

**Public Comment by Stephen Arakawa**  
**Delta Stewardship Council, May 25**  
**Draft Amendments on Conveyance, Storage and Operations**

- Good morning Chairman Fiorini and members of the Stewardship Council.
- I am Stephen Arakawa, manager of the Bay Delta Initiatives Program for the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.
- The process of amending the Delta Plan to expand its guidance for conveyance, storage and operations is an extremely important step toward achieving the co-equal goals in the Delta.
- And we appreciate your efforts to refine a draft that will be ready for environmental review.
- We very much agree with the Council draft that the status quo is unsustainable.
- The current water system cannot capture water efficiently and safely during wet periods.
- Multiple points of diversion will reduce conflicts with a Delta ecosystem under a much needed restoration plan.
- We support the draft amendments that call for a dual conveyance system, part of a modernized Delta water infrastructure that adapts to climate change.
- At stake is the reliability of a water supply for 25 million Californians who live in various communities throughout the state.
- Our letter notes the many modifications of the proposed project that have been made to minimize the impacts of construction and the final footprint.
- And we look forward to working with you and staff to advance performance measures that best reflect management of additional storage to provide dry year benefits and water quality metrics that reflect the best available science.
- I want to share some background on the actions that Metropolitan and its member agencies in Southern California have been taking to reduce reliance on the Delta.
- Our strategic planning and investments for reduced reliance date back to the drought of 1991 and the need for Southern California to improve conservation and diversify its water portfolio.
- We faced shortages that year because we had limited water in storage locally.
- Metropolitan completely rethought its water philosophy to emphasize the capture of Delta supplies in wet years.
- Our storage network has increased 13-fold since the mid 1980's.

- And thanks to those investments in storage, we are now able to capture water in wet years so it's available to homes, businesses, farms and the environment in dry years.
- We also provide financial support for our member agencies to develop their own local supplies.
- And during this past drought we invested \$450 million in conservation over two years, including the largest turf removal program in the nation.
- Our per capita water use has dropped about 30% over the past generation. With 5 million more people, our region is using about the same amount of water as it did 25 years ago.
- And we plan to repeat this accomplishment with the coming generation.
- We recognize the importance of Southern California being wise users of our imported water supplies and we take that responsibility very seriously.
- Thank you very much for your time and your Council's important efforts to advance the Co-Equal goals for the Delta and all of California.