



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
COUNCIL PRESIDENT BENJAMIN HUESO

April 6, 2009

Mr. Richard Wright
Chairman, San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board
San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board
San Diego – Region 9
9174 Sky Park Court, Suite 100
San Diego, CA 92123

***Re: Carlsbad Desalination Project's Flow, Entrainment and Impingement Minimization Plan
(Order No. R9-2006-0065)***

Dear Chairman Wright:

I regret not being able to personally attend the Regional Board's April 8, 2009 meeting on the Carlsbad Desalination Project (Project), and therefore, I am providing my comments in writing. I encourage you and the other members of the Regional Board to give final approval to Poseidon's proposed Flow, Entrainment and Impingement Minimization Plan (Minimization Plan).

As one of San Diego County's representatives on the California Coastal Commission, I made the motion to support the Project's Marine Life Mitigation Plan (MLMP), which provides for 55.4 acres of highly productive estuarine wetlands to mitigate for the Project's marine life impacts. I also made the motion in support of the MLMP's findings, approved by the Commission on December 10, 2008.

As the maker of the motion the intent behind my support of the mitigation plan was based on my understanding that the 55.4 acres was capable of providing comprehensive mitigation for the effects of the intake structures on the ecosystem of the Agua Hedionda Lagoon, and the coastal environment. Obviously, we understood that the potential effects of the intakes included the potential for fish to be impinged onto the intake screens, as well as the potential for entrainment of marine life. We did not consider the 55.4 acres as dedicated exclusively to entrainment mitigation, or that mitigation for any other effect would have to be furnished by means other than the 55.4 acres.

In this regard, I don't believe that the approach proposed in Poseidon's Minimization Plan results in a "double counting" of mitigation credit. The entrainment mitigation found in the Project's



Coastal Development Permit was designed to mitigate for the impacts to the three most affected fish - gobies, blennies, and garibaldi. Expert scientific opinion supports the conclusion that the 55.4 acres will create a new, healthy ecosystem that serves multiple purposes including compensating for these three entrained species, as well as other impinged fish.

This determination is supported the MLMP's findings adopted by the Commission on December 10, 2008, which specifically state:

“ ... these entrainment studies do not assume the complete loss of ecosystem function within an area of APF [Area of Productivity Forgone]; instead they identify only the area that would be needed to replace the numbers and types of species identified in the study as subject to entrainment. The APF is used to determine impacts to only those species most affected by entrainment, and the mitigation resulting from the APF is meant to account only for these effects.”

In conclusion, your final approval of the Plan on April 8, 2009 will allow an environmentally sound project that has been in the works for ten years to commence construction. I hope you will act swiftly.

Thank you for your consideration of my support for the Carlsbad Desalination Project and Poseidon's Minimization Plan.

Sincerely,



The Honorable Ben Hueso
San Diego City Council President

cc:

David King, Vice Chairman
Eric Anderson, Board Member
Grant Destache, Board Member
George Loveland, Board Member
Wayne Rayfield, Board Member
Gary Thompson, Board Member
Kris Weber, Board Member
Marc Luker, Board Member