



Terry Tamminen
*Secretary for
Environmental
Protection*

State Water Resources Control Board

Executive Office

Arthur G. Baggett Jr., Chair
1001 I Street • Sacramento, California 95814 • (916) 341-5615
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 100 • Sacramento, California • 95812-0100
Fax (916) 341-5621 • <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov>



Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor

May 12, 2004

Mr. Peter M. Douglas
Executive Director
California Coastal Commission
45 Fremont Street, Suite 2000
San Francisco, CA 94105-2219

Dear Mr. Douglas:

SUBJECT: COMMUNITY OF LOS OSOS

I am writing on behalf of the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) to express our great disappointment with a recent decision of the California Coastal Commission not to approve the Los Osos Community Service District's project to provide basic sanitation by constructing a wastewater treatment plant and sewer system. As you know, the community of Los Osos has been treating its sewage entirely with septic systems and seepage pits throughout its entire history. These practices degrade public health and water quality in a sensitive area of our coast and should be a tremendous concern to anyone, particularly an agency entrusted with protecting the environment.

The Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board) has been working to resolve this problem for decades. A prohibition against the future use of septic systems was imposed in 1983 but lawsuits delayed the community's efforts to find a solution. After the County of San Luis Obispo managed the project for many years, a Community Services District took the lead, got the project re-approved, and succeeded in getting overwhelming support from the voters. In 2002, the necessary Local Coastal Plan amendment was approved by the Commission.

After the County approved the Coastal Development Permit for the Community Services District, a small group of citizens succeeded in getting the Commission to withhold its approval and to schedule hearings. You have indicated these hearings will not take place for six to twelve months, and then only after the Community Services District performs extensive re-analysis of issues which the Commission already considered in its 2002 approval of the Local Coastal Plan amendment. It is entirely possible that this delay may have the effect of killing the project. Funding for the project is set to expire soon and the SWRCB may not be able to re-approve the loan given the circumstances presently surrounding the project. Given the State's fiscal climate, the SWRCB's loan programs are greatly over-subscribed. Additional costs imposed by the

Commission on the Community Services District will divert revenue necessary for planning and building the project to unnecessary and duplicative studies.

I and my staff, as well as the Regional Board and its staff, stand ready to work with you to arrive at a successful conclusion to this matter. We ask that we meet quickly to find ways to address your concerns so that the project can get underway. Please call me at (916) 341-5615 so that we can discuss how to better work together.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY:

Celeste Cantú
Executive Director

cc: Terry Tamminen
Secretary for Environmental Protection
California Environmental Protection Agency
1001 I Street, 25th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Mike Chrisman
Secretary for Resources
California Resources Agency
1416 9th Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814