

September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021



Protecting Marin Since 1934

Board of Directors  
Marin Municipal Water District  
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Re: 9/21/2021 Board Agenda

Dear Directors:

In response to historic statewide drought conditions, and uncertainties about future rainfall, the Marin Conservation League appreciates the district's efforts to evaluate and inform the public about alternatives for supplemental water supply. Due to climate change, it is prudent that the water district diversifies its portfolio to ensure a resilient water supply for the public it serves.

We recommend the following.

1. **INTERTIE PIPELINE.** Proceed with planning, permitting, and construction of the intertie (pipeline) over the Richmond/San Rafael Bridge connecting to the East Bay Municipal Utilities District (EBMUD), with continued implementation of ongoing conservation measures.
2. **CONSERVATION.** Increase efforts toward reaching greater community conservation goals, including mandatory use standards, set firm standards on the maintaining of private swimming pools such as those adopted by North Marin Water District (NMWD), and ongoing incentives to phase out non-productive private lawns. Encourage replacing landscaping with native, drought tolerant species that contribute to the natural habitat, support biodiversity and pollinator species, sequester carbon and reduce fire danger around homes.
3. **WATER USE CAP & PENALTY FEES.** Implement caps for reasonable use beyond which customers would be subject to penalty fees. In current drought circumstances, which likely may continue for similar or longer extended periods in the future, user caps should provide for public health and household needs, but target non-essential water usage such as for outdoor activities. Penalties should be sufficient to discourage overuse.
4. **DESALINATION.** Leave plans for alternative modular desalination facilities off the table at this time. A 5.4-5.9 millions of gallons/day (MGD) desalination plant will fall far short of meeting our needs. Desalination has high cost, uses more electricity and emits more greenhouse gases than the proposed intertie. It is the least environmentally sound alternative being offered.

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Marin Conservation League was founded in 1934 to preserve, protect and enhance the natural assets of Marin County.

5. **LAGUNITAS TUCP.** Assure that the Temporary Urgency Change Petition (TCUP) to reduce water flow released to the Lagunitas Creek system was a one-time adjustment, with which we reluctantly agree. It should not, however, be counted on in future years and we presume is being rigorously monitored as requested by regulatory agencies. It is entirely possible, in fact, that changing climate conditions at some point will merit increasing flows above what has normally been done to insure suitable habitat for aquatic species.

6. **LONG TERM PLANNING.** Longer term strategies, such as the following, must get underway:

- Water rate tiers must be sharply revised to reduce the Tier 1 and 2 quantities. This should include elimination of the existing subsidy for increased allowable volumes of water for summertime use that are currently embedded in Marin Municipal Water District's water rate structure.
- Recycling pipelines such as the Peacock Gap project, and wastewater treatment to more usable levels must be implemented and expanded where feasible.
- A North Bay regional approach to a sustainable water supply should be inaugurated.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Yours truly,



Robert Miller  
President



Susan Stompe  
Chair, Land Use, Water and  
Transportation

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