

Restore Hetch Hetchy
Sierra Club California
California Water Impact Network
Desal Response Group
Southern California Watershed Alliance
Planning and Conservation League
Friends of the River

February 13, 2012

The Honorable Ken Salazar
Department of the Interior
1849 "C" Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

Re: Interior investigation of compliance with the Raker Act

Dear Secretary Salazar:

The undersigned organizations support an investigation by the Department of the Interior as to whether diversions of water supplies from the Tuolumne River to San Francisco and its wholesale water customers are in compliance with the Raker Act – the 1913 statute which authorized construction of water storage facilities within Yosemite National Park.

The Raker Act clearly states (section 9H) that the diversions from the Tuolumne River must be limited, and that communities that divert water from the Tuolumne River must in fact make use of their own local supplies. A quick review of selected Urban Water Management Plans makes clear that San Francisco and at least some of its wholesale customers have in fact lessened their reliance on local resources since Tuolumne River supplies were first diverted to the Bay Area in the 1930s.¹

We believe it is essential that all water agencies, municipal and agricultural, divert only those supplies from California's natural waterways to which they are legally entitled. While the allocation of water between environmental and consumptive uses in California is often the purview of the State Water Resources Control Board, the Raker clearly establishes a federal nexus for diversions from the Tuolumne River to the Bay Area.

¹ The attached "Groundwater Fact Sheet" provides a few simple examples of Bay Area agencies which abandoned local resources after imported Tuolumne River supplies were made available. The Fact Sheet is not intended to be comprehensive, and it does not address either how SFPUC retail and wholesale customers have managed local surface supplies or how other SFPUC wholesale customers have managed groundwater supplies.

We urge the Department of Interior to thoroughly investigate compliance with this section of the Raker Act. If violations are indeed found, we ask Interior to ensure that San Francisco and its wholesale customers develop plans that would bring them into full compliance.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Mike Marshall
Restore Hetch Hetchy



Carolee Krieger
California Water Impact Network

Jonas Minton
Planning and Conservation League



Jim Metropulos
Sierra Club California

Conner Everts
Desal Response Group
Southern California Watershed Alliance



Ron Stork
Friends of the River