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TESTIMONY OF ROBERT THOMSON
Before the
CALIFORNIA STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD
Relative to
SANTA ANA RIVER WATER RIGHT APPLICATIONS FOR
SUPPLEMENTAL WATER SUPPLY

May 2007

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1 **Muni/Western Exhibit 4-1**

2 Testimony of Robert Thomson: Project Description

- 3 1) I was retained by the San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District (Muni) and the
4 Western Municipal Water District of Riverside County (Western) as part of the
5 environmental science and engineering team, to prepare the environmental impact
6 report (EIR), and to assist in the acquisition of permits for the Santa Ana River Water
7 Right Applications for Supplemental Water Supply (the “Project”).

8 **Background and Qualifications**

- 9 2) I was the overall manager for the preparation of the Santa Ana River Water Right
10 Applications for Supplemental Water Supply EIR. In this role I was responsible for
11 and directed technical evaluations for all portions of the EIR, including the
12 description of the Project. I am an ecologist with approximately 28 years of
13 experience in preparing environmental impact analyses, including the preparation of
14 EIRs on large, controversial water resource management and endangered species
15 compliance efforts in the State of California. I have prepared technical analyses
16 and/or directed and managed the preparation of EIRs and Environmental Impact
17 Statements (EIS) evaluating the impacts of multiple projects, including the Monterey
18 Agreement, Quantification Settlement Agreement, California State Water Project
19 transfers, portions of the Central Valley Project Contract Renewals, Restoration of the
20 Salton Sea, and others. My resume is included as Muni/Western Exhibit 4-2.

- 21 3) I am currently a Technical Director and Senior Project Manager with ENTRIX
22 Environmental Consultants, Inc. My specific activities are related to management of
23 the water and natural resource management group, focusing on water resource
24 management actions (e.g., storage, conveyance, planning) and endangered species
25 compliance for public agencies and private-sector clients throughout the Western
26 United States.

- 27 4) The Project Draft and Final Environmental Impact reports describe the Project’s
28 facilities, construction and operations actions, and delineate the direct, indirect and
29 cumulative impacts of the Project on the existing natural environment. The Draft

1 Environmental Impact Report is provided as Muni/Western Exhibit 4-3; the Final
2 Environmental Impact Report is provided as Muni/Western Exhibit 4-4; the
3 Resolutions certifying the EIR and approving the Project (including the Project
4 Findings and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan) are provided as
5 Muni/Western Exhibit 4-5; and the Notice of Determination for the Project is
6 provided as Muni/Western Exhibit 4-6.

7 5) The following testimony summarizes the project description. It focuses on the
8 location, description and construction of new facilities. The description of operations
9 is summarized in the testimony of Mr. Robert Beeby and Mr. Dennis Williams.

10 **Summary and Introduction**

11 6) Muni and Western are regional water agencies that manage groundwater and surface
12 water supplies in San Bernardino and Riverside counties in Southern California
13 (Muni/Western Exhibit 4-7). Muni/Western currently rely on imported water to
14 supplement locally available water supplies to meet the water needs of retail
15 purveyors and direct customers in their service areas. Muni, as a California State
16 Water Project (SWP) Contractor, receives water imported from the SWP while
17 Western, as a member agency of The Metropolitan Water District of Southern
18 California, receives supplies from the SWP and Colorado River. Population of the
19 areas served by these water agencies is anticipated to grow by 65 percent from 2000
20 to 2025. In order to diversify their sources of water supply and to take advantage of
21 the regulatory and seasonal water conservation storage potential created by the
22 construction of the Seven Oaks Dam, Muni/Western jointly filed two water right
23 applications with the SWRCB to divert unappropriated water from the Santa Ana
24 River. The applications seek the right to divert and put to beneficial use a total of up
25 to 200,000 afy. The Project consists of all discretionary actions necessary to
26 conserve, divert, convey and store this water from the Santa Ana River for beneficial
27 use in the Muni/Western service areas.

28 7) The Project is designed to achieve the following objectives:

- 29 • Increase water supply reliability by reducing dependence on imported water;

- 1 • Develop and deliver a new, local, high quality, long-term water supply that is
2 needed to meet part of anticipated future demands; and
- 3 • Expand operational flexibility by adding infrastructure and varying sources of
4 water, thereby providing Muni/Western with greater capability to match
5 varying supply and demand.

6 8) The Muni/Western service areas occupy the western portions of the Counties of San
7 Bernardino and Riverside. While implementation of the Project would use existing
8 facilities to the extent feasible, some new facilities would be constructed and some
9 existing facilities would be modified. These construction actions would take place in
10 four general geographical areas (See Muni/Western Exhibit 4-8). These areas are as
11 follows:

- 12 ◇ Seven Oaks Dam and Reservoir Construction Area (See Muni/Western
13 Exhibit 4-9);
- 14 ◇ Santa Ana River Construction Area that includes the lower canyon and
15 alluvial fan area of the Santa Ana River immediately downstream of Seven
16 Oaks Dam (See Muni/Western Exhibit 4-10);
- 17 ◇ Devil Canyon Construction Area adjacent to the Devil Canyon Power Plant
18 and Afterbays of the SWP (See Muni/Western Exhibit 4-11); and
- 19 ◇ Lytle Creek Construction Area that includes the alluvial fan area of lower
20 Lytle Creek just north of the City of Rialto and an area immediately to the
21 south thereof (See Muni/Western Exhibit 4-12).

22 9) Groundwater recharge would use existing facilities shown in Muni/Western Exhibit
23 4-13.

24 **Project Characteristics**

25 10) The Project Description in Muni/Western Exhibit 4-3 (Draft EIR Chapter 2 and
26 Appendix C), which describes the Project facilities, characteristics, construction and

1 operational characteristics, as modified in Exhibit 4-4 (the Final EIR), is a true and
2 accurate description of the Project. As part of the Final EIR, in response to comments
3 by the U.S. Forest Service, Muni/Western have eliminated from the Project the
4 relocation of a 2-mile section of the SCE access road. Relocation of a 2-mile section
5 of the SCE access road is no longer proposed as a Project element and impacts from
6 this element discussed in the Draft EIR will therefore no longer occur.

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