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**Statement of William A. Taube
On behalf of
Wheeler Ridge-Maricopa Water Storage District
to
CALFED
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Throughout the CALFED and BDAC process the issue of Water Use Efficiency has been addressed in a number of different forums. This is as it should be since water is a precious and vital resource in the State of California. It is a resource which is too valuable to be wasted on any use or for any purpose. It is so vital in fact that the people of the State of California have included in the State's Constitution a prohibition on the waste and unreasonable use of water. In creating this prohibition on waste and unreasonable use the people did not limit the scope of its applicability to specific purposes, but rather applied such restriction broadly to all uses of water.

The CALFED and BDAC process has focused on a number of conservation measures for urban and agricultural water users. Urban water users have developed a set of Best Management Practices identifying 14 important measures for management of urban water resources. These measures include retrofit of plumbing devices, water audits, education programs, water pricing schemes and a variety of other conservation practices to reduce the unit water use in urban areas. In addition, there are no less than 22 separate State and Federal statutes dealing with water conservation requirements for plumbing fixtures like showers, toilets, faucets and water closets^(a) not to mention a plethora of Local and Statewide Landscape Water Use ordinances^(b).

Similarly pursuant to AB-3616 the Efficient Water Management Practices for Agricultural Water Supplies in California have been developed which establish a broad and comprehensive set of 17 separate measures to be implemented by agricultural water suppliers. These measures are intended to reduce runoff and deep percolation of irrigation water thereby reducing the amount of water delivered by districts or pumped by farmers from wells. In DWR Bulletin 160-98 the magnitude of the reductions of applied water resulting from agricultural water conservation is estimated to be 800,000 acre-feet per year by the year 2020. Bulletin 160-98 further estimates that the true water savings resulting from such reduction of applied water is only 232,000 acre-feet per year.

But for all of its effort, the CALFED and BDAC process has failed to address potentially the largest source of water available for conservation. Water that is used to support the environment is the largest untapped source to which additional conservation efforts should be directed. If the efficiency of the use of this resource could be increased by only 5 percent it would provide huge quantities of new water which would be available for a variety of uses.

According to DWR Bulletin 160-98, the total average annual amount of precipitation which falls in the State of California is about 200 million acre-feet per year^(c). Of this amount about 65 percent or 130 million acre-feet per year goes directly to environmental uses for trees, plants and other vegetation, and the remaining 70 million acre-feet per year comprises the State average annual runoff. Of this amount, an additional 36 million acre-feet per year are dedicated to environmental uses and the remaining 44 million acre-feet are dedicated to urban and agricultural

uses^(d). Thus, of the total average annual precipitation in the State of California over 83 percent is dedicated to environmental uses and nearly 50 percent of the total runoff is dedicated for environmental uses. If only 5 percent of the total environmental water use could be conserved through better management of the environmental resources of the State over 8 million acre-feet of new water would be available annually which could be dedicated to other uses.

Establishing standards and criteria against which to measure the efficiency of environmental water use will not be an easy task, but there is simply too much at stake to continue to ignore the importance of establishing such measures. The fact that an undertaking may be difficult should not deter us from pursuing a solution. In order to conform to the solution principles of CALFED (equity, no displaced impacts) an environmental water use of efficiency program is essential. In developing this program CALFED must consider the steps it can take to eliminate wasteful uses of water for environmental purposes and capture up to 8 million acre-feet of water annually.

We can no longer afford to continue the wasteful practice of the past and throw water at environmental problems in the Delta and elsewhere with the hope that a meaningful solution will result. We cannot afford it and the Constitution of the State of California forbids it.

- (a) DWR Bulletin 160-98 page 4-14
- (b) DWR Bulletin 160-98 page 4-15
- (c) DWR Bulletin 160-98 page 3-1
- (d) DWR Bulletin 160-98 page 4-2

