



**MWD**

METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Executive Office

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~~L. SNOW~~  
~~J. Johns~~  
Kathy Kelly  
Paul Marshall

December 28, 2005

Mr. Lester Snow  
Department of Water Resources  
P.O. Box 942836  
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001

Dear Director Snow:

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California supports the California Department of Water Resources' South Delta Improvements Program (SDIP). The SDIP would enhance the operational flexibility of the State Water Project (SWP) in order to meet the multiple needs within the Delta. Metropolitan's Board policy is to support projects and programs that provide for the environmental and water quality needs of the Delta and its users in a manner that also protects the supply reliability and water quality for over 18 million people in Metropolitan's service area that rely on the SWP for their water supply.

Given the major infrastructure challenges facing the State, the SDIP represents an important decision for California – a chance to use existing Delta infrastructure in a responsible, balanced fashion to continue to deliver water upon which two-thirds of the state depends. It requires no major new facilities, and funding has already been secured under Proposition 13.

Components of the SDIP were an integral part of a landmark CALFED document (the 2000 Record of Decision), which was supported by environmental organizations, water agencies, farmers, and business leaders. The SDIP is currently in the midst of a public review and comment period, initiated by the release of a Draft Environmental Impact Report/Statement (EIR/EIS). This environmental review marks the next step forward, with important implications for all involved.

Specifically, the SDIP would provide the following benefits:

- Increased ability to protect fish species through the construction of seasonal tidal gates to create better migration pathways down the mainstem of the San Joaquin River and away from the export pumps;
- Enhanced water levels and quality for South Delta users who rely on the Delta water supply for farming through the use of the seasonal tidal gates;

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- Increased protection for fish by creating flexibility to pump during fish-friendly periods, timed to take place when water supply is available and it is environmentally safe to pump.

As one of the earliest supporters of ecosystem restoration in the Delta through its commitment of \$30 million for restoration projects, Metropolitan shares everyone's concern about protecting Delta fisheries. We support the State's phased, prudent approach, that allows for a thorough, sound scientific review by a multi-agency work team dedicated to protecting Delta fish species, and ensures the responsible implementation of SDIP for the benefit of the environment, Delta, and SWP.

Metropolitan looks forward to working with the State and all interests on the successful implementation of improvements in the Delta. A healthy and reliable Delta system is one of the keys to Metropolitan's successful diversified water supply and water quality strategy. Through its Integrated Resources Plan, Metropolitan is looking to fit a reliable SWP system with a program of water conservation, water recycling, groundwater treatment, voluntary water transfers and storage. SDIP would help achieve a more reliable Delta system for all stakeholders.

Very truly yours,



Debra C. Man  
Interim CEO/General Manager

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cc: State Water Contractors