

# FARMERS FOR WATER

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The Santa Rosa City Council  
 The Board of Public Utilities  
 100 Santa Rosa Avenue  
 Santa Rosa, California 95404

## CITY OF SANTA ROSA

P.O. Box 1678  
 Santa Rosa, CA 95402

SEP 24 1996

DEPARTMENT OF  
 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Dear Gentlemen and Ladies:

Thank you for this opportunity to allow us to tell you about Farmers for Water and our views on the need for a long-term project that involves the reclamation and reuse of what is already a valuable resource, the tertiary treated wastewater produced in Sonoma County. While we could raise a number of specific issues, technical problems, etc. concerning the current Draft EIR, we are confident that they will be raised today or in subsequent written comments and then addressed. Our primary interest is to see the study process concluded and thereafter gain access to a new source of water. Our approach is to reduce project costs and environmental impacts by expanding the delivery systems that are already in place and satisfy the storage problem through more on-farm storage. We view this as a variation of the reuse alternatives already included in the EIR. We hope that as the project selection process moves forward and the EIR is finalized, this alternative will be given serious consideration. 001

Farmers for Water is an alliance of dairy ranchers, grape growers, apple growers and farmers who have come together from throughout Sonoma County to address an issue that is vital to the future of agriculture, water. Our initial goals are: (1) to educate Santa Rosa and Sonoma County decision makers that tertiary treated wastewater is a valuable resource and that many Sonoma County farmers can use and do want such water; (2) to help formulate a plan that delivers treated water to farms and ranches throughout Sonoma County, and is fair to both rate payers and the farmers; and (3) to determine the desirability and feasibility of creating a

Sonoma County Agricultural Irrigation District or Zone to address the issues 001 (cont.) of wastewater reuse and future water for agricultural purposes.

We recognize that a successful wastewater reuse plan must reduce the project's overall cost to a point that is acceptable to the rate payers. We also share a common belief that condemnation is neither appropriate nor necessary to secure storage sites.

Farmers for Water has achieved significant progress in a very short period of time. Specifically, our steering committee has stated that they want and can use tertiary treated wastewater and we know that many farmers are willing to pay for such water and/or provide storage sites. Further, as a way to assist the City of Santa Rosa to formulate a plan that delivers treated water to farms and ranches throughout Sonoma County, at the urging of Farmers for Water, last June the Board of Supervisors directed the Sonoma County Water Agency to study the creation of an Agricultural Irrigation Zone. The initial purposes of the Zone would be to (1) locate storage sites and (2) negotiate the terms and arrangements between those farmers who want the water and the City of Santa Rosa. The Water Agency is currently at work on an economic feasibility study and an initial map which will show potential water users and storage sites.

We have every reason to believe that there is a strong desire for an affordable project that favors reclamation and reuse. With access to water Sonoma County's agriculture can expand, be more competitive and decrease its dependence on conventional water sources. Acting as a clearinghouse, an irrigation zone would be the entity through which farmers' needs for water can be coordinated with the supply available.

We urge you to move forward and complete the EIR process and then to work with the zone to formulate a project that delivers treated water to farms and ranches throughout Sonoma County. ]

Very truly yours,



Laurence G. Sterling  
on behalf of Farmers for Water

FARMERS FOR WATER

Steering Committee

Tom Bachman, Pegasus Ranch, Petaluma  
John Bucher, Bucher Dairy, Valley Ford  
Pete Downs, Kendall-Jackson Winery, Santa Rosa  
Warren Dutton, Dutton Ranch, Sebastopol  
Matt Gallo, Gallo Vineyards, Dry Creek-Healdsburg  
Ed Grossi, Grossi Farm, Petaluma  
Kip Herzog, Sleepy Hollow Dairy, Petaluma  
Saralee Kunde, Saralee's Vineyard, Windsor  
George McClelland, McClelland Dairy, Petaluma  
Paul Martin, Paul Martin Dairy, Petaluma  
Angelo Sangiacomo, Sangiacomo Vineyards, Sonoma  
Forrest Tancer, Iron Horse Vineyards, Sebastopol

Supporting Organizations:

Sonoma County Grape Growers Association  
Sonoma County Farm Bureau  
United Winegrowers for Sonoma County

