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NEWS RELEASE

February 3, 2012

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

PCWA Comments on Delta Draft EIR

AUBURN - In formal comments filed Thursday (Feb. 2) with the Delta Stewardship Council, the Placer County Water Agency is contending that environmental studies for the proposed future operation of the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta are inadequate.

PCWA and other Northern California water purveyors and organizations have been actively tracking the Delta planning process. Local officials remain very concerned that new water flow requirements for the Delta could seriously impact upstream agencies such as PCWA.

PCWA legal adviser Janet Goldsmith briefed the PCWA Board of Directors on Thursday after filing the comments on the draft EIR earlier in the day.

She said the draft EIR does not provide adequate information on the potential impacts to areas upstream of the Delta. "In a 2000-plus page environmental document, water supply reliability effects merit more than a summary page of discussion," she wrote.

PCWA's comments, which will be considered as the Delta Stewardship Council works toward a final environmental study, center around what is described as "a more natural flow regime" into the Delta.

"Implementing a more natural flow regime would almost certainly constitute an unavoidable significant impact to areas upstream of the Delta," said Goldsmith.

PCWA has been tracking the Delta planning process in collaboration with the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA), the State and Federal Contractors Water Agency, Mountain Counties Water Resources Association and the Regional Water Authority.

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Appointed by the State Legislature, the Delta Stewardship Council is tasked with the twin objectives of improving and restoring the Delta, which has suffered environmental damage through years of overuse and overdrafting of water by downstream agencies and improving water supply reliability. The council's draft Delta Plan is now in its fifth revision.

In other business, PCWA directors:

- heard a water supply update from Director of Field Services, Mike Nichol, who reported through January, Lake Spaulding has received about half its average precipitation. If the average snow and rainfall occurs for the remainder of winter and spring, the watershed would receive about 74 percent of normal precipitation for the year. A more detailed briefing on this year's water supplies is scheduled for the Feb. 16 meeting of the PCWA board.

- heard a report from Director of Technical Services, Brian Martin, on his department's accomplishments for 2011 and anticipated issues for 2012. Martin's department includes 21 positions in engineering and 30 positions in water quality. He noted that the agency produced 10.6 billion gallons of treated drinking water in 2011.

The next regular meeting of the PCWA Board of Directors will be held at 2 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 16, at the PCWA Business Center, 144 Ferguson Road, in Auburn.

Information on PCWA board meetings may be obtained through the Clerk to the Board at (530) 823-4850 or (800) 464-0030. PCWA information is also posted at www.pcwa.net.