

[Water...the Essential Building Block of Life !](#)

[The San Francisco Peninsula Fire Safe Council](#) would like to welcome you and thank you for your interest in saving the San Francisco Bay Area from a regional calamity that would destroy the ability to access waters held in the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) Watersheds in San Mateo County and in the East Bay. The Bay Area's ability to exist and its entire economy depend on securing and protecting the Hetch Hetchy Water System.

The Perfectly Scripted Disaster

Many believe that the next great disaster that could befall San Francisco would be a contemporary repeat of the great earthquake and subsequent fire of 1906. Most of the Bay Area residents are unaware that a similar fate could beset this city we love, should a [Perfect Firestorm](#) ever rage in that city's watershed and reservoir system, denying not only the City and County of San Francisco, but also denying the San Francisco Peninsula of its crucial water supply *for up to several years*. The Hetch Hetchy System is recognized as [the most vulnerable terrorist target in Northern California](#) by the FBI. In addition to the lives and property lost through such a fire, this potential tragedy comes with a minimal price tag of over [\\$30 billion dollars per month for the first two to three years](#). Neither the [San Francisco Public Utilities Commission \(SFPUC\)](#) nor the US Department of the Interior can deny this assertion. Actually, such a calamity might just devastate the economy of all of California, not just the City of San Francisco and all of the other municipalities dependent on water from the SFPUC run Hetch Hetchy System. Without water available to San Francisco and her sister Peninsula communities, we can imagine these communities, with a population over eight times that of pre-Katrina of New Orleans, will face the same kind of civil strife that city experienced after their hurricane. Unfortunately, the lack of our regular and only viable water source would make our predicament even worse, necessitating the abandonment of the San Francisco Peninsula.

An Ostrich Mentality

In the past several years, our organization has met representatives from Cal Fire, San Mateo County, the Department of the Interior, and the SFPUC. Acting as your [Fire Safe Council](#), we have monitored the state of [fuel loads](#), [the cost of fighting eucalyptus fires](#), the [availability of response resources](#), [GGNRA challenges](#), and the [condition of lands adjacent to our susceptible watersheds](#). We have [even met with the FBI](#), telling them of a security threat to the HHS they deemed extreme, but had

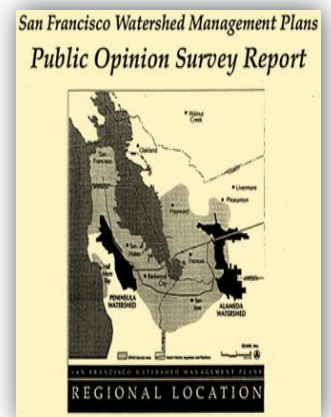
not until then even considered. With the exception of the FBI, all of these agencies have told us that their own regulations, combined with the protocols of the others, prevents each of them from better saving your lives, homes, and businesses. We have fared no better with our Bay Area Congressional Delegation. Congresswoman Jackie Speier, Congresswoman Pelosi, Senator Feinstein, and Senator Boxer have not responded when confronted with this information.

Hetch Hetchy's Deep Pockets

In these days of irresponsible government, should we be surprised that we find our regional civil leaders and representatives have put California in such a dangerous predicament? They fail at their most rudimentary responsibilities, [like responsibly budgeting and funding pensions](#). When revenues derived from infamously high San Francisco taxes are not enough, the Hetch Hetchy System serves as a historical cash cow for the City and County of San Francisco, [with revenues from water](#) regularly looted to the tune of \$1.5 billion adjusted for 2015. The SFPUC has also bilked its electrical customers for decades now of [inexpensive power once promised them](#). They ignore the people they serve when it comes to what the people desire in the safety and maintenance of their only source of water that assures survivability for such a large and dependent human population.

What the People Want: The 1994 Public Survey Buried by the SFPUC

In 1994, the San Francisco Water Department published their [San Francisco Watershed Management Plans Department Public Opinion Survey Report](#). Therein, 85% of a diverse group of water users determined the greatest role for the SFPUC was to limit access to the watershed, thereby restricting human degradation of the reservoirs and for SFPUC to act as chief authority in securing this resource. This is a tried and true historical measure for protecting watersheds meant for large human populations. In the POSR, the water users reported a willingness to pay just \$1 per month in order to secure the SFPUC watersheds on either side of San Francisco Bay. Because of advancements in multiple technologies, this goal is still attainable for \$1 in 2015.



A State of Bewilderment

The SFPUC has completed their [Water System Improvement Program](#) (WSIP). This was an overdue \$4.6 billion program, a bond financed retrofit regimen for the aging Hetch Hetchy System.

Despite heightened [risks of terrorism](#), the SFPUC has [directed few resources](#) addressing fire and security threats. Meanwhile, the population of San Francisco is taken away by their own [dalliance and indulgence](#) regarding “sustainability” by suggesting dismantling the O’Shaughnessy Dam and restoring the Hetch Hetchy Valley [at a cost of \\$3-10 billion](#). Insomuch, San Franciscans forget about their own survivability and the survivability of some twenty-eight other San Francisco Peninsula communities. Such distraction only occurs in the absence of leadership on the part of our civic leaders, administrators, and representatives. Therefore, the [San Francisco Peninsula Fire Safe Council](#) has gone outside our region for relief of our perilous situation. While both Congresswoman Speier and Congressman Dan Lungren (Gold River) sat concurrently on the House Committee on Homeland Security, only Mr. Lungren was approachable on seeking a fire and security solution for these watersheds. It may happen the reader knows former Congressman and California Attorney General Lungren as a critic of the SFPUC over the years, [accusing them of multiple violations of the Raker Act](#). He also supported the study of the consequences of removing the O’Shaughnessy Dam in the Hetch Hetchy Valley.

Still Just \$1 per Month

While the [San Francisco Peninsula Fire Safe Council](#) may disagree with former Congressman Lungren on some of these issues, he has always been his own man and we found him completely amenable to explore bringing to the House Committee on Homeland Security some type of emergency legislation and funding to address fire and security concerns of the SFPUC Bay Area Watersheds. By Congress raising the rent of the Hetch Hetchy Valley from just \$30,000 to \$30 million per year, such capital could finance efforts in these watersheds and adjacent properties to reduce of fuel loads, increase fire responders, and deploy an autonomous fire detector array. This \$30 million is what the 2.5 million willing water users would pay per month, as per surveyed in 1994.

When the Best is Proven Not Enough

Cal Fire and the National Park Service are said to provide their best support in protecting [Yosemite National Park](#). Even so, the four hundred square mile [Rim Fire of August, 2013](#) stands as the first largest forest fire in California history. The combined Cal Fire and National Park Service mitigation through forty years of fire prescribed burns was not enough to keep about a [third of the total area](#) of the fire moving into Yosemite National Park boundaries, threatening the Hetch Hetchy System. It could be a decade before the [“water quantity and quality impacts by fire”](#) to the source of the San Francisco Bay Area water are understood. [The San Francisco Peninsula Fire Safe Council](#) asks the reader: *If the best is shown insufficient in and around the jewel that is Yosemite National Park, how long will we allow*

chance and fate to decide and deprive us of our water by a fire that will someday certainly come into the SFPUC Watersheds?

Give Us a Fighting Chance

We ask the reader to sign up for our [FireSafeCA@Twitter.com](https://twitter.com/FireSafeCA) so we can keep you informed of our progress to preserve the Bay Area's only viable water supply. Should we lose our watersheds in the Bay Area, we just might also lose California—there is no substitution available. While our civil leaders and representatives toy with terms such as “sustainability,” [we instead seek “survivability.”](#) While San Francisco Bay Area residents can never know what the future economic situation will bring California, we could at least know that the water source we need for sustenance and to produce our livelihoods is secure. Because we cannot seem to trust our regional leaders and representatives for something even as simple as this, please share our [FireSafeCA@Twitter.com](https://twitter.com/FireSafeCA) link with the 2.6 million Bay Area Water Users, family, and friends.