

**PUBLIC COMMENTOR 261 - ROBERTA WALTER, SEPTEMBER 24, 1996**

349

Hello, my name is Roberta Walter, and I live at 18348 Neeley Road in Guerneville. I'm a former elected director of the Sweetwater Springs Water District. I'm also a licensed water operator 2. During the time of my tenure at Sweetwater Springs, our official policy was that we advocated zero discharge. What I'd like to do at this time is to touch on some of the things that Brenda was unable to talk about, because I feel what she had to say was important, and so I'm going to fill in the parts of her report that she had no time for. One of the things she was speaking about was funding and capacity.

It's a major flaw of this report that options have not included storage facilities under one billion gallons capacity. This one fact has huge costs and made an affordable reuse option a distant dream. That reminds me of what some of you said about Napa's system.

Larger storage facilities require massive initial capital outlay which assures prohibitive cost of reclamation options and prohibits phasing.

Cost benefits to agriculture are eliminated and consequently to consumers as a whole.

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Long-range beneficial impacts of phasing smaller sites have been avoided. Funding programs available to farmers only, thus saving rate payer dollars for development of ponds is unaddressed. Support for a phased multi reservoir system goes back at least 20 years with the advocacy of Bill Kortum. RRWPC supports the focus on phasing and reuse as presented by SCOR. If such a phasing program had begun ten years ago, the problem would have been solved by now and millions of dollars saved.

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Furthermore, unlike the river, agricultural reuse has a much greater likelihood of significant future expansion. That future expansion would be far less expensive if pipelines to the South County were already in place.

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Plant upgrade and expansion for the 5-b Laguna discharge has already been funded and built, assuring that the costs come in significantly lower than for other options and loads the deck in favor of its selection. Studies have been avoided on any current practices utilized with this option. And again, there's a big difference between 5, 10, and 20 percent.

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An unaddressed cost issue is that increased discharges and increased regulations could ultimately force the need for a filtration system on Santa Rosa's water supply. This could cost anywhere from 100 to 150 million. Higher discharges would speed the process. John Nelson represents the water contractors of the SCWA and believes that filters would be needed if alternative 5-A were chosen.

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We explained the relationship of the 5 percent discharge to the storage curve and precisely how that curve is determined and the exact circumstances under which higher discharges are allowed and for how long.

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Compare the various release scenarios to actual river flows at the time discharge reaches the river. In other words, show the true release percentage at the confluence of mark west spring creek, and the Russian River, and at the time in effect. Show actual discharge percentages into Santa Rosa creek and the Laguna de la Santa Rosa and explain why you do not have actual flow data for the Laguna above and below the Santa Rosa creek confluence other than what you estimated on the computer.

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The document does not detail current discharge calculations as allowed by the regional board. The seven-day average effectively allows a 10 to 15 percent discharge by the time it reaches the river during times of decreasing flow. Please show how such an average would affect actual discharges and associated impacts.

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City consultants facilitated a public comment process which was then ignored. The RRWPC put forth option 2-m, which was a modified form of the South County option allowing for greater conservation and urban irrigation. This option received the most support from the public input process determined by the City staff, and yet was not chosen for further study. A process was thereby contrived by the City consultants allowing for public input which was regularly not followed. The City of Santa Rosa is well known for ignoring the recommendations of its citizen committees.

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Fishery studies. Fishery studies only determined that fish were swimming through wastewater, not whether they were suffering sublethal effects from contact with the wastewater. Relatively few fish were caught. It's hard to know how many fish may have avoided the wastewater. Sublethal effects on juvenile fish are unknown.

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Nutrients in increased wastewater discharges are likely to raise water temperatures. This will foster increase of warm water predator species which will adversely affect steelhead and salmon. In light of the proposed endangered listings of the steelhead, how will this situation be remedied?

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Dissolved silver and zinc are very high, indicating possible contamination. Let me see -- I think we said this before -- I think I'm going to say it again. From electroplating, electronics and photo finishing industries. The regional plant received influents from many such industries.

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I just want to reiterate that I'd like to see that promise fulfilled that was made. Remember that one about promising to be out of the river? Thanks.

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**Mayor Wright:**

Thanks, Roberta. Rich Sherwood followed by Judy Boyce.