

**STEPHEN SOUZA POLICY STATEMENT
FOR JANUARY 18, 2011 SWRCB HEARING
ON DAVIS-WOODLAND WATER SUPPLY PROJECT
WATER-RIGHT APPLICATIONS 30358A AND 30358B**

My name is Stephen Souza, and I am serving my second term as a Councilmember of the City of Davis. I am also a founding member and current vice-chair of the Board of Directors of the Woodland-Davis Clean Water Agency.

Since settling in Davis in 1979, I have committed myself to civic participation and activism in my community and region. I am currently a member on the boards of the Lower Putah Creek Coordination Committee, California LAFCO, and the Yolo Natural Heritage Program, and also serve as an alternate to the Yolo-Solano Air Pollution Management District.

The City of Davis has always relied solely on groundwater for its water supply. However, the quality of the groundwater has degraded over time and can no longer be relied upon to meet municipal needs. In recent years, the City has been forced to drill deeper wells to meet increasingly stringent drinking water standards. At the same time, regulatory requirements for the City's wastewater discharge into the Yolo Bypass and ultimately the San Francisco Bay Delta have become more restrictive. Current concentrations of Selenium in our groundwater will not meet the regulatory requirements of our wastewater discharge permit that will go into effect in 2017. In addition, Manganese levels in some of our wells are high enough that surface treatment is now being added at the wellhead. Because the groundwater is hard, a high percentage of our customers utilize water softeners, which increases the Total Dissolved Solids concentrations to levels that will exceed future expected wastewater discharge limits.

Long before the onset of the current regulatory environment, the City recognized a need to improve the quality and long-term reliability of our source water. The Davis City Council has actively supported and pursued a project to bring surface water to the community for more than 20 years. The effort began with the development of a Water Master Plan in 1989, continued with collaborative studies with UC Davis, Woodland and other Yolo County agencies into the early 1990s, and reached a major milestone with the filing of our water rights application in 1994. Since our application was filed, the City completed an Environmental Impact Report in 2007 that analyzed an array of potential projects to address our water needs. That report recommended our preferred project to obtain surface water from the Sacramento River through a joint intake facility with the City of Woodland and Reclamation District 2035 (RD2035).

In 2009, the City reached an historic accord with the City of Woodland to form a Joint Powers Authority that led to the creation of the Woodland Davis Clean Water Agency (WDCWA). The purpose of the Agency is to deliver the surface water project and manage the ongoing operations of the water treatment facility. Most recently, in December 2010, the two Cities and the WDCWA reached agreement with RD2035 for a shared intake structure that will replace an existing unscreened facility, one of the last large unscreened intakes on the Sacramento River.

The City of Davis values and has long been committed to environmental stewardship. We have adopted policies and taken steps to reduce our environmental footprint and impact, from developing a 400-acre wetlands in conjunction with our current wastewater treatment plant, to the groundbreaking low-impact residential neighborhood of Village Homes, to the early implementation of the PV USA Solar Farm and the establishment of habitat easements with local funds. We have for many years supported conservation programs to reduce the per capita

consumption of water and are planning additional strategies in concert with our surface water project to further reduce our use. Davis has valued our region's farmland and has adopted a slow growth approach with a focus on urban in-fill, rather than encroaching upon surrounding agricultural lands.

Gaining access to surface water from the Sacramento River is yet another step in the responsible stewardship of our natural resources. The surface water project will eliminate a large unscreened intake facility, reducing the impact on fisheries and habitat. It will improve the quality of our source water, in turn improving the quality of our discharge into the Yolo Bypass and Bay Delta. And as analyzed in the EIR, it represents the lowest cost and most environmentally sensitive solution to our water supply and wastewater discharge issues.

In order to meet the City's 2017 regulatory wastewater discharge permit timeline, the project must be under design in 2011, and under construction in 2013. Before doing so, however, we must ask our ratepayers to support a series of rate increases to pay for anticipated bond financing. Without the approval of our water right permit applications, it will be very difficult to explain to our community the need to raise rates. Therefore, I respectfully request the State Water Resources Control Board act promptly to issue the requested water-right permits.