Foothill Conservancy
Since 1990

March 19, 2022

Honorable Board of Directors
Amador Water Agency
12800 Ridge Road
Sutter Creek, CA 95685

Attn: Larry McKenney, Executive Director

Subject: Comments – *Draft Tanner & Ione WTP Capacity Study Technical Report*

Dear Members of the Board of Directors:

The Foothill Conservancy appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on the Amador Water Agency Draft Technical Report, *Tanner & Ione WTP Capacity Study*. The following comments are provided as input into the revisions to the report that the Planning Operations Engineering (POE) Committee reviewed at their March 17, 2022 meeting. In general, we found the report prepared by Keller Associates to be technically sound and clearly written. We believe that the following suggestions will further strengthen and enhance the report.

- The report, as written, does not adequately communicate the urgency of some recommended capital improvements to reliably meet existing customer needs and that the urgency increases significantly when current will serve, and other commitments are considered.
- The demand for potable water is based on projections developed as part of the Water Masterplan Study. The report should also discuss the effect of existing commitments such as those to active development projects, Community Facility District(s), and issued will serve letters.
- The report mentions that service to potential industrial development (US Mines) would result in demand exceeding the capacity of the Amador Transmission Line (ATL). No improvements are proposed to mitigate this potential system deficiency. Instead, the report suggests that service commitments be limited to the capacity of the ATL. The

report should be clear about existing commitments to serve this potential development and what legal or administrative actions would be required to limit service.

- The conclusions and capital improvement recommendations in the report are based on modelled system and component capacities (theoretical capacity). This generally represents WTP operation under ideal conditions. At the POE Committee meeting theoretical, firm, and reliable capacities were discussed. The report should provide a clear definition of each.
- The report should also clearly indicate that providing a reliable supply of potable water may not be possible given the reliable capacity at the Ione WTP or at the Tanner WTP if there is a disruption of the raw water supply or key treatment facility components.
- The report acknowledges the use of State transmission lines to supplement the Agency's transmission capacity. This is not adequately defined as a system vulnerability.

The Foothill Conservancy appreciates the on-going efforts of staff and the Board to define and address the significant water supply needs facing the Amador Water Agency and the community it serves. These issues have been developing over a number of years. Thankfully, the existing staff and Board are actively addressing them through the recent rate adjustments and the current study of WTP Capacity.

The Foothill Conservancy recognizes that identifying the capital needs is critical to ensure safe and reliable drinking water for local residents. We also recognize that funding Water Agency and development shares of over $220 million in needed improvements will be a major challenge. That said, we strongly recommend that the Amador Water Agency pursue the Accelerated Ione Replacement option if fiscally feasible.

We look forward to supporting your efforts to implement the improvements to the water treatment and transmission facilities.

Sincerely,
The FOOTHILL CONSERVANCY

Larry Patterson
Director