

SAVE THE BAY

May 10, 2021

Tony Estremera
Chair, Valley Water Board of Directors
5750 Almaden Expressway
San Jose, CA 95118-3686

Mr. Estremera and Members of the Board:

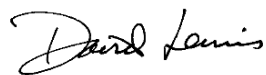
I am writing to express Save The Bay's opposition to the expansion of the Pacheco Reservoir currently under consideration by the Valley Water Board of Directors. At a time of worsening drought and uncertainty around municipal water supplies in the Bay Area, agencies such as Valley Water have an obligation to invest in projects that increase the reliable supply of clean drinking water to its customers. However, the Pacheco project does not appear to be the best option available to meet those goals in light of alternatives that pose significantly lower environmental risks at reduced cost to the district and its ratepayers.

Dams that create on-stream reservoir capacity like Pacheco carry significant environmental risks and require thorough consideration of alternatives that avoid impacts to riparian habitat, fish species, and surrounding watersheds. Fortunately, lower cost and less environmentally damaging alternatives to the Pacheco Reservoir expansion have been identified that would meet the district's goals for reliability and cost-effectiveness. Valley Water should consider the benefits of additional conservation, water recycling, groundwater banking and other alternatives before proceeding any further with the Pacheco Dam project.

Save The Bay has been proud to partner with Valley Water to advocate for critical investments in the Santa Clara Valley to improve water supply and quality, protect the local environment, and prepare for climate change. Specifically, Save The Bay has actively supported Valley Water's Safe Clean Water and Natural Flood Protection Program, which will enhance Valley Water's ability to meet its obligations to provide reliable drinking water while promoting water conservation and habitat restoration. We look forward to continuing to partner with Valley Water on the implementation of this program.

We urge Valley Water to consider more environmentally sustainable alternatives to the Pacheco Reservoir project. By doing so, Valley Water can reinvest in other urgently needed water efficiency and climate adaptation projects within the district's service area.

Sincerely,



David Lewis
Executive Director