



May 7, 2008

Mr. Phil Isenberg, Chair
Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force
Delta Vision
650 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Bay Area water supply reliability and the restoration of Hetch Hetchy Valley

Dear Mr. Isenberg:

Restore Hetch Hetchy supports the Delta Vision's primary and co-equal goals of protecting the Delta ecosystem and providing reliable water supply for California. We ask the Delta Vision to recognize that improved Delta conveyance, properly managed and operated, could not only improve the supply reliability of Bay Area communities beyond those currently served by the export pumps in the south Delta but also help to facilitate restoration of Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park.

The communities served by the East Bay Municipal Utility District and the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission each rely almost entirely on a single conveyance system to move supplies from the Sierra Nevada to the Bay Area. While some new physical interconnections, along with institutional agreements, have recently been made, these Bay Area communities lack diversity of supply. Should the Mokelumne or Hetch Hetchy aqueducts fail due to earthquake, drought, flood, terrorism or other disaster, the consequences for these major urban centers would be extraordinarily disruptive and could be catastrophic.

Improving the reliability of water supply for EBMUD and SFPUC customers is within the domain of the Delta Vision, given its co-equal goal of providing reliable water supply for California. It is likely that relatively little supply would actually be provided through improved Delta facilities to these customers, but it is very important that the capability exist in case that additional supply is needed. These supplies could be provided directly, perhaps through a new connection (and treatment plant) near the juncture of the California Aqueduct and the SFPUC's Coast Range Tunnel. Improved Delta conveyance could also assure availability of Mokelumne and Tuolumne River supplies to EBMUD and the SFPUC by exchanging Delta supplies with other agencies that also rely on those rivers.

There is little doubt that any changes in the suggested allocation of water in California has the potential to cause legitimate concern among agencies that are responsible for providing water to their own communities. The Delta Vision's charge, however, is to consider the broader welfare of all of Californians.

Mr. Phil Isenberg, Chair, Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force

May 5, 2008

Re: Bay Area water supply reliability and the restoration of Hetch Hetchy Valley

Page 2

Similarly, it is likely that any changes within the Delta will cause legitimate concern among those who are dedicated to restoring the wildlife and fisheries that depend on a healthy Delta. Restore Hetch Hetchy supports Delta habitat restoration and project operating criteria that provide ample flows for ecosystem restoration, as well as a viable governance structure to assure that the Delta environment will be protected over time.

An additional source of water for the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, even if seldom used, could also replace the small amount of supply that would be lost if Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park were to be restored¹. While Hetch Hetchy has not been explicitly addressed in previous Delta Vision documents, it, like many upstream areas, has the potential to benefit from an improved Delta. Restoring Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park would provide a spectacular mountain valley for the enjoyment of future generations. It could be managed to accommodate visitors without the degree of development that has diminished the quality of Yosemite Valley, its sister valley 15 miles to the south.

Please incorporate both the potential benefits to these Bay Area communities and the potential restoration of Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park in your Delta Vision. We take the liberty of suggesting the following specific language:

An improved and reliable Delta conveyance system could provide emergency and supplemental water supply to communities not currently served by the existing south Delta facilities, including the East Bay Municipal Utility District and the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission.

An improved and reliable Delta conveyance system could help to make possible the restoration of Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park by supplementing the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission's Tuolumne River supply in dry years, either directly or through exchange with other regional water agencies.

Thank you for considering these suggestions. Feel free to contact any of us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Ron Good
Executive Director



Spreck Rosekrans
Chair, Board of Directors

¹ Analysis by Environmental Defense Fund indicates that, without Hetch Hetchy Reservoir, more than 95% of the SFPUC's delivery reliability would be retained by diverting Tuolumne River flows at Early Intake outside Yosemite and by building a new connection from either Cherry Lake or Don Pedro Reservoir to its conveyance system for diversion of stored supplies. See *Paradise Regained: Solutions for Restoring Yosemite's Hetch Hetchy Valley* (2004) and *Cherry Intertie Alternative* (2005).