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UNITED WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
“Conserving Water since 1927”

General Manager
Mauricio E. Guardado, Jr.

Legal Counsel
David D. Boyer

September 27, 2018

The Honorable Paul Gosar
Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources
House Natural Resources Committee
2057 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: United Water Conservation District Support for ESA Modernization Bills

Dear Chairman Gosar:

On behalf of United Water Conservation District, we would like to express our strong support of the bi-partisan effort to modernize the Endangered Species Act (ESA) through the following nine bills:

- H.R. 6356, the LIST Act (Biggs-AZ-05)
- H.R. 6345, the EMPOWERS Act (Pearce)
- H.R. 6344, the bipartisan LOCAL Act (Tipton)
- H.R. 6355, the PETITION Act (Westerman)
- H.R. 6364, the LAMP Act (Young)
- H.R. 6360, the PREDICTS Act (Norman)
- H.R. 6346, the bipartisan WHOLE Act (Johnson)
- H.R. 6354, the STORAGE Act (Gosar)
- H.R. 3608, the Endangered Species Transparency and Reasonableness Act (McClintock)

United Water Conservation District (United), as a ratepayer-funded, local public agency, established in 1950 pursuant to the Water Conservation District Law of 1931, encompasses approximately 214,000 acres in central Ventura County, California, which includes the Santa Clara River Valley and the Oxnard Coastal Plain.

United’s facilities, including those located on or near the Santa Clara River including the Santa Felicia Dam and the Freeman Diversion, provide significant benefits to the groundwater aquifers underlying the coastal Oxnard Plain, as well as the groundwater basins of the Santa Clara River valley. These benefits are critical to water users in central Ventura County, who rely heavily on groundwater to meet water demands. Ventura County agriculture contributes \$2 billion per year in economic value. Cities rely on



UNITED WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

The Honorable Paul Gosar
Chairman, Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources
Re: ESA Modernization Package
Page 2

between 50-100% groundwater to meet water demands and, while users in Ventura County have a small allocation of water from California's State Water Project, those supplies are limited and heavily constrained during drought.

United believes the bills referenced above, along with the proposed ESA regulation changes, will streamline the implementation and interpretation of the ESA, and allow operations on the Santa Clara River to move forward pursuant to United's mission of balancing environmental needs, with a focus on utilization of updated standards and encouragement of cooperative management agreements. We appreciate the work the Congressional Western Caucus has put into attempting to modernize the ESA and thank you for your dedication to seeing this important legislative package through.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mauricio E. Guardado, Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mauricio E. Guardado, Jr.

General Manager

United Water Conservation District