

Southern California Leadership Council

August 4, 2008

The Honorable Arnold
Schwarzenegger
California Governor
State Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
U.S. Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

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Floyd Wicks

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Dear Governor Schwarzenegger and Senator Feinstein:

Thank you for your continued effort to address California's critical water supply needs. The Southern California Leadership Council (SCLC) is pleased to provide you the enclosed study by the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) aimed at developing a reliable water supply strategy for our region. The study is ongoing and we are seeking additional input from the water community.

The preliminary findings include the following:

- Traditional imported water sources from the Colorado River, San Joaquin/Sacramento Delta and the Owens River cannot be relied upon for increased supplies and may, in fact, diminish further. Addressing the environmental crisis and constructing a new water conveyance system in the Delta remains as a top priority.
- Southern California must embark on a concerted self-help water supply and reliability program comprised of a portfolio of locally sourced supplies and wet-year supply supplements to meet its future needs. A concerted effort would literally yield millions of additional acre-feet of water.
- Urban water conservation is one of the most promising and least costly options to extend our water supplies.
- Local storm water capture and increased use of ground water storage are the next largest and most cost-effective alternatives.
- Interagency cooperation to share water resources and minimize water transfers can be a no-cost or reduced-cost option to meet the region's needs and can be facilitated by the Metropolitan Water District.
- Recycling water for domestic use and desalination, while expensive and power intensive are viable options to ensure reliability of necessary supplies.
- New surface storage in the San Joaquin and Sacramento watersheds offer Southern California little in the way of water reliability; if and when deliverable would be one of most expensive and energy intensive options.

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As you can see, interim measures as well as a sustainable long-term solution for the Delta are paramount. A portfolio of self-help projects in southern California, including conservation, are also critical. Your latest joint effort better enables a variety of projects to vie for state funding support so that the best water reliability options can move forward. We support your approach.

To obtain the maximum benefit from self-help and conservation opportunities, we also encourage the adoption of state policies that facilitate investment in local projects and conservation statewide, including the agricultural sector, using concepts like the trading of "conservation and water augmentation credits." Such an approach would recognize and financially reward water right holders who commit to reduced water use through conservation and public and private parties that make investments in local projects to add to a region's water supply reliability. We need innovative new ideas like this to resolve entrenched thinking by competing interests which impede progress for the benefit of all.

Sincerely,


Floyd Wicks
Co-Chair


David Fleming
Co-Chair

Enclosure

cc: Peter Cleveland, Chief of Staff to Senator Feinstein
Susan Kennedy, Chief of Staff to the Governor
Darrell Steinberg, Senate President pro Tempore
Karen Bass, Speaker of the Assembly
Dave Cogdill, Senate Minority Leader
Michael Villines, Assembly Minority Leader
Mike Chrisman, Secretary for Resources
Lester A. Snow, Director, Department of Water Resources
Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Committee

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