



May 27, 2021

Ms. Jessica Law
Executive Director
Sacramento Water Forum
1330-21st Street, Suite 103
Sacramento CA, 95811

Mr. James Peifer
Executive Director
Regional Water Authority
5620 Birdcage Street, Suite 180
Citrus Heights, CA 95610

Re: 2021 Conjunctive Water Use

Jessica / Jim:

The Fair Oaks Water District (FOWD) is a signatory to the Water Forum Agreement and supports the coequal objectives of the Water Forum (WF) to provide a reliable and safe water supply for the Sacramento region's long-term growth and economic health; and to preserve the fishery, wildlife, recreational, and aesthetic values of the lower American River. FOWD is also a member of the Regional Water Authority (RWA) and supports RWA objectives, including the published plan for conjunctive use operations for regional water supply. Primarily based on our support of the objectives of the WF and RWA, the FOWD has received millions of dollars to fund water supply projects.

The Sacramento region is entering into the summer of 2021 with concerns about water level projections for Folsom Lake and water temperature projections for the lower American River. The purpose of this letter is to inform you that the FOWD is committed to increasing our use of groundwater for the remainder of 2021 in order to increase water levels in Folsom Lake and minimize temperature increases in the lower American River. Since the FOWD does not have a financial partner in our commitment to turn to groundwater and forgo surface water use in 2021, this action will come at a significant cost to FOWD ratepayers. During this time, the FOWD will be required to pay a majority of the cost of continuing to serve our customers surface water and the cost of groundwater production.



This lack of financial incentive for shifting to groundwater is one that we must address for the long-term viability of the region's major initiatives such as the Water Bank. However, to use it as a roadblock this year—in what may be our next “historic” drought year and a case study for climate change impacts on our water supplies and environment—is simply shortsighted.

FOWD's commitment to increasing groundwater use may cause financial impacts over the short-term, however we believe the long-term dividends to be more important. The FOWD—along with many other RWA members—have received millions of dollars in grant funding because of our demonstrated ability and commitment to shifting to groundwater during dry times like this. We as a region committed to taking action and received money to build a water system that could support this action.

Even more, consider what could come if we all did our part by shifting to groundwater to the greatest extent possible: This region could be a model for addressing climate change impacts—could demonstrate how we are an ideal investment—for future funding. This is our opportunity and time to do the right thing—and to live the story that we have shared for the past many years.

If you have any questions or comments related to the information contained in this letter, please contact me at tgray@fowd.com or at 916-967-5723.

Best Wishes,

Tom R. Gray
General Manager
Fair Oaks Water District