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Assembly California Legislature



MARY SALAS

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SELECT COMMITTEE ON BIOTECHNOLOGY

2008 APR -2 P 3:50

April 1, 2008

Chairman Richard Wright
San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board
9174 Sky Park Court, Suite 100
San Diego, CA 92123

**RE: Carlsbad Desalination Project - #R9-2006-0065, NPDES No. CA 0109223,
April 9th Hearing, Agenda Item #7**

Dear Chairman Wright:

This letter is to inform you of my support for the Carlsbad Desalination Plant and to request that you finalize the discharge permit by approving the key permit condition that requires a project to minimization marine impacts.

I represent the 79th Assembly District for the State of California. My constituents are found throughout San Diego's South Bay community, including the cities of Imperial Beach, Chula Vista, National City, Coronado and San Diego. Unfortunately, the South Bay has not always had access to the same resources, opportunities and services as the rest of the region. As an elected official since 1996, I have worked tirelessly to improve the quality of life throughout my communities.

I am pleased to support Sweetwater Authority, which provides water to thousands of my constituents, in their bid to increase their drought tolerant supplies to 36% by 2010 and become less dependent on imported water. In 2006, Sweetwater Authority contracted with Poseidon Resources to purchase 2,400 acre-feet of water annually that will be produced at the Carlsbad Desalination Plant. This water will account for approximately 10% of Sweetwater's annual needs and will supply enough water for about 4,800 families each year.

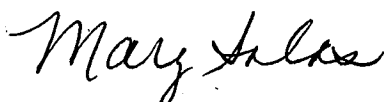


I take a personal interest in this, not only because my constituents will benefit directly from this contract, but also because I have sponsored AB 1435 which deal specifically with water quality and conservation. It is crucial that we have a safe and abundant drinking water supply. I encourage residents and local businesses to conserve water and reduce usage wherever possible. But I know that is not enough in this era of global warming, drought and environmental devastation. A new source of potable water – seawater desalination – is a tested technology that can guarantee San Diego's future water needs are met.

The water produced will be of the highest quality, meeting or exceeding all drinking water regulatory standards under the law. It is also guaranteed never to cost more than the rates set by the San Diego County Water Authority, ensuring that Sweetwater won't have to pass on excessively high water rates to their customers. And it has gone through rigorous testing and public scrutiny to ensure that the plant will be environmentally friendly and efficiently operated. The project developers have made every effort to comply with state and federal environmental regulations and have long since proved their project will not harm the Agua Hedionda Lagoon or ocean. In fact, their proposed mitigation measures will restore 37 acres of wetlands habitat and will provide for the annual maintenance of the lagoon.

I am proud to support this successful public-private partnership between Poseidon Resources with the City of Carlsbad and I urge you to approve this project at your April 9, 2008 meeting.

Sincerely,



Mary Salas

79th Assembly 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
Michael McCann
John Odermatt