

TESTIMONY OF TERRY WOODROW

I, Terry Woodrow, declare:

Introduction

1. I am a member of the Alpine County Board of Supervisors. I have held this position since January 1, 2003. Prior to my election as a Supervisor, I was on the board of directors of the Alpine County Service Area #1 (CSA#1). I am also a California licensed realtor.
2. I am providing this testimony on the issues pertaining to the County of Alpine and Lake Alpine Water Company (the "Applicants") Petition for Partial Assignment of State-Filed Application 5648, Petitions to Change State-Filed Application, and Application 31523 (the "Project"), that will be discussed during the July 14, 2008, State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) hearing to consider the Applicants' petitions and application.
3. The petitions before you today are a critical component of the Bear Valley Master Plan and the County's desire to create jobs and opportunities in Alpine County, which are essential to the long-term viability and economic sustainability of the Bear Valley community.

Alpine County Background

4. Alpine County, California lies along the crest of the central Sierra Nevada, south of Lake Tahoe and north of Yosemite. El Dorado, Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne, and Mono counties in California, and Douglas County, Nevada, border Alpine County. The main routes in Alpine County are State highways 88, 89, and 4.
5. Alpine County has the smallest population of all counties in California (approximately 1,190 full-time residents) and ranks 50th in geographic size among the 58 California counties. Most of the population is concentrated around a few mountain communities: Markleeville, Woodfords, Bear Valley and Kirkwood. Residents enjoy a rural lifestyle, with the convenience of several city areas in the neighboring counties. Markleeville is the County seat, and home to many of the county's offices. Since Alpine County has no incorporated cities, most public services are provided by county departments and agencies. And, with 96% of its land in public ownership, opportunities for growth are few.
6. Alpine County is governed by a five-member Board of Supervisors, each of whom is elected from the district in which he/she lives. Terms of office for the Supervisors are four years. The Board of Supervisors is both the legislative and the executive authority of the county. The Alpine County Board of Supervisors also sits as the Local Transportation Commission (LTC), the Alpine County Water Agency (WA), and the Board of Equalization (BoE).

County of Alpine Involvement in the Project

7. In the Bear Valley Master Plan (BVMP), Alpine County established a plan for residential, commercial, and recreational development in the Bear Valley area on Highway 4 in Alpine County. The BVMP involved a modification and enlargement of the existing approved master plan for residential, commercial, and recreational uses located at Bear Valley.
8. After consideration of the BVMP, Alpine County certified the Bear Valley Master Plan Environmental Impact Report (BVMPEIR) on December 28, 1978. The BVMPEIR indicated that existing water supplies were adequate; however, the document also states that the continued development was dependent upon developing an adequate source of water.
9. Mitigation measures were proposed in the BVMPEIR to address the impact to public services by the proposed additional development. One mitigation measure required the development of guaranteed water sources and the construction of a storage and distribution system. Thus, the purpose of this Project is only to serve planned growth in the Master Plan, and not to facilitate additional growth beyond what was already approved in the BVMP.
10. To comply with the mitigation measure to secure a guaranteed water source, and continue the planned development of Bear Valley, the additional water contemplated in the BVMPEIR must be obtained.
11. In order to obtain the additional water, the subject petitions and applications were filed with the State Water Resources Control Board.
12. The Project does not involve any new construction work for the diversion or storage of water. The Project's purpose is to secure water rights through the State Water Resources Control Board for the full amount to be put to use in the future development of the BVMP.

California Environmental Quality Act Compliance

13. During the scoping of this Project, it was determined by the County that a Project EIR should be prepared in response to potential hydrological impacts. An Initial Study (IS) was also prepared for the Project to determine if the Project would have any other significant effects on the environment.
14. Alpine County filed a Notice of Preparation (NOP) with the State Office of Planning and Research Clearinghouse and with other governmental agencies and organizations on January 12, 2006. During the 30-day comment period ending on February 10, 2006, written comments were received. A copy of the Notice of Preparation is County & LAWC Exhibit A.
15. Once the draft EIR was completed, a Notice of Completion was filed on May 19, 2006. A copy of the Notice of Completion is County & LAWC Exhibit B. During the comment period, comments were accepted and incorporated into the draft EIR.

16. After due consideration, the Board of Supervisors of the County of Alpine unanimously approved the Bear Creek Water Rights Application Final EIR for the Project and the Project on September 5, 2006. A copy of the final EIR is County & LAWC Exhibit C. A copy of the County of Alpine's Resolution 2006-43, which certified the Final EIR and approved the Project, is County & LAWC Exhibit D. A Notice of Determination was filed on February 5, 2007. A copy of the Notice of Determination is County & LAWC Exhibit E.

Effects of the Project on Alpine County

17. The Project will create several different types of economic and related benefits for the County of Alpine.
18. Due to the limited population and opportunities for growth, the Project is important to Alpine County because it will secure water rights that will allow for the planned future development contemplated in the Bear Valley Master Plan. This will support the economic base of local businesses, the viability of this mountain community and Bear Valley Ski Area, and will create potential tax revenues for a small county with otherwise very limited opportunities to do so.

General or Coordinated Plan for the Development of Water under SFA 5648

19. The Project does not conflict with any Alpine County general or coordinated plan for the development of water that would use SFA 5648. In fact, as discussed above, the Project fulfills the objectives of a county master plan to develop a small amount of water under SFA 5648.
20. In addition, this Project recognizes and allocates a portion of the 2,000 acre-feet of water that was reserved by the Bureau of Reclamation, and acknowledged by the SWRCB, for Alpine County from the Stanislaus River on page 9 of D-1422.

Conclusion

21. This project will provide economic and other benefits to the County of Alpine. The project does not conflict with any county plan.
22. The public participated in, or was given the opportunity to participate in, the development of the Bear Creek Water Rights Application EIR.
23. We ask that the SWRCB recognize the important need for this project by granting us the requested petition for partial assignment of State-filed application 5648.


Terry Woodrow