacks to BAWSCA member agencies between 36% and 54%. As previously stated, BAWSCA member agencies purchase roughly two-thirds of their water from the RWS. Several BAWSCA member agencies rely solely on the RWS for their water supply source.

Cutbacks to this degree will require BAWSCA member agencies to take extraordinary actions to provide water to their existing and future customers to meet basic health and safety needs. An EIR must address the impacts of "reasonably foreseeable" future activities related to the proposed Plan. (*Laurel Heights Improvement Ass'n v Regents of Univ. of Cal.* (1988) 47 Cal.3d 376, 398-399; see also CEQA Guidelines, §15126 [EIR's impact analysis must consider all phases of project.]) The Draft EIR must identify and analyze these methods for complying with the Bay-Delta Plan, addressing water shortages, and the resulting environmental impacts from these actions, which include, but are not limited to:

- Increased reliance on groundwater and other surface water supplies;
- Inability to conserve additional water as a result of past conservation efforts and demand hardening;
- Decreased water available for urban landscaping resulting in the death of mature trees, reduced carbon conversion and increased heat in urban areas; and
- Severe rationing and moratoria on new development, resulting in displaced growth and urban sprawl.

---

<sup>3</sup> SFPUC 2020 UWMP: [https://www.sfpuc.org/sites/default/files/programs/local-water/SFPUC\\_2020\\_UWMP2020\\_%20FINAL.pdf](https://www.sfpuc.org/sites/default/files/programs/local-water/SFPUC_2020_UWMP2020_%20FINAL.pdf)



Considering that a central tenet of Plan Bay Area 2050 is to encourage growth along transportation lines in an equitable and sustainable manner, it would seem prudent to analyze these reasonably foreseeable impacts resulting from the adopted Bay-Delta Plan. The Draft EIR fails to analyze the environmental impacts that would result from increased reliance on local groundwater and surface water supplies. Adverse effects from increased groundwater pumping may include, but are not limited to, declining water quality, overdraft, subsidence, and sea water intrusion. Agencies that rely solely on the RWS would seek to acquire new water supplies, which would have resulting environmental impacts, increase water rates, and possibly price out low-income residents.

If available water supplies are insufficient to meet demand, BAWSCA member agencies would consider implementing a development moratorium (e.g., "no new hook up") which would cause economic impacts and additional impacts from displaced growth and urban sprawl. An EIR must discuss growth-inducing impacts from a project. (Pub. Res. Code, § 21065.3; CEQA Guidelines, §15126(d).) The imposition of a moratorium on development in the BAWSCA service area would exacerbate the existing housing issues and further push housing growth out of the high-density areas of the Bay Area to the eastern and southern most portions of the Bay Area and to the western San Joaquin Valley. This would directly conflict with the purposes of the proposed Plan. Most of the region's farmlands and natural areas that are threatened by sprawl are in communities at the edges of the region, such as southern Santa Clara County, eastern Contra Costa County, and Solano County. Urban Sprawl has two primary impacts: 1) it increases per capita land consumption, and 2) it disperses development, which increases the distances between common destinations, increasing the costs of providing public infrastructure and services, and the transportation costs required to access services and activities.

The Draft EIR does not identify or analyze these reasonably foreseeable methods of compliance and actions by water agencies, or the potentially significant impacts resulting from these actions. Areas in which anticipated impacts are likely to result include:

- Reduction in the water supplies and the resulting significant impact on the Bay Area's economy, environment and impacts on public health;<sup>4</sup> and
- Inadequate water supplies and resultant moratoria on housing development resulting in displaced growth and urban sprawl that sharply conflict with predicted Bay Area population growth and accompanying need for greater housing and transportation.

The ultimate question under CEQA is not whether an EIR establishes a likely source of water, but whether it adequately addresses the reasonably foreseeable impacts of supplying water to the project. (*Vineyard Area Citizens for Responsible Growth, Inc.*, 40 Cal.4th at p. 434.) Given the failure of the Draft EIR to evaluate the water supply impacts from the Bay-Delta Plan, the

---

<sup>4</sup> The California Legislature has made clear that public health and safety are of "great importance" in CEQA's statutory scheme. (Pub. Resources Code, §§ 21000(b), (c), (d), (g); 21001(b), (d); *California Bldg. Industry Assn. v. Bay Area Air Quality Management Dist.* (2015) 62 Cal.4th 369, 386.) For example, Public Resources Code section 21083(b)(3) requires a finding of a "significant effect on the environment" whenever "[t]he environmental effects of a project will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly." California policy dictates that all humans have a right to water adequate for human consumption, cooking, and sanitary purposes. (Wat. Code, § 106.3.)

water supply analysis is inadequate and fails entirely to consider the extent of water supply shortages, and how those shortages would be exacerbated by the proposed Plan's anticipated population and housing increases. BAWSCA requests that ABAG and the MTC revisit Sections 3.10: Hydrology and Water Quality and 3.14: Public Utilities and Facilities to properly analyze the impacts from reasonably foreseeable methods water agencies will use to comply with the Bay-Delta Plan.

## **2. The Draft EIR Is Inadequate Because It Fails To Analyze The Impact Of The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Licensing And Certification Process For New Don Pedro Reservoir**

As previously stated, the Bay-Delta Plan is not self-implementing. Flow requirements must be allocated through regulatory and/or adjudicatory proceedings, such as a comprehensive water rights adjudication or, in the case of the Tuolumne River, may be implemented through the water quality certification process set forth in section 401 of the Clean Water Act as part of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's (FERC) licensing proceedings for the Don Pedro and La Grange hydroelectric projects. The Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Don Pedro project was released by FERC on July 7, 2020 (FERC/EIS–0293F, July 2020).<sup>5</sup> A “water bank” in Don Pedro Reservoir provides additional storage that is integrated into the RWS operations. The re-licensing of the Don Pedro reservoir by FERC may require additional water released from the Don Pedro Reservoir for the preservation of aquatic species in the lower Tuolumne River, potentially affecting the yield of the RWS.

On January 15, 2021, the SWRCB released the Clean Water Act section 401 Water Quality Certification for the Turlock Irrigation District and Modesto Irrigation District Don Pedro Hydroelectric Project and La Grange Hydroelectric Project, FERC Project Nos. 2299 and 14581 (WQC).<sup>6</sup> The WQC's requirements differ significantly from the recommended flows and conditions that FERC has analyzed in the Staff Alternative of its Final Environmental Impact Statement for the licenses. The WQC includes the 40% unimpaired flow objective from the Bay-Delta Plan, as well as additional conditions that, if incorporated into FERC licenses for the Don Pedro Project, would more severely impact SFPUC's water supplies. Data presented in the City and County of San Francisco's petition for reconsideration of the WQC before the SWRCB dated February 16, 2021, indicates that if the WQC were to be enacted, required rationing during single-year and extended periods of drought would range between 75 and 90 percent under present and future demand levels. To date, FERC has not taken action to incorporate the WQC into the licenses or to finalize the licenses for issuance. However, the draft EIR must consider the impacts on water supply from these foreseeable actions. (*Laurel Heights Improvement Ass'n*, 47 Cal.3d at 398-399.)

### **2.1. Section 3.14.2 Is Incomplete Because It Does Not Include The FERC Licensing And Water Quality Certification For Don Pedro Dam In The Regulatory Setting Section**

---

<sup>5</sup> <https://elibrary.ferc.gov/eLibrary/idmws/common/OpenNat.asp?fileID=15576184>

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/docs/dplg\\_fwqc\\_complete\\_20210105.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/docs/dplg_fwqc_complete_20210105.pdf)

Section 3.14.2 provides the Regulatory Setting for the Public Utilities and Facilities of the Draft EIR. It does not include the FERC licensing and WQC process, which, as stated above, may have significant impacts to water supply reliability for the SFPUC and BAWSCA member agencies. BAWSCA requests that ABAG and the MTC revisit Section 3.14 to include a description of the FERC licensing process in the Regulatory Setting section, including the released WQC.

### **3. Impact PUF-1 Is Inadequately Analyzed And Mitigation Measure PUF-1(A) Is Insufficient**

Impact PUF-1 considers how implementation of Plan Bay Area 2050 may “*require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects.*” However, because impacts of the Bay-Delta Plan, FERC licensing and the WQC, and the resulting significant water supply gap in single and multiple dry years are not considered, the analysis of Impact PUF-1 is insufficient.

The SFPUC and BAWSCA member agencies have stepped up efforts to identify and secure alternative waters supplies to reduce water supply shortfalls and rationing during droughts. However, these water supply projects are large, expensive, and take several years to design and develop. In early 2020, the SFPUC began implementation of the Alternative Water Supply Planning Program (“AWSP”) to investigate and plan for new water supplies to address future long-term water supply reliability challenges and vulnerabilities on the RWS. As stated in the SFPUC’s 2020 UWMP, projects identified through the AWSP will take 10 to 30 years to implement.<sup>7</sup> With implementation of the Bay-Delta Plan scheduled for 2022, there simply is not enough time to construct new or expanded water facilities to meet increased demand from population growth in single and multiple dry years.

An EIR must identify and describe any feasible measures that can be implemented to reduce or avoid each potentially significant environmental effect of the project. (CEQA Guidelines, §15126.4(a)(1).) Mitigation Measure PUF-1(a) (and PUF-2 discussed below) is insufficient to address increased water demand from the Project, especially with implementation of the Bay-Delta Plan, and merely defers identifying, analyzing, and mitigating potentially significant effects of new developments until those projects go through CEQA review. Mitigation measures should describe the specific actions that will be taken to reduce or avoid an impact. It is ordinarily inappropriate to defer formulation of a mitigation measure to the future. (CEQA Guidelines, §15126.4(a)(1)(B).)

The likelihood of new water supply projects being implemented in a timely manner and providing enough water to make up the shortfalls due to the Bay-Delta Plan, FERC licensing, and the WQC should be analyzed, and additional mitigation should be proposed, if necessary, to address associated impacts. Further, any water supply project will have environmental impacts that must be considered. If a mitigation measure identified in an EIR would itself cause

---

<sup>7</sup> See Section 7.4, page 7-6 of the SFPUC’s adopted 2020 UWMP (link provided above).

significant environmental impacts distinct from the significant effects caused by the project, those impacts must be discussed in the EIR, but in less detail than the project's significant impacts. (CEQA Guidelines, §15126.4(a)(1)(D).)

#### **4. Impact PUF-2 Is Inadequately Analyzed And Mitigation Measure PUF-2(A) Is Insufficient**

Impact PUF-2 considers whether there may be *“insufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years.”* Because impacts of the Bay-Delta Plan, FERC licensing, and the WQC were not considered, Impact PUF-2 was not sufficiently analyzed. Specifically, because the significant level of rationing that may be required in single and multiple dry years was not characterized or quantified, the proposed mitigation measures cannot be analyzed to determine whether they are adequate to mitigate potentially significant impacts. Further, BAWSCA and its member agencies have implemented conservation measures and expanded recycled water use as suggested in Mitigation Measure PUF-2(a) for many years, if not decades. BAWSCA member agencies intend to continue these projects, and water saving benefits have been quantified and included in their respective 2020 UWMPs. Those UWMPs demonstrate that Mitigation Measure PUF-2(a) is insufficient for closing the gap on water supply rationing that may result from implementation of the Bay-Delta Plan, FERC licensing, and the WQC.

Section 3.14.3, page 3.14-43 states, *“Future development projects would be required to comply with Water Code Section 10910 and Section 10912, as described above in the Regulatory Setting, under 'Water Supply Assessment and Water Supply Verification.' The enforcement of these regulations by local jurisdictions would ensure that a water supply assessment is prepared to demonstrate that sufficient water would be available to serve development projects before their approval.”*

This statement is conclusory. For many BAWSCA member agencies, these water supply assessments may demonstrate that there is insufficient water to serve new development projects (including new housing projects anticipated in the proposed Plan) from implementation of the Bay-Delta Plan, FERC licensing and the WQC. The sufficiency of an available supply of water to meet the anticipated population, job and housing growth in the proposed Plan should be fully analyzed in this Draft EIR, not when municipalities and water agencies are required to conduct a water supply assessment under Water Code Sections 10910 and 10912 for development projects aimed at accommodating that growth.

#### **5. The Draft EIR Relies On Out-Of-Date Water Supply Reliability Forecasting 2020 Urban Water Management Plans**

Under the Urban Water Management Planning Act, the SFPUC and the majority of BAWSCA agencies must prepare an UWMP for submittal to the Department of Water Resources (DWR) every five years. The UWMPs provide the long-term resource planning of each agency and ensure that adequate water supplies are available to meet existing and future needs.

The Draft EIR relies on outdated water supply information provided in urban water suppliers' 2015 UWMPs. Significant changes have occurred since the 2015 UWMPs were adopted, including major legislation on conservation, efficiency, and the Bay-Delta Plan. Therefore, those plans are no longer current and do not accurately represent the water supply and demand forecasts for the SFPUC and BAWSCA member agencies. For example, Chapter 3.14.3, page 3.14-43 of the Draft EIR states, "*As shown in Table 3.14-2, the major water suppliers in the region are projected to be able to supply adequate water for their projected service populations through 2040 during normal years, apart from Solano County Water Agency...*" This is no longer an accurate characterization of projected water supply availability. As shown in Table 8-3 of the SFPUC's 2020 UWMP, water supply shortages are anticipated in single and multiple dry years through 2045.

All water suppliers in the BAWSCA service area (i.e., the SFPUC, Alameda County Water District ("ACWD"),<sup>8</sup> and the Santa Clara Valley Water District ("Valley Water")<sup>9</sup> have adopted their 2020 UWMPs or have made drafts publicly available. BAWSCA requests that ABAG and the MTC utilize data from the 2020 UWMPs to characterize water supply reliability in Section 3.14 of the Draft EIR.

## 6. Errors And Inaccuracies

BAWSCA has identified the following errors and inaccurate information and requests that ABAG and the MTC make the following suggested corrections.

- Section 3.14.1, page 3.14-2: Suggest editing the following sentence, "*BAWSCA's goals are to ensure a reliable water supply, high-quality water, and a fair price for its customers*" to read, "*BAWSCA's goals are to ensure a reliable supply of high-quality water at a fair price for its service area.*"
- Section 3.14.1, page 3.14-5: San Francisco Public Utilities Commission section, first paragraph, second sentence should be corrected to read, "*water treatment plants*" not, "*water treatment plans.*"
- Section 3.14.1, page 3.14-5: San Francisco Public Utilities Commission section, third paragraph, last sentence references gross and nonresidential demand in 2015. 2015 was a drought year and not necessarily representative. Suggest using data from the SFPUC's 2020 UWMP.
- Section 3.14.1, page 3.14-8: Imported Water section, note that the SWP also delivers water to the Central Coast and southern California. BAWSCA suggests listing those regions as well.
- Section 3.14.1, page 3.14.10: Desalination section, second paragraph, last two sentences should be corrected to read, "*treatment plants*" not "*treatment plans*" and "*may result in additional future supplies...*" not, "*may result in addition of future supplies...*"

---

<sup>8</sup> ACWD 2020 UWMP: <https://www.acwd.org/DocumentCenter/View/3816/Final-2020-2025-UWMP>

<sup>9</sup> Valley Water 2020 UWMP: <https://fta.valleywater.org/dl/kvoCB45HuH/?>

- Section 3.14.1, *Table 3.14-2: Projected Normal Year Supply and Demand (Acre Feed/Year)* and *Table 3.14-3: Year of Projected Water Shortages (Single Dry Year)*. Update with 2020 UWMP data.
  - Note that there is double counting between the SFPUC's and ACWD's supply/demand, and between the SFPUC and Valley Water with regards to the eight shared customers. BAWSCA suggest including a footnote identifying the overlap so there's no confusion for the reader.
- Section 3.14.1, page 3.14-14: Wastewater Treatment section, second paragraph should be corrected to read "*pump stations*" not "*pipe stations...*" This sentence is also missing a comma after "*interceptor stations...*"
- Section 3.14.1, *Table 3.14-4: Wastewater Treatment Facilities in the Region*: Note that CMSA's service area is much larger than listed and includes the areas listed for RVSD. Also note that RVSD is not a treatment agency. RVSD provides wastewater collection services only and conveys that wastewater to CMSA. Other wastewater collection agencies that convey wastewater to CMSA (i.e., the City of San Rafael and the Town of Corte Madera) are not listed as treatment agencies.
- Section 3.14.2, page 3.14-34: MWELo section, last sentence should be corrected to state that agencies "*must*" adopt ordinances that are as stringent, if not more, than MWELo.
- Section 3.14-3, *Table 3.14-8: Projected Service Area Population of Major Bay Area Water Agencies*, footnote 2 incorrectly states that the SFPUC is a wholesale water provider to BAWSCA. This should be corrected to state that the SFPUC is a wholesale water provider to BAWSCA member agencies.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft EIR. Based on the significant findings highlighted in this letter, BAWSCA requests that ABAG and the MTC make the required changes and recirculate the Draft EIR. BAWSCA is available to meet with ABAG and MTC staff to discuss these comments and the water supply impacts from the proposed Plan further.

Please contact Tom Francis, BAWSCA Water Resources Manager, at TFrancis@BAWSCA.org, if you have any question or for follow up discussions.

Regards,



Nicole Sandkulla

Chief Executive Officer and General Manager

cc: BAWSCA Board of Directors  
BAWSCA Water Management Representatives  
Allison Schutte, Hanson Bridgett, LLP