

**STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR THE  
SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER RIGHTS SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT**

Written Testimony of Kate Rees  
Cachuma Conservation Release Board

I am the Manager of the Cachuma Conservation Release Board (CCRB), which is comprised of the Goleta Water District, the City of Santa Barbara, the Montecito Water District, and the Carpinteria Valley Water District. My areas of responsibility include management of all water rights related activities for CCRB, and implementation of the steelhead monitoring program and steelhead enhancement/restoration management actions on the Lower Santa Ynez River. I hold a Bachelors Degree in Geology from California State University at Northridge, and a Masters Degree in Hydrology/Geography from the University of California at Los Angeles, and have been employed by the Cachuma Conservation Release Board or the Cachuma Operation and Maintenance Board for the last ten years. I participated in all studies required by the SWRCB Order WR 94-05. In addition, I conducted the research and analysis for the Change in Purpose and Place of Use Petition for the Cachuma water rights permits, and served as an expert witness at the SWRCB Cachuma Water Rights Phase 1 Hearing. Therefore, I am familiar with the water rights issues involved with the Cachuma Project, as well as the efforts of CCRB, Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District, Improvement District No. 1 (ID No. 1), the City of Lompoc, and the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District (SYRWCD) to resolve the outstanding water rights issues on the Lower Santa Ynez River, which ultimately resulted in an historic Settlement Agreement among all the parties.

CCRB is a joint powers agency formed in January 1973 to jointly represent the respective its member agencies in conserving the Cachuma Project water supply and protecting the Cachuma water rights and interests. CCRB's Board of Directors is made up of elected representatives from each of its Member Units. The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, on behalf of the Cachuma Member Units, holds the Cachuma Project water right permits, and CCRB is the agency responsible for actions and decisions relative to the terms and conditions of those permits for the South Coast Member Units. These also include all issues related to downstream releases of water from Cachuma Reservoir for the benefit and protection of steelhead/rainbow trout and their habitats.

As you have heard from earlier witnesses, the Cachuma Member Units and the City of Lompoc have long been involved in controversy over concerns raised by the City of Lompoc that Cachuma operations were negatively impacting the quantity and quality of downstream water rights releases made pursuant to WR 89-18. In at least one instance, that controversy involved litigation brought by the City against the State Board. In 1995, the consultants for the City of Lompoc concluded that Cachuma Project operations had no impact on the quantity of water recharged into the Lompoc Plain or on groundwater levels, but that operations had impacted the water quality of downstream releases in terms of higher TDS levels than would otherwise occur in the absence of the Cachuma Project. Negotiations between the Cachuma Member Units and the City of Lompoc that began in 1995, and failed to reach resolution, eventually turned to a technically and scientifically based, hydrologic modeling process in order to better evaluate Lompoc's water quality concerns. Although the technical advisory team greatly improved the

models and gained a much better understanding of the hydrologic system, the water quality questions about the impacts of Cachuma, if any, remained unresolved.

In early 1999, CCRB, ID No. 1, the City of Lompoc, and the SYRWCD entered into renewed discussions that led to extensive negotiations. This cooperative process ultimately resulted in the Settlement Agreement for Cachuma Project Operations that all parties to the agreement and the Bureau of Reclamation have agreed will work. It is important to recognize that the Settlement Agreement took years to negotiate, and none of the parties can accept some portions of the Settlement Agreement without the rest. By its terms, the Settlement Agreement does not become effective unless the State Board, through this hearing process, provides for downstream water rights releases under WR 89-19 as modified by the Settlement Agreement. If this does not occur, years of negotiation and consensus among all parties on the Santa Ynez River may be lost.

The Directors of the Cachuma Conservation Release Board are satisfied that the Settlement Agreement adequately protects Cachuma Project water rights, and also provides for protection of public trust resources. They also believe that the Settlement Agreement is in the best interest of the CCRB Member Units, and should therefore be fully supported. On behalf of the Directors of the Cachuma Conservation Release Board, we wholeheartedly support the Settlement Agreement as the appropriate means to protect Cachuma Project water rights, and public trust resources downstream of Lake Cachuma.