



May 10, 2010

SUPERVISOR GREG COX
DISTRICT ONE
SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, ROOM 335
SAN DIEGO, CA 92101

RE: Conditional support for CAO funding for County Department of Environmental Health (DEH) Beach Water Quality Monitoring Program

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of San Diego Coastkeeper, Surfrider Foundation San Diego Chapter and WILD COAST, we wish to express our conditional support for the County of San Diego's plan to pursue Clean-Up and Abatement Order (CAO) funds from the Clean Water State Revolving Fund as an emergency measure to continue funding for the DEH Beach Water Quality Monitoring Program for 2011. We recognize that the state and local budget crises present difficulties in funding programs at all levels of government, and funding for programs like the one in question should be obtained where it can be found during these times of economic uncertainty.

However, we ask that any approval by the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board of the County's plan be conditioned upon the County of San Diego developing a longer-term funding plan for this important program that is both sustainable (dedicated) and locally-based. We also strongly encourage the County to develop an alternate near-term funding plan in the case of denial of the CAO funding request to ensure there is no interruption of the County's water monitoring efforts.

Beaches and ocean water quality are integral to the health and quality of life for San Diego County residents and to the region's economy. San Diego's coastline is a major part of the County's status as a southern California cultural icon for ocean water sports. Millions of tourists and residents visit the County's 52 miles of public beaches every year, and generate hundreds of millions of dollars for the local economy related to ocean water recreation and tourism.

Ongoing monitoring and public notification is critical to ensure the public is informed of any risks from swimming, surfing, diving, paddling or otherwise coming into contact with contaminated waters. In fact, annual beach closure and advisory reports from the County of San Diego, Department of Environmental Health (DEH) have documented bacterial contamination of beach water quality especially at locations adjacent to river, lagoon, and storm drain outlets.

An integrated and complimentary beach water monitoring strategy between the wastewater dischargers and DEH has been in place since 2004, and the people of San Diego cannot afford to have these efforts suspended based upon the absence of funding. It is clear that the County cannot continue to rely on ever-shrinking and ever-less-reliable state funds for ongoing beach water quality monitoring.

Supervisor Gregory Cox acknowledged this in his March 2009 letter to the County of San Diego that stated the need to identify a long-term funding source for beach water monitoring other than state funding.

Therefore, San Diego Coastkeeper, Surfrider Foundation San Diego Chapter and WILD COAST, who jointly represent the residents and ocean users of San Diego County, support the County's effort to secure outside funding to continue its beach water monitoring program in 2011 conditioned upon a commitment to identify a local, dedicated and sustainable funding mechanism to maintain this program into the future.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bruce Reznik', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Bruce Reznik
San Diego Coastkeeper

Manase Mansur
Surfrider Foundation San Diego chapter

Serge Dedina
WILD COAST