



February 21, 2019

Monterey Peninsula Water Management District Board of Directors and Staff:

On behalf of the 3500 local members of Public Water Now I want to say thank you to the Water Management District for its contribution to the Pure Water Monterey Project. While Cal Am made promises and charged us for failed projects, the District took action.

For decades, Cal Am has been over drafting our water resources, creating the water shortage we now face. It has given us the most expensive water in the country, with many residents paying hundreds of dollars a month for water.

The huge expense of Cal Am's proposed desal plant and the cost of the water it would produce, added to what we now pay, could double the cost of our water.

Cal Am's desal plant would draw its source water from Marina's groundwater, harming Marina's water supply.

The inconvenient truth is that Cal Am has no legal rights to this water. Contrary to Cal Am's claims, it cannot get appropriate water rights in the over drafted Salinas basin. Neither the CPUC nor the State Water Board can determine water rights. This must be settled in court. As you know, on January 16, 2019, Marina & Marina Coast filed their case challenging this project in the California Supreme Court.

Cal Am would like us all to believe that its desal plant is the only answer to our water supply problems. They would like us to believe they can get around the law and steal Marina's water. But water rights law appears to be on Marina's side. At this point, blind faith in Cal Am is a risky bet.

This is a terrible gamble with our community's water supply. If Cal Am loses there is no back up plan to supply water or meet the CDO deadline.

Cal Am and its supporters claim that there is no alternative to this desal plant. They claim we need 14,000 acre-feet to meet our long-term demand. Where is their proof of this future demand? In the ten years before the moratorium from 1997 to 2006, only 125 acre-feet of new water were needed.

From the current MPWMD numbers it looks like we need much less than Cal Am claims. Another 660 acre-feet would meet our 5-year average use of 9,924 acre-feet.

Clearly, the 2250 acre-feet from the expansion of Pure Water Monterey would meet our needs for decades to come.

The only plan that can guarantee us water is the Pure Water Monterey expansion. Please, for the good of our community, we ask you to move the expansion forward. It will take 27 months to complete. To meet the CDO deadline Monterey One Water must begin by September. There's no time to lose.

Melodie Chrislock
Managing Director
Public Water Now