

# California Legislature

August 2, 2018

Mr. Joel Ledesma  
Deputy Director, State Water Project  
Department of Water Resources  
1416 Ninth Street  
Sacramento, CA 94236

Re: Oroville Dam Comprehensive Needs Assessment  
Ad Hoc Committee Comment Submittal No. 1

Dear Mr. Ledesma:

The Ad Hoc Committee would like to extend our gratitude for the opportunity to engage with the Department of Water Resources (DWR) to bolster the safety and reliability of Oroville Dam.

We take our charge as stewards of the impacted community very seriously and our goal is to ensure that this infrastructure review leads to a top-level facility and ultimately operations that will truly make the safety of our community the top priority. If we can do this, it will be a great step toward rebuilding the trust with the community and turning the page to a new day of mutual cooperation and transparency.

As we understand it, this study is a ‘first step’ in what is envisioned to be a long-term effort to improve safety and reliability practices throughout DWR facilities and operations following the events of February 2017 at Oroville Dam. We appreciate that this process will take time and work will be phased and divided into six identified tasks.

However, we encourage DWR, as was recommended by the IRB, to *broadly identify potential dam safety issues and concerns, including issues not specifically addressed in the six CNA Tasks*. To us, that means including as many issues as possible that relate to the identified tasks. By way of example, our discussion on July 18<sup>th</sup> made clear that we believe the decision of how to proceed with a modification or update in the Water Operations Manual and the consideration of Forecast Based Operations are both infrastructure related issues that should be taken up during the CNA, even if the actual process of changing that manual is a separate process with the Army Corps of Engineers. This is an issue that weighs heavily on the overall safety of the dam and how it is governed to protect the safety of the community in which it resides. We request that DWR include these, and other issues we might similarly identify, within the CNA tasks. We agree that issues that we determine to be unrelated to the tasks can be identified in a separate tracking table that identifies the appropriate processes and forums for providing input.

As we collect comments and questions from the general public we will take a first attempt to place the items in the appropriate categories (i.e. within the six tasks and those outside the scope). Through our discussion and cooperation with you and the IRB we hope to ultimately summarize all the issues into a master table which will be updated throughout the process to capture and inventory both the CNA issues and issues falling outside its scope. It is our expectation that an initial draft of this table be disseminated in advance of our next Ad Hoc Committee meeting in October 2018.

In addition to our comments, the Ad Hoc Committee would like to encourage dissemination of formal responses to comments and recommendations presented by the Review Board. As stewards of the public, we believe we need to see clearly DWR's responses (agree/disagree) to IRB recommendations and the rationale behind those responses. To facilitate this process, the Ad Hoc Committee has assembled a summary table to facilitate DWR's ability to rapidly review, respond, and disseminate response to comments from the Review Board. This summary table will be updated with both DWR responses as well as additional comments/questions from the Review Board as they are posed.

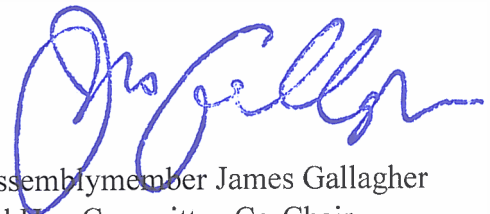
Finally, the Ad Hoc Committee appreciates the opportunity to submit comments and questions on behalf of the general public. We have adopted the US Army Corps of Engineers Independent External Peer Review protocols to structure our comments towards tasks 1-6. A summary table of comments is presented in Table 1 and are organized by degree of significance. These initial comments are focused on overall process, rather than specific and directed elements. We envision providing more detailed and targeted questions/comments once draft materials from this needs assessment are made available to the Ad Hoc Committee.

In response to the issues presented at our first meeting and in consideration of the IRB's first technical Memo, we submit the attached comments and questions. Thank you again for this opportunity and we look forward to working closely with you over the course of this initiative to bolster the safety and reliability of Oroville Dam.

Sincerely on behalf of the Ad Hoc Committee,



Senator Jim Nielsen  
Ad Hoc Committee Co-Chair



Assemblymember James Gallagher  
Ad Hoc Committee Co-Chair

### **Oroville Dam Safety and Reliability Ad Hoc Committee**

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