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Setting standards of excellence in public service

May 16, 2008

Lester A. Snow, Director
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Dorothy R. Rice, Executive Director
State Water Resources Control Board
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Support for Proposition 50, Chapter 8, Round 2 Proposed \$25 Million Funding Award for the San Diego Region IRWM Plan

Dear Director Snow and Executive Director Rice:

On behalf of the Helix Water District, a participant in the San Diego Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWM Plan), we are submitting this letter in support of the recommendation to fund San Diego's IRWM Plan up to the full \$25 million funding level. We understand that funding of \$20,675,000 is secured in the State's budget and that the availability of the balance of funds is contingent upon approval of a FY 2008-09 State budget proposal authorizing \$6.4 million in additional Proposition 50, Chapter 8 funding for the IRWM grant program.

The suite of projects submitted by San Diego for funding under Proposition 50, Chapter 8, represent a comprehensive and integrated approach to securing greater water supply reliability and resource protection. We believe that the partnership undertaken over the past two years by a diverse group of local stakeholders developing our IRWM Plan has resulted in a strong foundation for sustained involvement in and evolution of our region's balanced and holistic priorities.

San Diego's IRWM Plan establishes a clear pathway for the continued advancement of collaborative projects featuring multiple benefits that will help to expand reliable local water supplies. These projects are especially important given that the San Diego Region's imported water supplies have been significantly reduced in recent years. Southern California lost half of its traditional Colorado River supply earlier this decade; court-ordered pumping restrictions reduced State Water Project deliveries by approximately 30 percent this year.

We wish to thank the Department of Water Resources and the State Water Resources Control Board for their continued support of IRWM Planning and grant programs. We urge DWR and the State Board to approve the draft funding recommendations for Round 2, including \$25 million for the San Diego IRWM Plan, or \$20,675,000 should the additional funds not be available in the State FY 2008-09 budget. Given the magnitude of our region's needs and the number of people we serve (3 million), we strongly believe that the final figure should be \$25 million. We appreciate the request made by the Department of Water Resources to transfer the \$6.4 million back to the IRWM grant program and will work with the San Diego delegation to further encourage this budget shift.

Sincerely,

Charles W. Muse
Board President

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