



December 2, 2020

Chairwoman Gloria Gray  
The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California  
700 N. Alameda St.  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Consideration of Delta Conveyance Project

Dear Chairwoman Gray and Members of the Board:

The California Avocado Commission (Commission) represents California's 2,000 commercial avocado farmers and operates under the authority of the California Department of Food and Agriculture. The Commission is supportive of The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California's (Metropolitan) efforts to provide reliability for the service area, including consideration of the Delta Conveyance Project.

Water is the single most important input for a farmer, and our industry is dependent on the reliable delivery of quality water. California's avocados are farmed on nearly 60,000 acres, with approximately 60 percent within the Metropolitan service area. Over 1,300 of California's avocado farmers reside within the Metropolitan service area and farm on about 36,000 acres. This includes Riverside and San Diego Counties along with southern Ventura County.

Most of the farmers in the Metropolitan service area receive their irrigation water through agency deliveries, sourced primarily from the Colorado River or the State Water Project. Colorado River water is typically significantly higher in salinity, which is damaging to avocado trees. Through the State Water Project, some of the high-quality water from the Sierra Nevada mountains is delivered to the Southern California region, providing roughly 30 percent of the region's water needs.

Statewide the avocado industry has an annual farm gate value of \$383 mm (ten-year average), generates thousands of direct and indirect jobs, and provides a locally grown, healthy food source, along with numerous other benefits (e.g. U.S. food security, carbon sequestration, preservation of open space and reduction of urban sprawl, erosion prevention and many others). A stable, high-quality water supply must be maintained.

It is critical that Metropolitan continue to preserve and improve all sources of water supplies. Modernizing the Delta conveyance system is of utmost importance to Southern California avocado farmers to ensure the reliability of water deliveries, and the Commission appreciates Metropolitan's commitment to provide a stable and affordable water supply to the farmers of Southern California.

Sincerely,

Rob Grether, Chairman

Thomas A. Bellamore, President