

Contact:  
John Grubb  
Vice President, Communications  
Bay Area Council  
415-981-6600  
Cell: 415-847-6320  
jgrubb@bayareacouncil.org

## **Bay Area Council Releases Statement on Assemblymember Lois Wolk's Hetch Hetchy Reservoir Hearing**

**SAN FRANCISCO, October 9, 2006** – Today, the Bay Area Council released the below statement attributable to Jim Wunderman, President and CEO of the Bay Area Council:

“The Bay Area Council is disappointed that Assemblymember Lois Wolk did not invite our organization, which represents more than 275 of the largest employers in the Bay Area and many of the largest users of water from Hetch Hetchy, to testify today regarding the California Department of Water Resources’ “Hetch Hetchy Restoration Study.”

“It can be tempting to take the Bay Area for granted, to presume that this beautiful urban metropolis, this vibrant and creative economy, and this tolerant and diverse culture was inevitable and preordained. Yet the fact is that the Bay Area of today is built upon the visionary accomplishments of those who came before us. Nowhere is this more true than with the Hetch Hetchy water system, which has fed and nourished the growth of the Bay Area as we know it today.

“In spite of Hetch Hetchy’s importance to the Bay Area, a dedicated group of environmental activists are engaged in a long-haul campaign to drain the Hetch Hetchy reservoir and dismantle the dam, with Assemblymember Wolk as their champion. The advocates sell their plan based on the appealing image of a restored Hetch Hetchy Valley, but the more appropriate image would be one of Bay Area unemployment, shuttered factories and severe economic dislocation.

“Factories, bakeries, hotels, offices, industrial possessors such as chip-makers and biotech companies, research and development facilities and more than 2.4 million Bay Area residents use Hetch Hetchy water and rely upon its unparalleled purity and consistent quality. The Bay Area Council will fight any attempts to negatively impact the Bay Area’s water supply. It must be protected.

“Cost estimates to replace Hetch Hetchy stand at \$10 billion and we believe there are more pressing statewide needs for \$10 billion than increasing access to a valley that 50,000 people a year already visit.

“To protect Hetch Hetchy is not to be hostile to environmental quality; it is to be honest and rational about the importance of water to the Bay Area. There are many and numerous opportunities to restore and improve environmental quality without harming

the economy. The Bay Area Council has, in fact, championed environmental causes because it's important to our region and it's the right thing to do.

“This year we were proud to be the first major business organization to support the Global Warming Solutions Act. If greenhouse gas emissions are not cut, global warming is expected to raise temperatures between 8 and 10.4 degrees in California and diminish the Sierra snowpack by 90 percent in the next century, a major source of drinking water. Global warming could also raise the sea level between 4 and 33 inches, causing coastal erosion and sending salt water surging into Sacramento Delta water supplies.

“These are challenges we believe the entire state must focus on, not removing the source of the water for 2.4 million Californians.

“The Hetch Hetchy water system was left to us by our predecessors who had the vision, took the risks, and laid the foundation for the Bay Area of today. It's a legacy that the region should be proud of and our generation has a responsibility to protect.

“Assemblywoman Wolk, we ask respectfully, please drop this poisonous and divisive issue so that we can all dedicate our time to protecting and improving California's water supply, not exploring ways to reduce it.”

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### **About the Bay Area Council**

Founded in 1945, the Bay Area Council ([www.bayareacouncil.org](http://www.bayareacouncil.org)) develops and drives regional public policy initiatives and researches critical infrastructure issues. Led by CEOs, the Bay Area Council presents a strong, united voice for hundreds of major employers throughout the Bay Area region whom employ more than 490,000 workers, or 1 of every six private sector employees in the Bay Area.