



July 21, 2005

Mr. Paul Dabbs  
Statewide Planning Branch  
California Department of Water Resources  
PO Box 942836  
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001

Dear Mr. Dabbs:

On behalf of the Regional Water Authority (RWA), we appreciate the opportunity to comment on the April 2005 Public Review Draft California Water Plan Update Bulletin 160-05.

The RWA is a Joint Powers Authority representing over 20 water agencies in the greater Sacramento, Placer and El Dorado County region. Our mission is to help our members protect and enhance the reliability, availability, affordability and quality of water resources.

We offer the following comments:

- On pages 12 and 13 of the “Highlights” document, the plan emphasizes the importance of local agencies coordinating within their respective regions to develop integrated regional water management plans to promote sustainable resource management, increase self-sufficiency, and increase regional drought preparedness among other benefits. Regional integrated planning is one of RWA’s core programs as we have recently embarked upon a \$2.6 million IRWMP effort for the Sacramento, Placer and El Dorado county region.

The success of our IRWMP effort, as well as other similar efforts throughout the state, will depend to a large degree upon the “essential support activities”, as listed in part on page 13. We suggest that you add one very important support activity: **Improve coordination and cooperation among state and federal agencies to provide timely regulatory approvals and to prevent conflicting rules or guidelines** (see page 4-6, item 5 recommendation to help promote additional conjunctive management).

- The seriousness of the groundwater contamination issue throughout the state as well as the water supply and economic implications of this growing problem are not emphasized nearly enough in the document. For example, the “water quality” sections (page 4-5, Conjunctive Management and Groundwater Storage,

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and page 6-8, Sacramento River Hydrologic Region) fails to acknowledge how several large-scale contamination plumes are rendering huge volumes of groundwater unusable at this time – and in many cases, the plumes are growing unabated. This problem needs more attention from the state and federal government in the form of effective regulation, technical assistance, and funding assistance for remediation. Contamination adversely affects water supply reliability and the environment – in addition to water quality.

- On page 6-14, we appreciate the short notation about the RWA and its mission in the “Looking to the Future” section. This section also highlights and describes a number of other notable regional and sub-regional efforts underway throughout the Sacramento Valley. To better describe the RWA and its significant activities in the 3-county region, we ask that you add the following to the third paragraph: “RWA and its members have successfully implemented the American River Basin Conjunctive Use Program and a region-wide water efficiency program in furtherance of the goals and objectives of the historic Water Forum Agreement.”

We hope that these comments prove useful toward improving the California Water Plan. Feel free to contact me or Rob Swartz of my staff at (916) 967-7692 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "ED Winkler". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Edward D. Winkler  
Executive Director