July \_\_\_, 2011

WSMP Comments

c/o Tom Francis

Water Supply Improvements Division

East Bay Municipal Utility District

375 11th Street, MS 407

Oakland, CA 94607

Dear Mr. Francis:

As a private boater who enjoys paddling the scenic Mokelumne River from the Electra put-in to the Middle Bar take-out facility, I am writing to voice my opposition to the inclusion of an enlarged Pardee Reservoir in the rewrite of EBMUD’s WSMP 2040. The expansion of Pardee Reservoir could flood up to two miles of the Mokelumne River, including the Mokelumne’s Middle Bar reach and part of the Electra Run upstream of Highway 49.

I oppose the expansion of Pardee Reservoir for the following reasons:

* The Electra Run down through the Middle Bar reach provides an outstanding section of whitewater suitable for beginner & intermediate paddlers. Unlike the Class II sections on the North & Middle Fork American River where you have to travel miles down, often ungraded, dirt roads this reach of the Mokelumne River has easy access from a paved road. It also provides a tranquil change of scenery from the Class II section of the South Fork American, which is often crowded with commercial rafting, kayak schools and other users. The year round boatable flows provide multiple class II rapids and a progression to class III at S-Turn and Devil’s Toilet Bowl.
* The Mokelumne Electra Run has been the site of the annual Mokelumne River Races, sponsored by Loma Prieta Paddlers since 1978. The “Moke” race attracts expert and novice boaters from across the state to a beautiful river setting for a three-mile downriver sprint & a 22-gate slalom race. At capacity an expanded Pardee has the potential to back up water over the three-mile downriver race from the 49 bridge killing riparian habitat and at other times leaving an unsightly bath tub ring.
* The proposed expansion would destroy EBMUD’s constructed takeout at Middle Bar Bridge and the new Big Bar River Access Facility – a $1 million BLM and California Department of Boating & Waterways project.
* Nearly a mile of the Mokelumne River eligible for Wild & Scenic River designation would be flooded.

Since EBMUD already pulls 90% of their water resources from the Mokelumne River please consider dropping the alternative to expand Pardee & work with stakeholders on other viable options including a focused conservation effort, fixing leaking infrastructure & opportunities with willing neighbors in Contra Costa on Los Vaqueros Reservoir.

Sincerely,