



December 5, 2022

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein:

The undersigned public agencies write to provide our recommendations to ensure that your legislation, the Western Riverside National Wildlife Refuge Act (S. 4669), provides for adequate protections for the delivery and maintenance of core public infrastructure; which provides for and supports critical health and safety services. This includes water supply, water quality, renewable energy, flood protection and transportation services.

We request a meeting for us, as a coalition, to meet with you to review the legislation, Savings Clause, and proposed map.

We would like to review with you the referenced map in the legislation, as the referenced map directly threatens current and anticipated water and energy infrastructure as well as flood protections and transportation services.

The below is amended Savings Clause language that we, as a coalition, request be included in the legislation:

*Savings Clause: Nothing in this Act, or in the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966 (or its implementing regulations), shall impact, preclude, or modify the following: (1) existing water supply agreements (or obligations and rights arising therefrom); acquisition or exercise of water rights; the diversion, conveyance, impoundment, recharge, treatment, or storage of water, for water supply (including recycled water), groundwater, wastewater, and flood risk management or for any other related beneficial uses, including maintenance of existing infrastructure and associated rights-of-way; (2) recreational activities currently authorized within the Refuge; (3) existing and future environmental mitigation or restoration activities; (4) existing or future public roads and rights-of-way; (5) any activity within the Refuge that is authorized by the existing Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan; or (6) establishment, operation and maintenance of new utility facilities associated with the provision of utility and related public services, and rights of way associated with such facilities.*

We make these important requests based on our understanding that barring these changes, our responsibilities to deliver vital public services would be significantly hindered or eliminated. Our region's agencies are also charged with the maintenance of critical infrastructure ranging from water and wastewater systems to roads. The requested changes ensures that the full range of these responsibilities would not be encumbered by the Refuge Act.

Our recommended revisions to S. 4669 will allow for the goals and objectives of a national refuge to be achieved while also ensuring the delivery of essential public services and vital infrastructure. We look forward to working with you to advance S. 4669 with these changes.

Please contact let us know when works for you to meet with us virtually.

Sincerely,



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General Manager  
Eastern Municipal Water District



Greg Thomas  
General Manager  
Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District



Michael R. Markus, P.E., D.WRE, BCEE, F.ASCE  
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