



GOVERNOR ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER

February 2, 2009

Via facsimile: (858) 571-6972

San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board
9174 Sky Park Court
Suite 100
San Diego, California 92123-4340

Dear Members of the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board,

I am writing to urge you to approve the Marine Life Mitigation Plan for the Carlsbad Desalination Project at your February 11 meeting. Desalination must be part of a diverse approach to improving water supply, especially as California confronts what may be the worst drought in our state's modern history. Ignoring desalination as part of a region's water supply portfolio would ill serve both the region and the state.

After two years of drought, California is entering what is likely to become a third critically dry year. The state's reservoirs are nearing record low levels, and regulatory restrictions designed to protect fish have reduced our ability to move water when and where it's needed. If dry conditions continue through this year, experts have predicted the loss of 40,000 agricultural jobs in the Central Valley as a result of reduced water availability. In order to protect California's environment and economy, we must continue to do all we can to protect existing water supplies and to identify new sources of supply, such as desalination.

The situation in San Diego, a county nearly 90 percent reliant on imported water from northern California and the Colorado River, is equally dire. Last week, San Diego Mayor Jerry Sanders announced the high probability that the city will need to start rationing water July 1. The agricultural community has also felt the effects of the drought, and losses for 2008 are estimated to be nearly \$400 million. The drought has further implications for the ever-growing number of fires our state faces every year. Its effect on California's residents and industries led me to issue an executive order in June 2008 declaring a drought and directing my administration to take actions to minimize the impact of the dry conditions.

As California plans for the future, we need to ensure that we have a sustainable water supply. I am working on a long-term, comprehensive water plan because I know that, as our water supply decreases and our population increases, something must change. We don't know what the future holds for our water supply, but if the current trend continues, California will be faced with an even more serious crisis. The Carlsbad Desalination Project plays an important role in securing California's water future because it creates a long-term solution to the drought conditions in the San Diego area by providing a reliable, local source of water. As I said in a 2006 meeting with the San Diego Union-Tribune editorial board, we need desalination. It is not a choice.

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The Carlsbad Desalination Project will be constructed, owned and operated by the Poseidon Resources Corporation, and 100 percent of the water will be subscribed by public agencies. I support public-private partnerships because I believe the creativity and innovation that result can help the state achieve more. This project is just one more example of how we can do just that.

As the Board evaluates the Carlsbad Desalination Project's Marine Life Mitigation Plan, I urge you to consider the critical role desalination plays in ensuring water supply reliability for San Diego and for the state.

Thank you for your continued work to protect our state's water quality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Arnold Schwarzenegger", written in a cursive style.

Arnold Schwarzenegger

cc: The Honorable Linda Adams, Secretary of the California Environmental Protection Agency
The Honorable Mike Chrisman, Secretary of the California Natural Resources Agency
The Honorable A.G. Kawamura, Secretary of the California Department of Food and
Agriculture