



1554 - 10th Street
Los Osos, Ca. 93402-1706
Nov. 6, 2005

Jeff Young, Chairman
RWQCB
895 Aerovista Place, Suite 101
San Luis Obispo, CA. 93401

Dear Mr. Young:

This letter is in response to Roger Briggs' letter of October 6, 2005, in which he threatens Los Osos residents with \$11 million in fines just days after our new CSD board took office.

Los Osos citizens and the CSD board are sincere in their determination to build an affordable sewer at a location outside of town that will not threaten the health and safety of the community and the Bay, will resolve the salt water intrusion problem, and allow for expansion of the community. A sewer plant at the Tri-W site will not solve these problems but will add to them.

We believe that your Board wants to fulfill your mission of having a viable waste water treatment plant that will clean up the water and avoid further pollution of the Bay. Fining people that can least afford it will not solve any of the problems, but may force many people to leave.. It will only increase the division between residents of Los Osos, and will not get a sewer built any faster. As retirees, we live on a limited income. We do not want to be forced to sell our house. We cannot afford to move elsewhere.

We want the SWQCB and the RWQCB to work together with the LOCSD and the citizens to resolve the sewer issue in an amicable way so that a sewer will be built in the right location to resolve our water problems. We can accomplish much more working together cooperatively, rather than against each other to accomplish our joint mission of providing a safe, effective and affordable waste water treatment plant.

Sincerely,

Mary Bhuta

Pravin Bhuta

c.c. Lisa Schicker, LOCSD
Enc: Tribune editorial



Newspaper of the Central Coast

THE TRIBUNE

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EDITORIAL

OPINION OF THE TRIBUNE

Why abandon the sewer deal?

California's state water officials have some explaining to do. Maybe even some apologizing. But we won't quibble about an apology so long as they make an about-face and reconsider their decision to revoke the Los Osos sewer loans.

Here's what happened: A state water board negotiator struck a tentative deal with the Los Osos Community Services District through weeklong mediation efforts by Assemblyman Sam Blakeslee, R-San Luis Obispo. The deal allowed construction to restart immediately by keeping state funding intact. The state also conceded that the treatment plant could be moved from the center of town and gave the district two years to secure an alternative site.

By early this week, though, the water board staff said that the only way the community will receive \$135 million in low-interest loans is if the district's board goes back to the sewer's original design — which includes a treatment plant in the center of town at the Tri-W site.

Why? William L. Rukeyser, spokesman for the state water board, told The Tribune on Tuesday: "If I get a car loan from the bank, I can't go out and buy a gym set for my kids." Frankly, that's fatuous reasoning. The \$135 million isn't going to be spent on frivolous trifles; it will be spent on a sewer system.

Further, the distinct odor of revenge seems to be enveloping this decision. That is, the state appears to be more intent on punishing Los Osos residents than carrying out its sworn mandate of cleaning up the state's waters in the most timely manner possible.

We can understand how the water board's patience has been stretched thin. They've listened to 30 years of obstructive whining about Los Osos sewers. But the brokered agreement would move the project forward at the expense of only a two-year extension.

Finally, by the water board hanging its funding on the treatment plant being built at the Tri-W site, it's demanding that the services district break the law by violating Measure B. This alone could add years of litigation before a sewer may be built.

So, why would the water board go through the charade of negotiations, then violate its sworn mandate by making demands that would break the law?

As we said, the people behind this decision have some explaining to do — including how they can be a productive partner, rather than a punisher, in getting a timely sewer back on track. The best way to achieve that goal is to embrace the brokered deal.