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## STATE AGREES THAT HETCH HETCHY VALLEY RESTORATION IS FEASIBLE

*“Somewhere, John Muir smiled today”*

*Sonora - July 19* .Today the Schwarzenegger Administration’s Department of Water Resources is expected to release its Hetch Hetchy Valley restoration report after more than a year of reviewing the growing number of existing studies on the subject. The state concluded that restoration of Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park is feasible. When released, the DWR report can be found at [hetchhetchy.water.ca.gov/](http://hetchhetchy.water.ca.gov/)

The organization Restore Hetch Hetchy commends the Schwarzenegger Administration for the highly professional review found in the Hetch Hetchy Valley restoration report released today, while respectfully disagreeing with the State’s cost estimates. “The Schwarzenegger Administration’s report confirms earlier conclusions by our organization and others that restoration of Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park is feasible and practical, and can be achieved with no harm to San Francisco Bay Area water and power users and Central Valley irrigation districts,” said Restore Hetch Hetchy’s Executive Director Ron Good . Restore Hetch Hetchy, Environmental Defense and academics at UC Davis have previously released studies concluding that restoration is feasible. “The fact that the State has confirmed that restoration is feasible is a major milestone in our long journey to the day that restoration begins,” added Good.

RHH agrees that more detailed study is warranted, as was contemplated by the scope of work for the preliminary study just released (1). “While we are confident in our own technical analyses, we would welcome a more detailed, independent study by a third party and encourage the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission to fully cooperate in further study, as was recommended by the SFPUC’s independent Citizen’s Advisory Committee last October on a 10-1 vote.” (2) “Restore Hetch Hetchy will cooperate fully with the next level of study, whether it is conducted by the State or Federal governments, or both,” added Jerry Cadagan, Chair of Restore Hetch Hetchy’s Board of Directors.

The State’s cost estimates as high as \$10 billion appears to include the cost of new and unrelated storage facilities not necessitated by the elimination of Hetch Hetchy Reservoir and the replacement of its water and power delivery capability. RHH estimates the cost of its recommended alternatives for removal of the dam, replacement of water and power

supplies, and valley restoration to be approximately \$1 billion, and stands by that estimate. "SFPUC's unsubstantiated estimate of \$10 billion or more for reservoir removal and replacement infrastructure is simply unrealistic, and may have unduly influenced the State's cost figures", said Good. "We have substantiated our cost estimates; SFPUC has not. We look forward to a more detailed independent review of all cost estimates. Further study would help in determining the exact cost of dam removal and valley restoration, and the totally unrelated costs of providing additional water storage in California."

Hetch Hetchy Valley is the smaller twin sister of Yosemite Valley. What is the value of Yosemite Valley? What would be the value of a restored Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park? More or less than the \$8 billion spent to restore the Florida Everglades? (3) Or the \$3.8 billion to restore Boston Bay ? (4) It is estimated that the total cost of the Yucca Mountain nuclear repository will be \$60 billion (5) and that a single B-2 Stealth Bomber costs \$2.2 billion (6). It cost a half a billion dollars to restore the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island, all of which was paid for by private donations. (7) RHH believes that American taxpayers and philanthropists will conclude that a restored Hetch Hetchy Valley is worth as much or more as the Everglades, Boston Bay, Yucca Mountain, or one more B-2 bomber.

"The current body of information puts a lot of emphasis on costs, and not enough on benefits, although the report strongly suggests that the potential benefits are very significant. The next level of study should include a comprehensive look at the benefits, both economic and environmental, that would result from a restored Hetch Hetchy Valley", said Good. "People come from around the world to visit and marvel at Yosemite National Park and those visitors contribute significantly to California's economy. That contribution would inevitably increase a lot as more people come to take a first look at Hetch Hetchy Valley in the process of restoration."

"The California Governor who presides over Hetch Hetchy Valley restoration becoming a reality will attain a place in environmental history comparable to Hetch Hetchy's most ardent supporter, John Muir," concluded Restore Hetch Hetchy board chair Jerry Cadagan. "Somewhere, John Muir smiled today."

(1) <http://www.hetchhetchy.water.ca.gov/scope/>

(2) [http://hetchhetchy.org/puc\\_advisory\\_comm\\_resolution\\_11\\_17\\_05.html](http://hetchhetchy.org/puc_advisory_comm_resolution_11_17_05.html)

(3) <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/evergladesforever/restoration/default.htm>

(4) [http://www.rfc.or.jp/rivernetnetwork/pdf/en/15bostonbay\\_en.pdf](http://www.rfc.or.jp/rivernetnetwork/pdf/en/15bostonbay_en.pdf)

(5) <http://www.citizen.org/documents/Yucca%20approps.pdf>

(6) <http://www.cnn.com/US/9903/24/us.kosovo.military/>

(7) <http://www.statueofliberty.org/Foundation.html>

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