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Cc: [Polly Holcombe](#); [Bob McDonald](#); [Chris Dahlstrom](#); [Kevin Walsh](#); [Joshua](#); [Megan](#); kyrrab.cal@verizon.net; [Das Williams](#); [Gregg Hart](#); [Nick Welsh](#); [christian.beamish](#)
Subject: SWRCB Draft Cachuma Project Order/ Comments
Date: Friday, April 26, 2019 1:09:39 AM



Dear Ms. Townsend and Honorable Members of the Board:

These are my preliminary Comments to the subject Cachuma Draft Order. As an Introduction, I am now retired, as a professional I served as General Counsel to the Goleta Water District for over 20 years and the Summerland Water District until it was merged with Montecito. After I retired I served on the City of Santa Barbara Water Commission that has oversight of all Water and Wastewater operations of the City, for over 8 years, half those years as Chair. I participated in every Cachuma Water Board hearing from that in 1989 leading to Order 89-18, and every hearing from then until I retired in 2007, including but not limited to the 1994 hearing leading to 94-5; and the 2000 and 2003 hearings, leading to the current Draft Order. I was on the Cachuma Member Unit Steering Committee (Comm.) for the 2000 hearings. I was on the initial SY River Fish Management Plan Comm. that was formed in 1993 and led to the initial SY River Steelhead BO. I was on the Member Units Steering Comm. for the initial Cachuma Project Contract Renewal where we managed the preparation of the EIR/EIS and the negotiation of our current Contracts with the Bureau. I have followed this process since my retirement. I am now a resident in the service area and a customer of the Carpinteria Valley Water District. I will defer to current Member Unit Staff on the technical issues raised. I can assure you we employ the best and brightest at the Member Units and I am confident that they will do a fine job of responding to the Draft Order. I will frame my Comments primarily as a local resident and water rate payer who is uniquely informed on the subject.

One issue that I have observed develop since we started the first serious and credible Steelhead studies on the River in 1993 is the feasibility of passage for Steelhead, not only over the Dam but through the Lake. As formidable an obstacle as the Dam is, for a migrating Steelhead, successfully traversing the Lake from one end to the other and then finding habitat to spawn in the Upper reaches of the River is I believe, an impossible expectation. If we take a reasonable approach that recognizes that fact, then we are left with trap and truck. I expect the State Board is very familiar with the perils for Steelhead and the practical problems presented by a trap and truck proposal. In addition to that, the prospect of a major trucking operation in the Upper reaches of the River would inevitably cause significant environmental harm that could not be mitigated. I know the requirement to study passage will be included in the Order, but as a local resident who will pay for all that through my Water bill, I ask that you take a reasonable approach and not require our community to spend tens of millions of dollars on an experiment that will certainly fail if the goal is to successfully establish migrating Steelhead in the Upper Reaches of the River.

An issue that one never hears about that I want to address is to ask for a coordinated, efficient approach to our community by our State government as a whole. Here we are dealing with significant challenges to our most important Water supply. In another forum the State is demanding the development of a staggering amount of new housing, with a "Housing Mandate" that has an "or else" associated with it. In another forum, getting our Desalination Facility running effectively has encountered formidable regulatory and permitting challenges that are not only difficult to comply with but exorbitantly expensive to satisfy. We hope that at

all levels State government looks at all the demands being made on our community and consider a coordinated, efficient approach that prioritizes matters and makes an attempt to at least be fair and reasonable. Santa Barbara has a cache for those who do not live here. The reality is that a majority of our Santa Barbara County residents are struggling Middle class families many at the poverty level, and that is who pays the costs to implement the requirements of the Order through our monthly Water bills. Please be reasonable in your demands on our community.

Respectfully submitted,

Russell Ruiz