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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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AUBURN-- The Placer County Water Agency Board of Directors met in regular session on Feb. 5.

Among the many issues discussed were the long-term implications being planned to drastically alter the Delta as recently proposed by the Governor's Delta Vision Committee. "PCWA has very serious concerns with several of the so-called 'solutions' proposed to 'fix' the Delta. The agency must be assertive to guard that these are not implemented on the backs of water agencies and customers located above the Delta, such as Placer County," said General Manager David Breninger.

Staff reported that any proposed alterations to the Delta, including water for ecosystem restoration and the newly configured peripheral canal, must be implemented to honor and comply with California's existing water rights' system and area-of-origin statutes. "These are critically important statutes to PCWA as they assure water supply protection to Sierra Nevada watershed areas like Placer County and in particular to the agency's Middle Fork American River water storage project," said Breninger.

The board also considered the Governor's proposal for a sweeping statewide, one-size-fits-all, per capita reduction in urban water use plan by the year 2020. "Now embodied in AB 49, this proposal is burdensome, would be an unfunded mandate and has no consideration of local water needs or who is to benefit from the alleged water 'saved' by this plan," said PCWA Chairman Gray Allen.

The board authorized that the agency's concerns and recommendations about the proposed Delta alterations and AB 49 be sent by letter to the Association of California Water Agencies which represents water utilities on legislative and regulatory issues.

Staff provided a review on the agency's comprehensive water use efficiency program.

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Director of Customer Services John Kingsbury said, “The agency has been promoting, and our customers have been observing, water use efficiency practices for the past 40 years, including two key components: water meters at all connections since 1968 and use of tiered treated water rates for nearly a decade.”

He highlighted that the agency also has an active meter testing and replacement program to ensure accurate meter reading, provides water-wise house calls to help customers save water, administers several rebate programs, provides water education to schools, homeowner’s associations, and participates at public events.

Most recently, he reported that the agency has expanded its outreach in collaboration with the City of Auburn on a youth program to carry the water efficiency message to the community. Kingsbury said, “This pilot program is an excellent catalyst for us to expand student awareness about water education at schools and at homes and may be expanded to other communities in Placer County as well.”

He summarized that because the agency has implemented water use efficiency objectives, PCWA has consistently met regional Sacramento Water Forum efficiency goals. The agency was recognized as well when it received the prestigious Community Service/Resource Efficiency award from the California Municipal Utilities Association in 2006.

In other business, directors:

- approved a contract with consultant Cheryl Buckwalter to administer the agency’s new lawn replacement rebate program. The water efficiency “pilot” program offers rebates for lawn replacement with plants or materials that use less or no water.

- heard updates on the agency’s ongoing project to obtain a new federal license for the Middle Fork American River Project. Staff offered presentations on scheduling, current studies, project operation modeling and future power sales marketing. The agency anticipates a new operating license by February 2013.

- approved environmental studies for a project to install 1100 feet of new underground pipeline on the Boardman Canal where it passes through the Pacific Heights apartment complex and Railhead Park off Pacific Avenue in Auburn. Director of Technical Services Brian Martin said he anticipates construction this year.

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The next regular meeting of the PCWA Board of Directors will be held at 2 p.m. on Feb. 19 at the PCWA Business Center, 144 Ferguson Road, in Auburn. PCWA board meetings are open to the public.

Information on PCWA board meetings may be obtained through the Clerk to the Board at (530) 823-4850.

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