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April 5, 2021

Board of Directors & Agricultural Water Advisory Committee Members
Valley Water
5750 Almaden Expy
San Jose, CA 95118

Dear Honorable Directors of Valley Water and Members of the Agricultural Water Advisory Committee,

Regarding groundwater production charges, the Santa Clara County Farm Bureau would like to emphasize the following:

1. Our agricultural ground water production charges have doubled over the past ten years
2. These charges bring in revenue to Valley Water that are minuscule relative to the Valley Water's operations and total budget
3. The Santa Clara County Farm Bureau has supported Valley Water's efforts to raise funds from the public
4. Farmers have adopted efficiency enhancing and water use minimizing irrigation techniques such as drip irrigation with great speed over the past few decades
5. Farmers continue to be falsely painted as careless users of water

We ask that you adopt a different strategy with respect to farmers, and specifically with respect to Points 1 and 5 above. We acknowledge and are grateful that Valley Water has historically recognized that farmers provide the public with numerous benefits such as open space, carbon-reduction, local-grown produce, recreational opportunities, bio-filtration of water etc.

That farmers also reduce run-off and engage in aquifer recharge during the rainy season has been less well recognized. As the supply of water has become an increasing concern in our state and in our County, we are pleased to see that there is increasing recognition of the role of farmers and farmland in aquifer recharge statewide.

Accordingly, we respectfully submit the following points for your consideration:

First, we ask that Valley Water affirmatively emphasize the role of farmers in deploying irrigation techniques that make efficient water use and in replenishing our aquifers. The needless and unfounded vilification of farmers as water-wasters must cease. We ask your public affairs unit to emphasize going forward the historical zeal with which farmers have adopted water-efficient irrigation techniques and our historical and continuing role with respect to run-off reduction and aquifer recharge during rainy months.

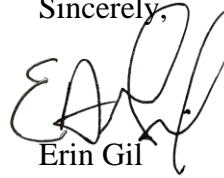
Second, at our Board meeting on March 2, 2021, we adopted the following resolution that we now bring to your attention: "All customers of Valley Water who are charged ground water production charges for ground water they pump should be credited fully with the ground water recharged on their lands during months of rainfall as determined by application of the Santa Clara County Drainage Manual (adopted August 14, 2007). This amount of

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recharge credited to each ground water user as determined by application of the Santa Clara County Drainage Manual should offset the quantity of ground water pumped by the customer for which Valley Water currently applies its ground water charges." We respectfully ask that Valley Water recognize that the quantification of the aquifer recharges, done by farmers on a farm-by-farm and collective basis, is important to record and credit with fidelity since Valley Water charges all ground water users for the quantities of water that Valley Water itself adds to our aquifers.

In the light of the above, we ask that you reconsider Valley Water's routine subjection of farmers to the last ten years of agricultural ground water production rate increases. We specifically and respectfully ask: (i) That Valley Water freeze agricultural ground water rates for the next fifteen years; and (ii) That Valley Water work affirmatively and actively with farmers going forward to increase the aquifer recharge done on farmlands over and above what farmlands have done routinely in years past.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Erin Gil', with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

Erin Gil
President