



REGIONALSAN

TAKING THE WASTE OUT OF WATER

Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District

Main Office

10060 Goethe Road
Sacramento, CA 95827-3553
Tel: 916.876.6000
Fax: 916.876.6160

Treatment Plant

8521 Laguna Station Road
Elk Grove, CA 95758-9550
Tel: 916.875.9000
Fax: 916.875.9068

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April 30, 2015

Rachel Ballanti
Acting Executive Officer
California Water Commission
P.O. Box 942836
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001

Subject: Proposition 1 Water Storage Investment Program Draft Program Goals, Objectives, and Principles

Dear Ms. Ballanti,

Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District (Regional San), appreciates the opportunity to comment on the California Water Commission's Staff Draft of the Proposition 1 Water Storage Investment Program (WSIP) "Program Goals, Objectives, and Principles." I want to thank the Water Commission for this initial WSIP draft; it is an excellent first step in ensuring that the WSIP conducts its work in an open and transparent manner. Regional San provides wastewater treatment and conveyance for approximately 1.4 million people in Sacramento County and surrounding areas. We are dedicated environmental stewards of our water resources, and believe recycled water to be a practical and sustainable aspect of a comprehensive water storage program.

We feel that the "Program Goals, Objectives, and Principles" document fails to capture the critical role recycled water can play in conservation, recharge, and augmentation of groundwater resources. Recycled water is treated wastewater that has undergone filtration and disinfection to make it safe for non-potable purposes, including landscape irrigation, industrial uses, and environmental restoration. Increasing use of recycled water can reduce regional dependence on precious groundwater and surface water supplies, which become especially significant during times of drought and high consumer demand for potable water.

The staff draft highlights the importance of conjunctive water use projects that do not isolate groundwater and surface water management, as they control water resources more holistically and efficiently. However, the document does not consider the significant nexus that exists between recycled water and groundwater resources. Recycled water is an important component of groundwater management, either through direct recharge projects, or in-lieu of pumping groundwater projects, and is an environmentally safe and sustainable means of supplementing our diminishing water supplies. While traditional water storage projects have played a fundamental role in sustaining Californians' water supplies, new approaches to water storage that utilize recycled water can help our state conserve potable water resources for other uses.

Ms. Ballanti
April 30, 2015
Page 2

The segregation of recycled water projects from water storage projects threatens to stall water management advancements that could take place if recycled water was given a priority in water storage projects

Recycled water is a “drought proof” source of water that is readily available and can serve to recharge groundwater supplies and conserve surface water supplies. We urge the California Water Commission to consider the function that recycled water can have in California’s water storage future. The “Program Goals, Objectives, and Principles” draft mentions that eligible projects that involve groundwater recharge will be treated with priority. We recommend applying this same prioritization to projects involving recycled water.

On behalf of Regional San, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on the WSIP “Program Goals, Objectives, and Principles” document. If we can be of any assistance or you have additional questions, please contact me at 916-876-6092, or mitchellt@sacsewer.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Terrie L. Mitchell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Terrie L. Mitchell
Manager, Legislative & Regulatory Affairs
Regional San