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Metropolitan Water District Vote Saddles Ratepayers with High Costs and Harms Investments in Local Water Supplies

Vote to approve two tunnels could lead to catastrophe for San Francisco Bay Delta

SACRAMENTO –The large Southern California water wholesaler, the Metropolitan Water District, voted today, 60.83 percent to 39.17 percent, to support and fund two environmentally damaging tunnels through the San Francisco Bay Delta.

The vote for the tunnels came over the objections of Los Angeles and San Diego, the two largest cities in the district.

The California Department of Water Resources has proposed to build the tunnels at a cost of about \$47 billion, when inflation is taken into account. The tunnels would move 9,000 cubic feet of water per second from the Sacramento River system north of the Delta to points south of the Delta.

Environmental impact documentation has revealed that the tunnels would have negative effects on fish, wildlife and water quality in what is the largest estuary on the west coast of North America.

Statement from Kathryn Phillips, Director of Sierra Club California:

“MWD’s board rushed through a vote on a project that hasn’t yet received permits and that will likely be litigated for years to come. In the meantime, ratepayers will get no benefit.

“It would have been smarter and more responsible for the water agency to commit its ratepayer money to projects that will actually guarantee local water supplies.

“Instead, if the tunnels go through, we’ll have a destroyed ecological system in the Delta and no new water.”

Sierra Club California is the legislative and regulatory advocacy arm of the 13 Sierra Club chapters in California, representing more than 400,000 members and supporters statewide.