Mr. Paul Massera  
Manager, Strategic Water Planning Branch  
California Water Plan Update 2018  
Statewide Integrated Water Management  
California Department of Water Resources  
Attn: Francisco Guzman  
P.O. Box 942836  
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001  


Dear Mr. Massera:  

CalDesal (California Desalination Association) appreciates this opportunity to provide comments on the California Water Plan Update 2018, Public Review Draft, released on December 21, 2018 (Update 2018). CalDesal represents public water agencies and private companies as the primary voice for ocean and brackish desalination and salinity management in California. We believe and encourage the need to manage our water resources in a sustainable manner and that good water planning and water portfolio planning includes desalination and salinity management. CalDesal encourages continued investment in our water resources planning, infrastructure, water projects and sound management.  

CalDesal continues to encourage the state to recognize through the California Water Plan an acknowledgment and appreciation of the on-going work of our members, other water suppliers, and other local, state and federal agencies that are responsibly and effectively managing California’s water resources for both current and future needs. We recognize the role that this plan has in framing current water management challenges and ongoing policy alternatives. We were active in the last update particularly on the recycled water and desalination portion of the Water Plan and appreciate that portion of the previous plan. We have also participated with our fellow water association’s active Water Plan participation, and would like to call to your attention the input and comment letter from the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA).  

We offer these written comments to supplement other comments from CalDesal representatives have offered during previous workshops.  

**Strengthen Alignment to the California Water Action Plan in Update 2018**  

We join with others who have commented and provided detailed reasons why the California Water Action Plan (Action Plan) released by former Governor Jerry Brown in 2014, should be in stronger alignment in this Water Plan. The Action Plan serves as broadly-accepted, statewide
policy direction for water resource management in California. The Action Plan allowed the water community to set goals and measure success through implementation updates on Action Plan progress. Though this update 2018 highlights the Action Plan as a state initiative, we feel it needs to be more central to the document and show instances where the Action Plan has driven water management decision making and other investments in water management. The Action Plan calls for an “all the above” approach to water portfolio planning, recognizing that water for people in California needs to come from broader water supply portfolios. We strongly encourage this approach since it includes looking at ocean and groundwater desalination as key elements for local communities to find drought resilient water supplies as elements of broadening their water supply portfolio. Based on this, we believe that this Water Plan 2018 needs to recognize ocean and groundwater desalination and salinity management as key opportunities for local communities to broaden their water supplies.

**Recognize Local and Regional community’s role in Statewide Water Plan success**

We think that update 2018 should emphasize the importance of local and regional roles and the relationship between the state and locals in achieving statewide water management success.

All through Update 2018, we think a stronger effort to identify existing local or regional practices would be a better use of this plan. This would reinforce the programs and activities that are considered successful in contributing to statewide successes, including Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM), Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) planning, water conservation planning efforts, and diversification in local water supply through desalination and recycled water.

As many references to IRWM, SGMA, water use efficiency, desalination and recycled water efforts should be emphasized in Update 2018 where local agencies are working to implement the previously mentioned Action Plan’s all the above approach.

We agree with other water associations specific comments in this regard with specific references to pages and sections. Again, we strongly urge the department in Update 2018 to recognize and acknowledge the efforts local water agencies and water providers are making to implement the Action Plan and the benefits that these efforts offer to the state’s Water Plan 2018.

**Recognize the valuable role desalination can play in Statewide Water Plan success**

We feel that ocean and groundwater (brackish) desalination can play an important role in a local community’s water supply planning process. Many communities in California have drinking water supply challenges, and have gone through extensive planning processes that include conservation, recycled water use and other supply research with desalination identified as key elements to their future water supply portfolios. In some cases, like implementing SGMA, desalination can be a useful tool in implementing state policies and providing local communities a much-needed drought resilient water supply. We encourage more recognition of these key water supply tools.
Water Plan 2013 had volume 3 “Resource Management Strategies” with information on many different water supply strategies. The desalination and recycled water sections were very helpful and we feel that Update 2018 should emphasize the importance of these water portfolio options in accomplishing the goals identified on Update 2018.

CalDesal appreciates the opportunity to offer these comments emphasizing a few particulars important to CalDesal. We look to engage collaboratively in future California Water Plan processes with the state and with other stakeholders.

I am available to discuss these comments at paul.kelley@caldesal.org or (916) 239-4099

Sincerely,

Paul Kelley

Executive Director