



# AGENDA REPORT

SAN CLEMENTE CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
Meeting Date: September 5, 2017

Agenda Item 6-J  
Approvals:  
City Manager [Signature]  
Dept. Head [Signature]  
Attorney [Signature]  
Finance [Signature]

**Department:** Utilities  
**Prepared By:** Dave Rebensdorf, Utilities Director DR

**Subject:** *ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE CALIFORNIA WATERFIX.*

**Fiscal Impact:** No impact at this time. The project cost is estimated \$17 billion dollars and may cost water customers an additional between \$2 to \$3 dollars per month.

**Summary:** Staff recommends that the City Council adopt a Resolution in support of the California WaterFix project.

**Background/  
Discussion:** As a critical source of water supply, the California Bay Delta provides approximately 30 percent of Southern California's water supply annually. That number is higher in South Orange County, which relies heavily on imported water from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.

In partnership with the Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWDOC), the City of San Clemente participated in the recent Orange County Water Reliability Study (Study) evaluating scenarios and projects that enhance or sustain water supplies to the region. Modeling shows the California WaterFix, as currently proposed, represents the most cost-effective, large-scale reliability solution to improving Orange County's water supply reliability over the next 25 years. The supply analyses in the Study assumed that the California WaterFix results in "recovery" (i.e., prevents the future loss) of historical supplies in the amount of 440,000 acre-feet per year on average.

MWDOC Directors in December passed a resolution of support for the California WaterFix, which is approaching the final stages for its permits and environmental documents (EIR/EIS and Record of Decision). The profile and level of support for this program needs to be elevated. More than 100 alternatives were considered during a 10-year study period that drew 30,000 public comments before Plan 4a, the WaterFix, was recommended.

The California WaterFix involves construction and design of the three new water intakes north of the Delta and the two, 32-mile, 9,000 cfs underground tunnels that will provide operational pumping flexibility and protect against water supply disruption. However, much remains to be determined, especially with respect to the financing, regulatory certainty and operating criteria for the project.

In addition to water management and quality benefits, a large and growing consensus understands that the Delta is in an unsustainable position and needs to be "fixed" to accommodate the many competing interests for the future, especially with regard to ensuring the area is a sustainable ecosystem. The status quo is yielding a continuing degradation of the Delta systems, levee integrity and water supply reliability. The companion initiative to the California WaterFix is the EcoRestore, which seeks to achieve the State's co-equal goal of habitat restoration and reliability of supplies. EcoRestore is initially charged with 30,000 acres of restoration efforts under an accelerated effort by 2020 to improved habitat conditions for fisheries migration, restore tidal and non-tidal wetland habitat for native wildlife, and improve connectivity among existing grassland and other natural habitats.

Success in the Delta continues to rely on the implementation of the California WaterFix and EcoRestore to achieve the co-equal goals. The ecological health of the Delta and fish species are fundamentally linked to the reasonable use and export of water supplies. Although total restoration of the Delta to the historical past is not possible, there can be significant improvements in how best to approach the management of the Delta's combined water and land resources in a manner that will realistically achieve improvements in both water supply reliability and ecosystem protection of the Delta's endangered or threatened aquatic species.

Based on these proposed improvements in system conveyance and habitat restoration, staff recommends the City Council adopt a support position for the California WaterFix and Preferred Alternative (No.4A) as described in the environmental documents, with reasonable adherence to the current, public operating criteria and cost allocation principles and assumptions.

**Recommended**

**Action:** STAFF RECOMMENDS THAT the City Council adopt Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_, entitled "A Resolution of the City Council of the City of San Clemente Supporting the California WaterFix."

**Attachments:** Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_.

**Notification:** None.

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF  
SAN CLEMENTE, CALIFORNIA, IN SUPPORT FOR THE  
CALIFORNIA WATERFIX

WHEREAS, the Delta, formed by the confluence of the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers as they come together and flow into San Francisco Bay, is a major water hub for California's water supply system for the majority of the State, including 30 percent of the supplies for Southern California, and therefore underpins the overall economy of California, which stands equivalent to the 6<sup>th</sup> largest country in the world; and,

WHEREAS, the Delta historically was a complex and dynamic natural system driven by tidal fluctuations and natural marsh flooding that has been highly altered over the last 100 years, with many of the levees and islands reclaimed from former marshlands for development or farming. The Delta was never intended to be a water conveyance facility. The scientific consensus is that the Delta is not sustainable as it exists today and that changes must be made to stabilize conditions; and,

WHEREAS, from a fisheries, farming and water-management perspective, the Delta will continue to decline, at an increasing rate as sea levels rise and continuing subsidence caused by farming result in salinity intrusion, artesian conditions and levee failures, which will become more frequent and more expensive to mitigate or repair as time passes; and,

WHEREAS, 25 million residents rely on water from the Delta, and local conservation cannot replace the water the Delta has historically supplied to Southern California even though that amount is only 4 percent of the annual average Delta flows; and,

WHEREAS, no practicable and economically efficient way exists to improve existing levees to keep pace with sea level rise or prevent levee collapse during a large earthquake. The consequences to the Bay Delta ecosystem, the water supply and the California economy would be immediate, severe and negative when these events occur; and,

WHEREAS, Voters approved the State Water Project (SWP) about 55 years ago, yet it was never completed as envisioned to include an independent conveyance facility that would allow increased capture and storage of water during periods of high flows and would also minimize conflicts with fisheries; and,

WHEREAS, as the result of federal court decisions, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service Biological Opinions, as well as other regulatory constraints to protect native species in the Delta, the SWP has not been able to collect, store, and deliver an estimated volume of 3.6 million acre-feet of water since 2008; and,

WHEREAS, although restoration of the Delta to the conditions of the historical past is not possible, much has been learned through science studies about what is needed to improve the management and utilization of the Delta that can enhance fish, wildlife and water management for the future; and,

WHEREAS, Governor Brown's California WaterFix and California EcoRestore proposal provide a framework of how best to approach managing the Delta's combined water and land resources in a manner that will realistically achieve improvements in both water supply reliability and ecosystem protection for the Delta as an evolving place by balancing the many competing demands; and,

WHEREAS, the California WaterFix and Eco-Restore proposal will help with water supply reliability by improving essential ecosystem functions so that populations of endangered or threatened aquatic species will be strengthened; and,

WHEREAS, the California EcoRestore will pursue more than 30,000 acres of critical Delta restoration over the next five years, including the improvements of habitat conditions for fisheries migration, restoring tidal and non-tidal wetland habitat for native wildlife, and improving connectivity among existing grassland and other natural habitats; and,

WHEREAS, the California WaterFix includes construction of three intakes north of the Delta, two 35-mile tunnels up to 150 feet below the Delta and Clifton Court forebay modifications, all of which will provide operational pumping flexibility and protect against water supply disruption due to sea-level rise, earthquakes and flood events; and,

WHEREAS, the three new intakes north of the Delta will improve environmental conditions in the Delta by reducing reverse-flow conditions, minimizing the trapping of migrating fish and reducing diversions during critical fish-migration periods, which will allow more operational flexibility to enhance water deliveries, especially during wet periods; and,

WHEREAS, improving the SWP system can increase regional storage reserve levels. These storage reserves are used to protect the region from devastating effects of drought and other emergencies. The California WaterFix will help ensure that Orange County will have sufficient supplies at critical times when we need them; and,

WHEREAS, the 2016 Orange County Water Reliability Study revealed a number of important findings with implications for the county's water reliability, including that projected water shortages would be too frequent and overall reliability would not be sustainable by as early as 2030 without new supply and system investments by the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MET), its member agencies and Orange County;

WHEREAS, Orange County should strongly advocate for the implementation of the California WaterFix and EcoRestore, as it represents the most cost-effective large-scale reliability solution to improve regional water supply reliability for all of Southern California. The Orange County water reliability supply analyses assumes the California WaterFix results in "recovery" of historical supplies in the amount of approximately 440,000 acre-feet per year on average and notes that adjustments to the project costs or supply development could result in changes to this recommendation; and,

WHEREAS, Orange County ratepayers have invested millions of dollars to build and maintain the SWP as well as portions of Metropolitan's regional storage, distribution, and treatment systems that take delivery of SWP supplies. Modernizing the system through the California WaterFix will protect this investment for decades to come; and,

WHEREAS, moving forward with the California WaterFix will not be an inexpensive endeavor; however, it is the most cost-effective investment of the ratepayers' dollars to maintain and continue our economic vitality for the region. Furthermore, all of the costs for California WaterFix will be paid for exclusively by water agencies benefiting from the project; and,

WHEREAS, to do nothing in the Delta is far costlier to the businesses, residents, and economy in the State of California and Orange County than investing in the California WaterFix and California EcoRestore; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the City Council of the City of San Clemente does hereby support the California WaterFix Preferred Alternative (No.4A) as described in the environmental documents with reasonable adherence to the current, public operating criteria and cost allocation principles and assumptions.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_,

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk of the City of  
San Clemente, California

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor of the City of San  
Clemente, California

STATE OF CALIFORNIA )  
COUNTY OF ORANGE ) §  
CITY OF SAN CLEMENTE )

I, JOANNE BAADE, City Clerk of the City of San Clemente, California, do hereby certify that Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_ was adopted at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of San Clemente held on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the official seal of the City of San Clemente, California, this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
CITY CLERK of the City of  
San Clemente, California

Approved as to form:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Attorney