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 HOMELAND SECURITY

Assembly California Legislature



NOREEN EVANS
 ASSEMBLYMEMBER, SEVENTH DISTRICT

October 18, 2006

Board of Directors
 State Water Resources Control Board
 1001 I Street
 Sacramento, CA 95814

In Re: Proposed 2006 Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List for the Laguna de Santa Rosa

Dear Members of the Board:

I write to express strong support for all seven of the proposed Clean Water Act Section 303(d) listings to preserve water quality in the Laguna de Santa Rosa and to urge your support for a more expeditious timeline for subsequent Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) completion.

Waterway restoration has been a focus of my political career and, in this context, I have been a strong advocate for the Laguna de Santa Rosa. Therefore, I am delighted to see that the nutrient control proposals before the Board this year abandon the approach under consideration last year to de-list nutrient impairments in the Laguna. That would have set a problematic precedent for waterway restoration and management across our state. Your support of listings under consideration this year – for nitrogen, phosphorous, sediment, mercury, low dissolved oxygen, and two for water temperature – will send the right message.

According to the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, the Laguna holds the unenviable position as the region's most impaired watercourse. This illustrates the point that I have consistently advocated before you: the Laguna needs to be restored and managed. Nutrient control is critical to this effort, and the TMDL process is the appropriate framework for determining what nutrient levels should be in the Laguna.

Without nutrient control, the Laguna will continue struggling with its current challenges at great taxpayer expense and risk to property, public health, and the environment. Elevated nutrient levels in the Laguna trigger the growth of *Ludwigia*, an invasive plant that has accelerated sedimentation and decreased flood control capacity. Excess *Ludwigia* growth and elevated nutrient concentrations also inhibit mosquito vector control to mitigate the risk of West Nile Virus. Furthermore, surplus nutrients also lead to low oxygen levels which threaten the survival of endangered steelhead and Coho salmon populations.

The Laguna is of great importance to my constituents. In 1990, Sonoma County voters passed an initiative to tax themselves to preserve agricultural land and protect open space. The initiative specifically identified the Laguna as one of the areas to be protected by this tax. More recently,

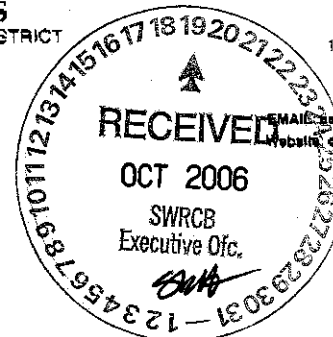
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10/25/06 BdMtg Item 10
 303(d) List
 Deadline: 10/20/06 5pm

my community came together to craft a plan for Laguna revival. Many individuals volunteer their time to support this plan. The state and local governments have also contributed nearly \$2 million in financing to implement this plan. Your support for the proposed Clean Water Act Section 303(d) listings will help improve the efficacy of these important efforts geared to revive this jewel in my district. In order to facilitate a more immediate impact, and provide timely parameters for my home town of Santa Rosa which relies on the Laguna for discharging treated water, I urge your support for a more rapid development of the TMDLs for nitrogen, phosphorous, sediment, mercury, and water temperature earlier than the proposed 2019 deadline.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact my office at (916) 319-2007. Thank you for your consideration.

Yours very truly,



NOREEN EVANS,
Assemblymember, 7th District

NE:am

cc: North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board