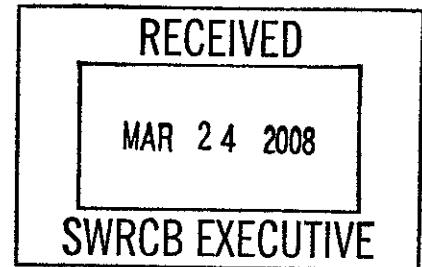




LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF THE MONTEREY PENINSULA



March 20, 2008

Ms. Tam Doduc, Chair
State Water Resources Control Board
PO Box 100, Sacramento, CA 95812-0100

SUBJECT: ORDER WR 95-10

Dear Ms. Doduc:

The League of Women Voters of the Monterey Peninsula has studied local water issues over many years. We support the intent of the draft Cease and Desist Order (CDO) compelling California American Water Company to reduce its take from the Carmel River in stages over the next seven years from 15 percent to 50 percent.

As pointed out in the CDO, in the thirteen years since Order WR 95-10 was issued, water savings resulting from conservation have been redirected to support marginal increases in development, and the population has increased by about 12,000 people. The Monterey Peninsula cannot continue to go in opposite directions at the same time - conserving and growing - using Carmel River water. If Order WR 95-10 has any meaning at all, there must be an emphatic gradual reduction of drafting from the Carmel River. Therefore we urge that a development moratorium be imposed as a condition of the Cease and Desist Order, so that any further water savings are not used for new development. We are aware that failure to meet the Cease and Desist Order may result in fines that could be passed on to current ratepayers. This must not be allowed to happen. Rather, the order should be urgent, yet practical. Imposing a moratorium will provide incentives to the community to support alternative water supply projects, while assuring that the Carmel River will not be degraded any further.

We also urge that the reductions in pumping be based on conditions in the river to avoid "administrative drought" during periods when the river has ample water. The severe reductions after the first two years will be a hardship for the communities involved and close monitoring of river conditions, along with continued restoration efforts will be needed. Additionally, we ask also that California American Water Company be ordered to provide adequate fish passage over Los Padres Dam, to help save the endangered steelhead fishery.

The League is also concerned about fragmentation. Several municipalities have initiated individual efforts to solve the water supply crisis with small municipal and/or developer

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desalination projects. The permitting of multiple small desalination plants to support a city's development plan takes focus away from solving the problems of the Carmel River and may worsen those problems. In the likely event of failure or inadequacy of the small desalination facilities, back up water service will fall to California American Water Company, the local service provider.

Currently the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District has voted unanimously to resurrect its plan for a local desalination plant, which is sharply focused on resolving Order WR 95-10 and would not be growth-inducing. We support this effort since it is the one most likely to succeed in the short term and because it maintains local control. There are enough problems related to resolving the Order without adding another controversial element by providing the impetus for further growth inherent in all other projects.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Janet Brennan".

Janet Brennan
President