



October 6, 2010

Ms. Kathleen Cole Harder  
Regional Water Quality Control Board  
Central Valley Region  
11020 Sun Center Drive, Suite 200  
Rancho Cordova, Ca. 95670

Re: Objection to CVRWQCB Draft Tentative Permit issued to Sacramento Regional  
County Sanitation District (SRCSD)

Dear Ms. Harder:

I am writing this letter as a concerned resident of the City of Sacramento and rate payer of the SRCSD. I am also writing this letter as a knowledgeable registered professional engineer in the State of California, possessing a Masters Degree in Environmental Engineering who has worked for the State Water Resources Control Board (1975-79) and the County of Sacramento/SRCSD (1979-2006) before retiring in 2006. During the latter years of my career I held the position of Director of the Department of Water Quality, Sacramento County and District Engineer (General Manager) of the SRCSD.

During my career with the SRCSD I was involved in many water quality issues related to the Sacramento River and the Delta. I was involved in numerous meetings with State and Regional Board regulators, downstream (Bay Area and Southern California) water purveyors and environmental groups that had concerns about potential impacts that might be occurring from the discharge from Sacramento's regional treatment plant. As General Manager and with the support of the SRCSD Board of Directors, many scientific studies were conducted, regional and localized monitoring programs were implemented and state of the art modeling work was conducted to determine what if any adverse impact the discharge from the Sacramento plant might be having on the receiving waters and what if any impact was occurring to the beneficial uses of the receiving waters. Many of the studies were undertaken with input from the CVRWQCB staff. National experts were asked to peer review the studies and the conclusions they reached. After spending many 10's of Millions of Dollars no definitive problems were identified that could form the foundation of the overly stringent permit requirements contained in the CVRWQCB's draft permit.

I indicated many times to the various interest groups involved that as General Manager I would go to my Board with a recommendation to add additional treatment to the plant if it could be demonstrated that our discharge was causing a water quality problem. No studies ever demonstrated that need. Surely the staff of the CVRWQCB and the Board members themselves would not require the rate payers of the SRCSD to spend over 2 Billion Dollars in capital costs and many 100's of Millions of Dollars in O&M costs without having overwhelming scientific evidence that once those facilities were in place

a major problem in the Sacramento River or Delta would be resolved or at least significantly reduced. It is my understanding that Board staff has reached no such conclusion and that the cost-benefit information submitted by the District has been largely ignored. Doesn't the State have some burden to prove or at least make findings that proposed onerous and extremely expensive regulations solve some problem or at least produce a measurable benefit that is significant?

The draft permit requirements clearly go beyond what is "reasonable and necessary" as required by the Clean Water Act and enters into policy setting based on perception and not based on a documented public health problem or existing standard or criteria.

If the Board moves forward and adopts the draft permit requirements monthly service charges to residents, businesses and industry will likely triple. Connection (impact) fees for new homes, businesses and others will go up by over 500%. New impact fees for a residential home could go from \$7,450 to \$35,000, adding over \$27,000 to the cost of a home which is more than 10% of the median price of a new home being built today. Some small businesses such as restaurants could see their fees go up by more than \$50,000. Surely the staff and the Board members themselves can recognize the significant adverse impact that these new rates and fees would have on the Sacramento area economy. Again I ask you for what benefit?

Instead of adopting the draft permit requirements the Board should ask the District to develop a work plan to address any unanswered scientific questions related to water quality or public health issues that may be linked to the Sacramento discharge. A peer review panel should be required as part of the process. Findings from the studies should be what drives more stringent permit requirements after taking into consideration the costs to comply with the more stringent requirements and the benefits obtained.

I will continue to follow this issue and will plan to provide public comment at the time of the public hearing on this matter. Feel free to contact me at if you have any questions related to my comments.

Sincerely yours,

Robert F. Shanks