



Tony Mendoza ASSEMBLY MEMBER FIFTY-SIXTH DISTRICT

September 3, 2009

California Legislature

Lester Snow  
Department of Water Resources  
1416 Ninth Street  
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001  
Email: DWR\_IRWM@water.ca.gov

Re: Request for reconsideration of the RAP denial of the LA Gateway IRWM JPA Authority (Gateway Authority)

Dear Director Snow:

As a legislator who wrote in support of the Gateway IRWM Authority's application to DWR, I am disappointed and surprised to learn that DWR has preliminarily denied the group's status as a Regional Water Management Group (RWMG). It is particularly distressing that the Recommendation Summary stated:

*"...the rationale for forming a separate IRWM Region, exclusive of the GLAC IRWM Region, is not compelling. Therefore, DWR does not approve the Gateway Region."*

The Gateway Authority was formed at the direction of the Gateway Council of Governments (COG). I support this action and one could argue that the intent of the locally elected officials to represent the people of the Gateway Cities would be undermined with your decision. Below are several examples that highlight the benefit and effectiveness of the Gateway Authority:

- The Gateway Authority, even in its short life, has a successful record of effective governance and integrated planning for regional water needs.
- Currently, the Gateway Authority secured a \$10 million grant to improve water quality in the Los Angeles River and is administering a Metals TMDL monitoring and implementation plan in the San Gabriel River.
- The Gateway IRWM Authority clearly meets the minimum qualification for a RWMG as defined in the State Water Code.
- The Gateway Region includes 27 cities, the water wholesaler Central Basin MWD, and the region's groundwater quality advocate, the Southeast Water Coalition. *None of the cities in this region have consented to regional water management representation by any other agency.* Indeed 15 of the COG entities are dues-paying members of the Gateway Authority to ensure that their voices are heard. The others have indicated their member status will change as soon as their budgets recover (which should be co-incident to the state's recovery and subsequent release of bond funds which support IRWM activities).
- The Gateway Region is a vast area: its two million people comprise nearly 6% of the state. It also represents the highest concentration of minority and disadvantaged communities in Southern California. To equitably address regional water needs, it is imperative that the region maintain strong local leadership in water management issues.

There is a historic and well documented neglect of the Gateway Region by larger County planning efforts in a multitude of disciplines. Though DWR acknowledges as much in the Recommendations for the GLAC Region, they have not proposed a remedy for this inveterate problem; in fact the approval of their region imposes no consequence. This amounts to law without enforcement, and we all can appreciate how ineffective this can be.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to reconsider the preliminary RAP decision and give the Gateway Authority its approval.

Sincerely,

TONY MENDOZA  
Assemblymember

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