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California State Senate



**SENATOR
JIM NIELSEN**

FOURTH SENATE DISTRICT

COMMITTEES
APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET & FISCAL REVIEW
VICE CHAIR
HEALTH
VETERANS AFFAIRS
CHAIR

November 6, 2015

Sent via ELECTRONIC MAIL to cwc@water.ca.gov

Chairman Joseph Byrne and Commissioners
California Water Commission
P.O. Box 942836
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001

RE: Water Bond, Chapter 8 Funding

Dear Chairman Byrne and Commissioners:

Thank you for the efforts of the California Water Commission (CWC) and its staff to quickly step into your role of administering the Proposition 1 Chapter 8 funding. We are pleased to see that, upon passage of Proposition 1 last November, the CWC immediately began to draft regulations, set and hold meetings around the State, and prove itself responsive to our offices' inquiries.

We do, however, feel it is appropriate to reassert the legislative intent behind the Water Bond's Chapter 8. The overwhelming support from legislators and the public was for a large pot of money to fund two large surface water storage projects, namely Sites and Temperance Flat Reservoirs. Assembly Bill 1471, which became Proposition 1, would not have been placed on the ballot without the \$2.7 billion intended for large surface water storage projects. The public comments during the CWC meetings reiterate their support of Proposition 1 was to ensure funding for new, large surface storage. Californians recognize that this is a once-in-a-generation bond that provides a large sum of funds for large projects to benefit all Californians.

These large projects are the best bet to ensure "public benefits associated with water storage projects that improve the operation of the state water system, are cost effective and provide a net improvement in ecosystem and water quality conditions" (Water Code §79750(b)). While some groups have requested the CWC to set aside ten percent of Chapter 8 funds for smaller projects—which they admit are not as competitive—we request that you continue your work to maintain the level playing field for allocation decisions that were set by statute and legislative intent.

For groups concerned that their smaller projects are not competitive under Chapter 8, they may find better opportunities in other sections of the Water Bond—especially considering Chapter 8 is the only portion of the bond that can fund construction of large surface water storage. Incidentally, Sites and Temperance Flat are exactly the sources that would provide the reliable, cold, clean water and conjunctive use that most other water projects require.

Thank you for providing an open line of communication between our offices and for your accommodation to hold public meetings in the North State. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



JIM NIELSEN
Senator, Fourth District



JAMES GALLAGHER
Assemblyman, Third District

cc: Paula Landis, Executive Officer
Rachel Ballanti, Assistant Executive Director
Jennifer Marr, Supervising Engineer