



3/13/14

Central Valley Water Board
Attn: Ross Atkinson
11020 Sun Center Dr., Ste. 200
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

RE: Mount Diablo Mercury Mine, Reconsideration of Cleanup and Abatement Order R5-2013-0701

Dear Mr. Atkinson,

Save Mount Diablo (SMD) is a non-profit conservation organization founded in 1971 which acquires land for addition to parks on and around Mt. Diablo, and monitors land use planning which might affect protected lands. We build trails, restore habitat, and are involved in environmental education. In 1971 there was just one park on Mt. Diablo totaling 6,788 acres; today there are almost fifty parks and preserves around Mount Diablo totaling 110,000 acres. We include more than 8,000 donors and supporters.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comment on the Cleanup and Abatement Order to clean up the Mount Diablo Mercury Mine. As an organization that has acquired many parcels of land along Marsh Creek to protect, manage, and restore the natural resources on these properties, we encourage the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board to not modify the Cleanup and Abatement Order and to continue to require the previously identified Responsible Parties to clean up the mine.

Marsh Creek is the second longest, least disturbed creek in Contra Costa County. A third of its length is within protected lands. Protection of the riparian habitat of Marsh Creek watershed and the wildlife that use it are some of the main reasons that Save Mount Diablo acquired the lands along the creek. Mercury seeping into Marsh Creek from the mine is contaminating the creek and causing potential harm to the wildlife that depend on it. It is obviously also a threat to Marsh Creek reservoir downstream, the Delta and Bay, along with efforts to reestablish anadromous fish species in Marsh Creek.

The Marsh Creek watershed is included in the Delta Methyl-mercury TMDL requirements for reducing the impact of mercury in the larger estuary of the Bay-Delta. A study conducted by Contra Costa County showed that 95% of mercury in the Marsh Creek watershed originates from the mine site. It has long been recognized that the first step in addressing mercury in the Marsh Creek watershed is to clean up the source, the mercury mine.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments

Sincerely,

Juan Pablo Galván
Land Use Planner

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