

# **Exhibit I**

field surveys. These calibrations calculated the water, aquatic cover, and basking opportunity components differently to produce scores that better reflected field conditions.

As discussed in the 2003 and 2004 Annual Reports, other variables including channelization, habitat alteration, and ongoing flood control and agricultural activities that have occurred throughout the coastal plain reach of Conejo Creek have created widely different habitat conditions for SPPT between the dry and rainy season. In an undisturbed situation, the creek would have meandered across its floodplain, forming sites of sediment deposition and erosion that change depending on the location and configuration of the active creek channel that year. This physical diversity in streambed and channel features act as energy dissipaters during storm flows. In its current channelized situation, Conejo Creek is little more than a ditch conveying water as efficiently as possible. Flood control measures, prompted by complete conversion of the floodplain to agricultural, residential, and commercial development, constrain the creek to follow a narrow, roughly linear path. During storm flows this situation results in significant scouring of the bed and lower banks of the channel. Vegetation and aquatic refugia for SPPT that may have formed during the dry season are eliminated each year by scouring (Appendix D). Consequently, the overall stability of habitat features important to SPPT, such as deep pools for adults and shallow side channels with aquatic emergent vegetation for hatchlings and juveniles is greatly reduced. Human-induced amplification of seasonal variability in stream habitats appears to have made Conejo Creek generally unsuitable for SPPT except for specific locations.

## 5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2005 HSI scores are generally consistent with previous years scores. Other ongoing variations appear more influential and are due to flood control/agricultural manipulation within the floodplain. As these activities are not controlled by the City of Thousand Oaks and are not related to the water diversion, we recommend termination of the final monitoring year (Year 5) of the section of Conejo Creek south of Highway 101 below the diversion given the continued presence of pond turtle. The remaining year of monitoring is not likely to capture differing results from those of the last four.

As noted in previous years reports, a predator control program and additional agricultural/flood control permit enforcement are recommended for this watershed. Further analysis of the section of Conejo Creek may be useful to determine potential opportunities for habitat enhancement to increase productivity of SPPT. However, this is not within the scope of this mitigation monitoring program given that no net loss of SPPT habitat or population was observed.

## 6.0 CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of the Mitigation Monitoring Program for the water diversion project on Conejo Creek is to determine if the goal of "no net loss of southwestern pond turtle population or habitat" has occurred in the reach of Conejo Creek between the stream diversion, near Highway 101, downstream to its confluence with Calleguas Creek. This goal remains problematic to monitor due to multiple variables unrelated to the water diversion such as, agricultural/flood control activities and predation by exotic species including bullfrog. Many variables are not accounted for in the HSI methodology for SPPT habitat, which may contribute to the changes in

habitat conditions for SPPT. Examples of these variables include water quality and food sources.

Analysis of the survey data showed only a slight variation in stream characteristics within each reach when evaluated on a biannual basis. The major contributing factor manipulating the data for 2005 was the natural storm scour from the above-average winter storm season.

Twenty (20) observations of SPPT were recorded during the 2005 biannual surveys conducted by Rincon Consultants within Conejo Creek between Highway 101 and Calleguas Creek. All twenty observations were recorded within Reach 4. Different from previous years, a young juvenile, approximately 2-3 years old, was observed within Reach 4A. The presence of a young juvenile is a positive sign of population recruitment and could be a sign of long-term survival of the existing population. It is also an indication that operation of the diversion has not affected the SPPT population.

Thirty (30) SPPT were observed during the May and November surveys of the off-site mitigation area located on the south fork of the Arroyo Conejo. This is a positive sign that existing populations are surviving. Different from previous year's surveys, three SPPT were observed within the created mitigation ponds below the wastewater treatment plant during the November survey. This is a positive sign of natural use of the created ponds by the SPPT. Only one turtle observation was recorded in the created ponds in 2004.

As noted in previous years, an abundance of non-native predators of hatchling and juvenile turtles were observed within Conejo Creek including catfish, carp, African clawed frogs, and bullfrogs.

The locations of this year's observations of SPPT were consistent with the previous years survey results. The HSI calculations for 2003 through 2005 confirmed that the values produced by it were generally representative of the actual field conditions. Based on previous years surveys and habitat conditions, we assumed that Reach 4 would accommodate the largest number of turtles. The data collected over the last three years confirms that assumption.

The long-term health of the SPPT population for Conejo Creek may be difficult to monitor and may be completely unrelated to the water diversion. This year's observation of juveniles provides evidence of survivorship and population recruitment in SPPT in this reach of the drainage. Observations by Fugro West, Inc. of SPPT in Reach 4 in 1995 did not include hatchlings or juveniles. Previous observations by Rincon Consultants over the past three years have also failed to discover any hatchlings or juveniles in this reach.

The comparison of HSI scores in prior year's for Conejo Creek below the diversion with the HSI scores for 2005 illustrate that no substantial change in habitat conditions has occurred due to the operation of the diversion during the past four years. This is confirmed by the continued presence of SPPT in Reach 4 as documented during the monitoring.

Based on the 2005 surveys and the HSI calculation, we conclude that it does not appear that the water diversion is having an adverse impact on the southern pacific pond turtles downstream on Conejo Creek. SPPT were observed during both the May and November surveys. Up to seven SPPT were observed in Reach 4 during both the May and November surveys. During the



August 2000 pre-construction surveys within the study area of Conejo Creek, only five pond turtles were observed, also in Reach 4. Also, no substantial decreases in water availability were observed or recorded due to diversion activities.

As of this time, the continuing presence of SPPT in Reach 4 and evidence of a hatchling showing signs of population recruitment indicate that no net loss of southern pacific pond turtle population or habitat has occurred in this reach of Conejo Creek due to the implementation of the water diversion.

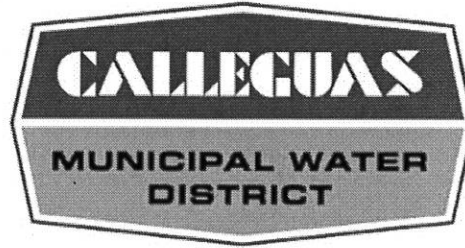


# **Exhibit J**

SCOTT H. QUADY, PRESIDENT  
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April 11, 2014

State Water Resources Control Board  
Division of Water Rights  
P.O. Box 2000  
Sacramento, CA 95812-2000

Subject: *City of Thousand Oaks Temporary Change Petition  
SWRCB Decision No. 1638*

To whom it may concern:

Calleguas Municipal Water District (Calleguas) submits this letter in support of the Temporary Urgency Change Petition submitted by the City of Thousand Oaks to reduce the bypass requirements at the Conejo Creek Diversion Structure. The diversions from Conejo Creek are an essential source of water supply for Ventura County.

Calleguas delivers imported water throughout much of the county, serving a population of 620,000 in and around the cities of Thousand Oaks, Simi Valley, Moorpark, Camarillo, Oxnard, and Port Hueneme. As the water landscape has changed since Calleguas' formation in 1953, we have also facilitated local supply projects, including the Conejo Creek Diversion Project. Calleguas played an active part in the development and operation of the project from conception to 2013, and while we are no longer directly involved with the project, we are more convinced than ever of its necessity.

As you undoubtedly know, Governor Brown declared a drought emergency for the State of California in January of this year. That drought declaration followed California's driest year on record in 2013 and a continuing drought into 2014. These conditions caused the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), the operator of the State Water Project (SWP) to issue a zero allocation to the SWP contractors. If that zero allocation holds, it will be the first time in the SWP's 54-year history that the DWR will not allot such water.

The drought has also caused record low levels for the snow pack in the Northern and Southern Sierras. Consequently, the amount of water stored in various reservoirs is also at record lows. All SWP water currently being delivered to Southern California is depleting these perilously low storage supplies.

State Water Resource Control Board

April 11, 2014


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Ventura County is heavily reliant on the SWP system because there is infrastructure in place to deliver only a very small quantity of Colorado River water to our area. In the face of these unprecedented drought conditions, Calleguas supports any measure or program that will make additional water available to water users in Ventura County.

The Pleasant Valley Basin supplies both agricultural and municipal uses. As its groundwater levels fall, users demand increasing amounts of imported water to supplement their disappearing supply. Reducing the bypass requirements at the Conejo Creek diversion and allowing more water to flow to the Pleasant Valley Basin provides a buffer against the otherwise inevitable draw on our now severely limited stores of SWP water. I strongly urge the State Water Resources Control Board to promptly approve the City of Thousand Oaks' petition.

Please feel free to contact me at (805) 579-7115 or [smulligan@calleguas.com](mailto:smulligan@calleguas.com) if you have questions or would like additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan B. Mulligan". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the left of the typed name.

Susan B. Mulligan  
General Manager

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UNITED WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
"Conserving Water Since 1927"

Legal Counsel  
Anthony H. Trembley

General Manager  
E. Michael Solomon

April 7, 2014

State Water Resources Control Board  
DIVISION OF WATER RIGHTS  
P.O. Box 2000  
Sacramento, CA 95812-2000

Dear State Board:

On behalf of the United Water Conservation District, I write to you today to declare United's support of the Temporary Urgency Change Petition submitted by the City of Thousand Oaks to reduce the bypass requirements at the Conejo Creek Diversion Structure.

The United Water Conservation District (UWCD) conserves and enhances the water resources of the Santa Clara River through groundwater replenishment and the operation of water supply and delivery systems. UWCD's service area includes the Oxnard Coastal Plain, an area underlain by groundwater basins that contribute greatly to both the agricultural and municipal vitality of the region. Using diverted surface water (in our case, the Santa Clara River) to recharge those basins and offset pumping that would further deplete them is our primary operational strategy, which we've employed to great effect since the construction of the Santa Felicia Dam in 1955 and the Freeman Diversion in 1991. We know from extensive experience the value of surface water flows to protect and enhance groundwater resources.

The Conejo Creek Diversion Project is just such a project. The Pleasant Valley Basin is an important supply resource and is vital to protecting the Oxnard Coastal Plain against seawater intrusion. At a time when the climate is not cooperating to recharge the basin naturally and its groundwater levels continue to plummet, the best course of action to ward off the consequences of that descent is to increase inflows artificially. Reducing the bypass requirements at the Conejo Creek diversion structure is an effective way to achieve this.

On behalf of United, I urge the State Board to promptly approve its petition.

Sincerely,

E. Michael Solomon  
General Manager



# FOX CANYON GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AGENCY

A State of California Water Agency



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**EXECUTIVE OFFICER**  
**Jeff Pratt, P.E.**

April 8, 2014

State Water Resources Control Board  
DIVISION OF WATER RIGHTS  
P.O. Box 2000  
Sacramento, CA 95812-2000

**SUBJECT: CITY OF THOUSAND OAKS TEMPORARY URGENCY CHANGE PETITION**

Dear State Board:

On behalf of the Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency, I write to you today to express the Agency's support of the Temporary Urgency Change Petition submitted by the City of Thousand Oaks to reduce the bypass requirements at the Conejo Creek Diversion Structure.

The Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency (FCGMA) manages and protects aquifers within several groundwater basins underlying the southern portion of Ventura County. One of these is the Pleasant Valley Basin, portions of which have been in perpetual overdraft since long before the FCGMA's establishment in 1982. Overdraft in a basin so near the ocean results in seawater intrusion into freshwater aquifers. Protecting against seawater intrusion is one of the FCGMA's core missions.

Without significant rain to recharge them in the ongoing drought, groundwater levels in the Pleasant Valley Basin have become critically low. Deliveries of Conejo Creek surface water via the Conejo Creek Diversion Project (an average of more than 5,000 acre-feet a year for the last ten years) have kept the basin from further degradation. Every drop of Conejo Creek water that Pleasant Valley Basin users receive is one less they have to pump. Reducing bypass requirements at the diversion structure – water that otherwise flows to the ocean – would reduce pumping in an overstressed basin used for both M&I and agricultural demands, actively help recharge that basin, and reduce the area's demand for imported water.

The FCGMA has a host of challenges on its hands – one part of a solution to the overdraft problem would involve increasing diversions from Conejo Creek to the FCGMA. The Agency fully supports the City of Thousand Oaks's petition to reduce its bypass requirements, and urges the State Board to promptly approve it.

Sincerely,

  
Jeff Pratt, P.E.  
Executive Officer

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Website: [www.fcgma.org](http://www.fcgma.org)