



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CALIFORNIA

801 12th Street, Suite 220, Sacramento, California 95814
(916) 442-7215 ■ Fax (916) 442-7362 ■ (888) 870-8683
Web site: www.lwvc.org ■ E-mail: lwvc@lwvc.org

January 14, 2008

Delores Brown, Chief
Office of Environmental Compliance
California Department of Water Resources
Sent by e-mail: delores@water.ca.gov

Re: Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) for the Monterey Amendments to the State Water Project Contracts

Dear Ms. Brown:

The League of Women Voters of California supports measures that promote the management and development of water resources in ways that are beneficial to the environment with emphasis on conservation. We are opposed to making the Monterey Amendments to State Water Project (SWP) contracts permanent. We believe that the Department of Water Resources (DWR) should operate the State Water Project as it did prior to the development of these amendments.

We oppose the Monterey Amendments for several reasons.

These amendments were developed in secret meetings between the DWR and selected SWP contractors. The League of Women Voters believes that governmental bodies must protect the citizen's right to know and has long worked to insure that citizens have an opportunity to provide input into policy making.

Now that the contents of the amendments have seen the light of day, we find many of their provisions to be objectionable.

The amendments eliminate provisions of the original SWP contracts that provide safeguards for urban areas in drought conditions. DWR itself estimates that in dry years, water supplies for urban homes and businesses could be reduced by over 400,000 acre-feet.

The Monterey Agreement, implemented by the Monterey Amendments, also proposes to give the state-owned Kern Water Bank to a joint powers authority including the Kern County Water Agency. As we anticipate the effects of climate change, we feel it imperative that the state should maintain control of this important state water resource.

We are very concerned about the use of intermittently available or unreliable "paper water" sources, as allowed under the Monterey Amendments, to support uses such as

housing development or permanent crops. DWR should continue to attempt to determine the realistic yield of the SWP and should not promise to provide water that cannot be reliably delivered.

We fear that the Monterey Agreement may be an important contributor to the current problems in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta in that it has resulted in over-pumping and has added to the crisis in the Delta.

The Draft Environmental Impact Report does not adequately address these concerns. We must register our opposition to making the Monterey Amendments permanent.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit these comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Janis R. Hirohama". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line at the end.

Janis R. Hirohama
President