

To: Chairman Arthur Baggett and Boardmembers

State Water Resources Control Board 1001 I Street

From: Diane Conn, Citizens for Goleta Valley

RE: REGARDING CHANGES TO THE BUREAU OF RECLAMATION'S WATER RIGHTS PERMITS FOR THE CACHUMA PROJECT TO PROTECT PUBLIC TRUST RESOURCES IN THE RIVER AND TO PROTECT WATER RIGHTS DOWNSTREAM FROM BRADBURY DAM

Citizens for Goleta Valley is a grass-roots non-profit organization that monitors comprehensive policy initiatives to protect environmentally sensitive habitats, including threatened, endangered and protected species. We strive to support policies that promote the quality of life that we enjoy in the Santa Barbara County. Restoration of the steelhead runs are an important part of recovering our cultural and social heritage, as well as bringing life back to our creeks. We concur with the comments of the Santa Barbara Channelkeeper, the Carpinteria Creek Foundation, Santa Barbara Urban Creeks Council and the study and conclusion of the Pacifica Institute regarding the EIR.

Having experienced the drought years in the 1980's, I have seen how little water a community can use if they are educated about the benefits of conservation. In the Goleta Valley people changed their gardening habits and design, changed their domestic use, and were provided options and incentives to save water. And they did. Unfortunately, there is an incentive for water districts to sell water, especially in the plentiful years, because they make more money that way. We need to look at real incentives for water conservation and penalties for high use that change that dynamic. That is part of the challenge to water conservation. But in terms of what the consumers of each district can do to conserve water, it is clear from our experience that we are capable of significant water conservation given the education.

Recovery of our steelhead is important to many people in our county. If they can see that their water conservation efforts can directly benefit recovery of the steelhead, they will act. We need more than what is being done now. We need a program that really restores a healthy population. We have seen many species recover in the south coast, given the chance: white-tailed kite, brown pelican, goleta tar plant, western snowy plover. We want to see the same for the steelhead. Please consider the information and recommendations, especially from the Pacifica Institute, as you consider this permit. It's not just a fish, it's part of our heritage. And we want to give that heritage back to present and future generations.

Thank you very much for your consideration,

Diane Conn

Program Director

Citizens for Goleta Valley