

# Sonoma County Taxpayers' Association

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TO: Marie Meredith  
City of Santa Rosa  
Community Development Department  
P.O. Box 1678  
Santa Rosa, CA 95402-3181

OCT 07 1996  
DEPARTMENT OF  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

RE: Draft EIR/EIS for Long-term Wastewater Disposal

FROM: Steve Klausner, Member of the Board of Directors  
Sonoma County Taxpayers' Association

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Ms Meredith,

The Sonoma County Taxpayers' Association participated in the scoping sessions, workshops, and Roundtables sponsored by the City of Santa Rosa. We are satisfied that there was significant public involvement in the identification, screening, and selection of the project alternatives and alternative components to be analyzed in this EIR/EIS. 001

We believe the five alternatives considered in this Draft EIR/EIS include all feasible and reasonable alternatives and meets CEQA and NEPA requirements for alternatives analysis. 002

We do have a few questions that we hope might help to clarify some of the socio-economic issues found on Section 4.18 003

1. *What is the magnitude of the negative economic impact to communities served by the Wastewater Project resulting from the significant increase on service - charges and hookup fees?* 003 (cont.)

The impact needs to be explained in terms of millions of dollars so that the value can be directly compared with the projected benefits. Thus some net economic benefit can be ascertained. Is it possible that the so called agricultural benefites may be entirely offset by the costs associated with the project alternatives involving huge capital expenditures?

The EIR/EIS considers several alternatives which require significant sums of money to implement. The EIR/EIS does not provide sufficient information as to the negative economic impact of the greatly increased hookup and service fees on the communities by the Wastewater Project. Evidence of the seriousness of this impact on new businesses deciding not to locate in Santa Rosa is discussed in the August 26, 1996 Business Journal. 004

This impact should include the loss of economic growth and perhaps even economic contraction of some industries. While the loss of property per square foot is defined, this was not converted into millions of dollars of loss to the property owners or the resulting loss of tax revenue. The increased service charges will also increase the cost of living in the service areas and reduce the funds available for spending in the local economy. This consideration should be part of the economic impact analysis.

2. *What are the details of the economic benefits projected for the alternatives shown in Fig. 418.18? What is the real job content of the new income versus landowner or other beneficiaries?* 005

These benefits derive from new agricultural production postulated by the EIR/EIS which will be driven by "market forces," and thus not guaranteed. The projected income divided by the direct jobs provide results in a figure of about \$69,000 per job which seems high for an agricultural position. As stated in the EIR/EIS, the Annual Economic Benefits do not accrue to the ratepayers, but to the agricultural land owners.

005 (cont.)

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3. *What is the cost of providing reclaimed water per acre-foot?*

006

Measuring water and its cost by acre-foot is a common practice. For example it costs about \$90 per acre-foot to provide water to the Westlands Water District (part of Central Valley Water Project). The Sonoma County Water Agency charges from \$250 to \$350 per acre foot to provide drinking water. The average cost of pumping from wells for agricultural irrigation in Sonoma County is about \$75 per acre-foot.

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4. *What is the difference in protein content between alfalfa and locally produced oat hay? How will this protein deficiency be made up for regarding dairy production?*

007

The EIR/EIS refers to Central Valley alfalfa, a product produced within the State of California, as "imported," yet a common source of protein supplement for lower quality oat hay is fish meal, krill harvested in the Antarctic and imported from Chile.



