

# CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE

STATE CAPITOL  
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA  
95814

Thursday, October 07, 2010

Ms. Katherine Hart  
Chair, Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board  
Sacramento Office  
11020 Sun Center Drive, Suite 200  
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670-6114

RE: National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit  
Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District  
APPROVE STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Dear Ms. Hart:

The water system and ecosystem in crisis in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta continues to have a direct impact on water supplies for millions of acres of agriculture and 25 million Californians, including those who live in our districts. Despite severe water supply curtailments that are now in place to address endangered species such as Delta smelt, environmental problems in the Delta continue to worsen. Meanwhile, there is an ongoing threat to the water supplies that our communities and much of California depend upon. It is absolutely essential to address the Delta crisis effectively and comprehensively. It is with this need in mind that we urge you to follow the staff recommendation and approve new, advanced treatment standards for the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District (SRCSD) wastewater facility.

The growing body of scientific evidence points to a Delta that is struggling due to many stressors, including in-Delta and upstream water diversions, invasive species and wastewater discharges. Water quality experts, including those of the California Department of Public Health, are concerned about large wastewater facilities such as the one near Sacramento that does not remove pathogens from the waste stream, meaning that recreational users of the Delta downstream, and all those who drink from a downstream supply, face this water quality challenge.

We recognize that there is an ongoing debate on the relative role of the many stressors on the Delta and the precise role that wastewater that contains ammonia is playing on the food web of the ecosystem. But there is no question that SRCSD is the largest wastewater discharger in the

Delta and that its secondary method of treatment has not been improved in a generation. Additionally, there is no question that SRCSD is now releasing tons of ammonia into the Sacramento River every day, and that the discharge containing human pathogens is of growing concern to the regulatory community and is above the new levels of emerging federal recommendations.

It will take a tremendous investment by water districts and other public sources of funds in order to reverse the decline of the Delta and regain a reliable water supply system for California. The proposed treatment advances for this facility represent a very small fraction of the coming investments and are well within community affordability standards.

We urge you to keep in mind the millions of Californians who are directly affected by the Delta crisis as you begin your deliberations for this facility's new NPDES permit. Requirements for advanced treatment for ammonia and pathogen removal are an essential part of an overall regulatory response to ensure that the environment of the Delta and the economy of California are no longer threatened by the ongoing crisis in the estuary.

Sincerely,

Wes Zell

Jim Emmons

Tom Harman

R. Adams

Bob

Ray

Mimi Walters

Tom

Al

Bois

Mark

Carol

[Signature]

Blair

Robert Cedillo  
Brenda M

Arnell

Alan Swenthal

Fran Parley

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Signatories include:

Senator Alex Padilla  
Senator Tom Harman  
Senator Bob Huff  
Senator Mimi Walters  
Senator Jeff Denham  
Senator Mark Wyland  
Senator Ron Calderon  
Senator Bill Emmerson  
Senator Dennis Hollingsworth  
Senator Roy Ashburn  
Senator Tony Strickland  
Senator Bob Dutton  
Senator Carol Liu  
Senator Gloria Negrete McLeod  
Senator Gilbert Cedillo  
Senator Roderick D. Wright  
Senator Curren Price  
Senator Alan Lowenthal  
Senator Fran Pavley