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December 10, 2021

Teresa Alvarado
Chair, California Water Commission and Commissioners
P.O. Box 942836
Sacramento, California 94236-0001

RE: Water Storage Investment Program: Support for Continued Eligibility and Feasibility Determination of the Pacheco Reservoir Expansion Project

Dear Chair Alvarado and Commissioners:

The Cupertino Chambers of Commerce is committed to promoting a thriving and sustainable community and economy. We are writing in support of the Pacheco Reservoir Expansion Project (Pacheco Project). We urge the California Water Commission (Commission) to make the appropriate finding for eligibility and feasibility as required by Water Code Section 79757 established by Proposition 1.

The Santa Clara Valley Water District (Valley Water) and its agency partners, the Pacheco Pass Water District, and the San Benito County Water District, have worked diligently over the last three years to ensure the requirements for the January 1, 2022, deadline is met. The Pacheco Project delivers both the public benefits and the wide-ranging water supply benefits promised to California voters when they approved Proposition 1 in 2014. It improves the regional water supply for the economically vital technology sector of Silicon Valley and enhances storage capacity for other water contractors, while also reducing flood risk, supporting sustainable groundwater recharge, and expanding habitat for wildlife.

The expanded Pacheco Reservoir, supplied by natural inflows and federal Central Valley Project water from nearby San Luis Reservoir, would be operated to provide a host of water supply and societal benefits. Among the most notable benefits are emergency water supplies, as this project would bolster water supply reliability for not just Silicon Valley, but for the region as a whole, supporting local and regional economies of statewide significance. Millions of San Francisco Bay Area residents, and tens of thousands of job-creating businesses, depend on water imported through regional, state, and federal water systems. Silicon Valley is particularly dependent on imported water, which represents 50 percent of Santa Clara County's supply.

The emergency water supply that will be provided by the Pacheco Project will help protect Bay Area residents and businesses in the event of a severe drought or a Delta conveyance failure by accessing water supply interties with other regional water agencies. The value of this south-of-Delta storage is that it will keep our region supplied with water in emergencies such as a major earthquake or flood event that compromises the fragile system of levees protecting Delta water conveyance.

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CONTINUED: Support for Continued Eligibility and Feasibility Determination of the Pacheco Reservoir Expansion Project

In addition, this project will solve raw water quality issues impacting Santa Clara County by addressing the San Luis Low Point problem. In the event algae blooms occur in San Luis Reservoir due to elevated temperature combined with declining water levels, local water agencies can shift to the improved and interconnected Pacheco Reservoir to avoid costly treatment.

As we know, California is experiencing devastating impacts due to climate change, from unprecedented wildfires, rising sea levels, and a reduced and sometimes non-existent Sierra snowpack. Increased water storage is a critical adaptation of our water system from one dependent on snowpack to one that is based on precipitation from large rain events. The Pacheco Reservoir Expansion Project delivers a new storage facility to allow conveyance of water from where it falls to where it is stored for human and environmental uses. If the Pacheco Project were in operation from 2017 through the current extreme drought, Santa Clara County and Silicon Valley would not be struggling with the current water shortage emergency condition.

The Pacheco Project improves the regional water supply for the economically vital technology sector of Silicon Valley, while also reducing flood risk for disadvantaged communities and supporting sustainable groundwater recharge. We, the undersigned Chambers of Commerce, urge the Commission to continue your full support of the Pacheco Project and make the appropriate finding for continued eligibility and feasibility.

Sincerely,



Shyam Panchal
President, Board of Directors
Cupertino Chamber of Commerce