

October 20, 2005

Jeffrey S. Young, Chairman
California Regional Water Quality Control Board
Central Coast Region
895 Aerovista Place, Suite 101
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401



Dear Mr. Young:

We strongly support the Los Osos Wastewater Project as designed for the Tri-W site. ~~And we are~~ appalled that the new Los Osos Community Services District Board of Directors has stopped the project. Their action is irresponsible and very risky. It's not only a serious health risk, but a serious financial risk. To move the project "out of town", as they advocate, would mean more years of delay and more years of groundwater and estuary contamination. It would mean severe financial impact due to the loss of the State Revolving Fund low-interest loan, breach-of-contract penalties, enforcement fines and increased cost due to inflation.

When we voted to form the assessment district and paid our share of the cost, we expected it to be used for the current project at the Tri-W site. Its central location would be the most efficient, from a collection standpoint, of the many sites studied. And it has been designed to be "a good neighbor" with its below grade negative air flow buildings, odor-removing filters, wave wall and screen planting to mitigate visual impact, and landscaped park-like setting.

We question the feasibility of the pond-type treatment system opponents propose for an out-of-town location. Does it have a record of successful operation in California? Can it meet the discharge requirement of the Regional Water Quality Control Board? Is it acceptable to pump the collected effluent across the creek to a plant out of town, give it tertiary treatment, and pump it back into the community for aquifer recharge? (The community has always advocated that it be a water-reclamation project.)

We strongly oppose the STEP-STEG collection system the opponents are advocating. While less costly to install, we believe it has a potentially high maintenance cost and certainly a higher electrical energy cost, both borne by the home owner. Most septic tanks in the Prohibition Zone would probably have to be replaced with new sealed units with grinder pumps. They can be expensive to operate and maintain. The gravity collection system of the approved project, while more costly to install, would be the most efficient, reliable and maintenance-free.

The new LOCSD Board claim they have a mandate to design and install a cheaper system out of town; that they represent the majority of the community. But the fact is they were elected with little more than 30% of the eligible voters. They deny that their fifteen lawsuits, resulting in years of delay, has caused the project's cost to double. Instead, with no valid justification, they absurdly blame the original board.

The new Board claims they want to save the community money with a cheaper, better system, and by negotiating their way out of fines, penalties and the loss of the state loan. They can avoid the impending financial disaster only by resuming the construction of the approved system.

Sincerely yours,

Mr. and Mrs. Raymond E. Bracken

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