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STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD

DIVISION OF WATER RIGHTS

In the matter of:

Santa Ana River Water Right Applications 31165, 31174, 31369, 31370, 31371, and 31372 and Wastewater Change Petition No. WW-0045.

Hearing Officer: Arthur Baggett, Jr.

WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF JEFF BEEHLER ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF RIVERSIDE

Date: May 2, 2007
Time: 9:00 a.m.
Dept: 1001 I Street, Second Fl.
Costal Hearing Room
Sacramento, CA

Riverside Ex. 4-0

1. I have over 17 years of experience as a biologist. I obtained a degree in Biology from Kalamazoo College in 1981. Additionally, I have a Master of Science in Entomology/Evolutionary Biology and a Doctor of Philosophy in Medical Entomology/Veterinary Science from the University of Wisconsin.

2. Currently, I am the Senior Environmental Project Manager at Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority ("SAWPA"). SAWPA is a joint powers authority of five water agencies within the Santa Ana Watershed including: Orange County Water District, Inland Empire Utilities Agency, Western Municipal Water District, Eastern Municipal Water District, and San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District. SAWPA operates a regional brine disposal system, is engaged in regional watershed planning, and administers a number of projects on behalf of watershed stakeholders. Attached as Riverside Ex. 4-1 is my curriculum vitae.

3. One of my job responsibilities at SAWPA is to administer the Santa Ana Sucker Conservation Team on behalf of the watershed stakeholders having maintenance and operation responsibilities along the River. The Conservation Team is funded by the stakeholders including: the Cities of Riverside and San Bernardino (Water Department); the Counties of Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino; Orange County Water District; and the Orange County Sanitation District. SAWPA contributes funds to administer the Conservation Team. Other Conservation Team members include U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Game, and others interested in sucker conservation (*e.g.*, representatives from environmental organizations). The Center for Biological Diversity regularly attends the Santa Ana Sucker Conversation Team meetings.

4. The Conservation Team has retained San Marino Environmental Associates and Dr. Jonathan Baskin to provide research in regards to the Santa Ana sucker. Through Dr. Baskin, the Conservation Team has conducted research activities along the river related to the Santa Ana sucker for the past five years. In 2000, the Santa Ana sucker was listed as "threatened" under the

Endangered Species Act. Since then, the Conservation Team has conducted annual population monitoring surveys in the upper Santa Ana River and also has conducted a number of habitat suitability and enhancement studies in the river. (See Applicants' Joint Exs. 2-12 through 2-15.)

5. In addition, the Conservation Team has developed a conservation program consisting of guidelines to avoid impacts to the Santa Ana sucker, or other threatened species while conducting maintenance and other activities. Recently, the Conservation Team has completed a video training program for maintenance personnel and has scheduled training workshops for the Conservation Team members and other stakeholders having operations along the River. These workshops are intended to minimize potential impacts to the threatened and endangered species while doing routine maintenance activities along the Santa Ana River.

6. The Conservation Team also has recently completed several in-stream habitat enhancement studies aimed at improving spawning opportunities for the Santa Ana sucker.

7. My testimony will cover the potential impacts on the Santa Ana sucker presented by the Riverside Public Utilities Recycled Water Program in Reach 3 of the Santa Ana River.

8. To prepare for this testimony, I reviewed the Riverside Public Utilities Recycled Water Program Draft EIR and various SAWPA documents regarding Santa Ana sucker and their habitat. I have also toured various sections of Reach 3.

9. Based on my review of the above mentioned documents and site tours, I have reached the conclusion that the Riverside Public Utilities Recycled Water Program (the "Project") will not have any significant impacts on the Santa Ana sucker.

10. The Riverside Public Utilities Recycled Water Program will utilize increased flows from the City's POTW to a recycled water conveyance system. Reduced flows will not fall

below an agreed-upon minimum of 25,000 afy. The net decrease of flow reduction from the current plant operation will be 11,000 afy.

11. I have reviewed potential Santa Ana sucker impacts from these reduced flows in the area below Van Buren Bridge to the Prado Dam (Reach 3), and have reached the following conclusions. The substrate of the River in this area is primary sand and is not preferred sucker habitat. Suckers in this area are limited by the availability of gravel substrate, not the availability of water. Suckers require gravel beds for spawning and feeding on algae growing on the gravel. Improvements in habitat in this area depend on scour and transport of gravel from heavy storm flows originating upstream.

12. The limited reduction of flow of 11,000 afy proposed by this Project will not affect the availability of the limited habitat in this area, nor will it impact scour required to improve habitat in this area. The minimal decrease in POTW discharge proposed by this Project will not decrease available habitat for the Santa Ana sucker.

13. This Project area may currently hold suckers, but large populations and reproduction is likely the limiting factor for the sucker in this section in this reach of the River, as the availability of suitable habitat, not the availability of water during low-flow periods, is the limiting factor.