

VALLEY CENTER MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT

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SAN DIEGO REGIONAL
WATER QUALITY
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March 31, 2008

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Attention: Richard Wright, Chair
9174 Sky Park Court, Suite 100
San Diego, CA 92123

RE: Carlsbad Desalination Project (#R9-2006-0065, NPDES No. CA 109223)
Approval of Flow, Entrainment and Impingement Minimization Plan, April 9,
2008 Hearing – Agenda Item #7

Dear Chairman Wright:

I have recently reviewed the Flow, Entrainment and Impingement Minimization Plan for the Carlsbad Desalination project and I wanted to submit my comments and offer my endorsement of the project.

I'm the General Manager for Valley Center Municipal Water District. The District was formed in 1954 to secure a more reliable source of water to serve our communities. We are the largest agricultural water district in the county, serving 25,000 residents and 24,000 acres of agricultural land within the unincorporated communities of Valley Center, Jesmond Dene, Hidden Meadows, Circle R and the Lawrence Welk Village.

Like much of San Diego County, our District is heavily reliant on imported water from Metropolitan Water District (MWD). In the years ahead, rising wholesale costs and higher demands on the water system due to increased residential, commercial and agricultural growth will eventually outpace the availability, causing shortages and mandated reductions. Because of the high percentage of agricultural users, our District is going to be hit harder than most by MWD's announced cuts to imported agricultural water supplies.


While our conservation and wastewater recycling programs can bolster a small percentage of our supply, we know that it is imperative to find more cost-efficient, drought-proof ways to expand our supply of drinking water.

After extensively studying desalination, the District entered a contract to purchase 7,500 acre-feet per year of water from the Carlsbad desalination plant in 2005. The District took this action, in part, because the San Diego County Water Authority adopted a Drought Management Plan that gives incentives to member agencies to pursue conservation, reclamation and desalination in an effort to develop new, local drought-proof supplies.

This project has already gone through multiple layers of approvals over the past eight years and has long since proven it's an environmentally-responsible project. I would like to remind the board that they have already given their approval for a discharge permit and that the Flow, Entrainment and Impingement Minimization Plan includes many additional protections for the surrounding marine environment. In fact, the plant will be crucial to the long-term health of the Agua Hedionda Lagoon when the Encina Power Station is decommissioned and no longer provides maintenance and dredging.

Valley Center Municipal Water District understands that seawater desalination is a key part of the solution to the region's long-term water reliability needs. The entire San Diego region is depending on this new water supply to lessen the demand on imported water. We find no reason to delay action any longer and we strongly urge the Board to approve this project.

Sincerely,



Gary Arant
General Manager
Valley Center Municipal Water District

cc:

David King, Vice Chairman
Susan Ritschel, Board Member
Eric Anderson, Board Member
Wayne Rayfield, Board Member
Elizabeth Pearson-Schneider, Board Member
Kris Weber, Board Member
John Robertus, Executive Director
Eric Becker
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