



COACHELLA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT

Established in 1918 as a public agency

GENERAL MANAGER
Jim Barrett

ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER
Robert Cheng

CLERK OF THE BOARD
Sylvia Bermudez

ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER
Dan Charlton

June 8, 2020

The Honorable Diane Feinstein
United States Senator California
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
via email: john_watts@feinstein.senate.gov

Re: Support for inclusion of Section 2 of S.2044 as an amendment to S.3422

Dear Senator Feinstein:

Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD) writes to request you support the inclusion of SEC. 2 of S. 2044, the Water Supply infrastructure Rehabilitation and Utilization Act, as an amendment to S. 3422, the Great American Outdoors Act. Senator McSally is planning on offering this provision as amendment when the legislation is considered on the Senate floor.

This amendment is critically important to our nation's water resources.

CVWD was formed in 1918 to protect and conserve local water sources. Since then, the District has grown into a multifaceted agency that supplies domestic (drinking) water from the aquifer below the valley to nearly 110,000 residential and commercial accounts. CVWD collects and recycles wastewater, provides regional storm water protection, replenishes the groundwater basin and promotes water conservation, which is essential in the desert climate the District serves.

Importantly, CVWD delivers irrigation water to water users in the Coachella Valley through the All-American Canal and the Coachella Canal from the Colorado River. CVWD is partially responsible for the Operation and Maintenance costs of Imperial Dam, which remains under Reclamation title. The current three-year Capital Improvement Project costs at Imperial Dam total more than \$14 million, of which CVWD would be responsible for approximately \$1.4 million.

This amendment would establish a revolving loan account to address extraordinary maintenance backlogs within the Department of the Interior's primary water management agency, the Bureau of Reclamation. The Bureau of Reclamation is our nation's largest wholesale water provider and is facing significant maintenance backlog issues.

The Great American Outdoors Act, provides deferred maintenance for every federal asset agency within the Department of the Interior except the Bureau of Reclamation. Just like the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Reclamation is facing significant issues with deferred and extraordinary maintenance needs at federally owned water facilities.

According to the Bureau of Reclamation, "Major Repair and Rehabilitation" (MR&R) over the next five years (FY 2021-2025) is approximately \$3.8 billion. The revolving loan fund that Senator McSally's amendment would establish, known as the "Aging Infrastructure Account," would allow water managers to access funds for outstanding maintenance needs and improve federally owned facilities. The account would be established with \$400 million annually over 5 years. This is seed money: it would be repaid by water users through the loan process and made available to address future needs.

Establishing a loan program to invest in aging water infrastructure would have significant safety, conservation, and economic benefits. You have an opportunity to address pressing maintenance needs within all of the resource management agencies at the Department of the Interior, including the Bureau of Reclamation, and encourage you to support this amendment.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J.M. Barrett", written over a light blue horizontal line.

J.M. Barrett
General Manager