



# CALIFORNIA MUNICIPAL UTILITIES ASSOCIATION

Public Comment  
Bay-Delta Plan Supplemental NOP  
Deadline: 04/25/12 by 12 noon

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April 24, 2012

Jeanine Townsend, Clerk to the Board  
State Water Resources Control Board  
P.O. Box 2000  
Sacramento, CA 95814-2000

**Re: Comment Letter – Bay-Delta Plan Supplemental Notice of  
Preparation – Comprehensive Review**

Dear Ms. Townsend:

This letter provides the California Municipal Utilities Association's (CMUA) comments pursuant to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) January 24 2012 Supplemental Notice of Preparation (NOP) and Notice of Scoping Meeting for the Update and Implementation of the Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary (Bay-Delta Plan): Comprehensive Review.

The SWRCB update of the Bay-Delta Plan could have significant hydropower and water supply impacts to California. When the SWRCB released its 2010 report on new flow criteria for the Delta ecosystem, it cautioned readers that the report did not include any balancing of the beneficial uses of water, including water supply and hydropower, and made it clear that the report should have, "no regulatory or adjudicatory effect". Still some interest groups continue to use this report and its recommendations of increasing Delta outflow to 75 percent of unimpaired flow from January to June as the percentage for unimpaired flows that should be adopted in the Bay-Delta Plan update. CMUA believes this is inappropriate, and asks that the SWRCB continue to resist reliance on this report and its flow-centric approach to the Delta's ecosystem problems.

As required by the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act and by 23 California Code of Regulations Section 658, et seq., the SWRCB will need to balance all the beneficial uses of water, including water and hydropower impacts as it updates the Bay-Delta Plan. To facilitate this balancing process and increase public transparency of this important regulatory effort, CMUA has requested a series of stakeholder workshops on water supply and hydropower impacts to occur within the timeframe established by the SWRCB to review the Bay-Delta Plan. CMUA is in full support of the SWRCB examining water supply

impacts through workshops, but for the purpose of this comment letter, we will focus on issues we would like examined as part of a hydropower workshop.

### **Need for Thorough Hydropower Impact Assessment**

Because the majority of California's nearly 400 hydropower plants are located in the Sacramento and San Joaquin river watersheds, the SWRCB needs to carefully examine all hydropower impacts as part of its Bay-Delta Plan update. Hydropower, one of the most economical sources of power, can meet up to 45 percent of Northern California's summer peak load. As a flexible source of power, the availability of hydropower is also crucial for the development and integration of renewable energy sources. It can be ramped up or down on short notice to help smooth out the intermittency of other renewable sources of energy such as solar and wind.

All these factors must be considered as the SWRCB examines the potential of dramatically increasing winter and spring flows, leaving potentially far less potential for hydropower production in the summer -- when it is needed most to meet peak demands. Any analysis of hydropower impacts must also consider impacts to the grid as a whole. Because of their staff expertise, CMUA requests that the SWRCB involve the California Energy Commission and California Independent Systems Operator in a hydropower workshop. Consistent with its GHG reduction policies, SWRCB should also be assessing the potential GHG impacts of replacing hydropower with other sources of power that provide the same operational characteristics as hydropower.

In conclusion, CMUA believes that the SWRCB should involve stakeholder and other agencies when appropriate to examine all the potential impacts of its decisions. We believe that the workshops will help facilitate this process.

Thank you for considering our views. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions or concerns regarding CMUA's comments.

Sincerely,



Jennifer West  
Director for Water