

**WILLIAM L. MARBLE: POLICY STATEMENT
JANUARY 18, 2011 SWRCB HEARING
DAVIS-WOODLAND WATER SUPPLY PROJECT
WATER-RIGHT APPLICATIONS 30358A ND 30358B**

My name is William L. Marble. I am a dentist by profession and am in my fifth year of service as a Councilman from the City of Woodland. I have been the Chairman of the Water Resources Association of Yolo County since 2008 and have served as the Chairman of the Woodland-Davis Clean Water Agency since it was formed. I also serve as a member of the League of California Cities Statewide Water Task Force.

The Woodland-Davis Clean Water Agency was organized as a Joint Powers Authority on Sept 15, 2009 after decades of study, discussion, analysis and conclusions involving Yolo County, the cities of Davis and Woodland, and the University of California at Davis. The board is presently composed of 4 city council members; 2 each from Woodland and Davis. Its primary purpose is to provide sustainable high-quality drinking water for Woodland, Davis and U.C. Davis that will enable us to meet present and future wastewater discharge requirements.

I regret that I am unable to attend today's hearing because of a previously scheduled commitment requiring me to be out of the country.

Currently the City of Woodland's sole source of water is groundwater. Woodland and Davis are some of the few remaining cities in California who rely exclusively on groundwater for their municipal water supplies.

Woodland is within the Cache Creek drainage area downstream of the geothermal areas surrounding Clear Lake. As a result, the groundwater beneath the City is high in boron. These boron levels are high enough to harm vegetation, and lawns or house plants with yellow leaves are not uncommon. While this is a nuisance, rising nitrate levels pose a health concern for our

citizens. The City is surrounded by farming operations that apply nitrogen fertilizers, and we believe that has caused the nitrate levels in groundwater from the City's wells to rise. The City has abandoned several wells because the water from these wells contained nitrate levels that did not meet drinking water standards, and we anticipate that we will have to abandon additional wells in the future due to high nitrate levels.

Water-quality issues related to the City's discharge of treated wastewater are also of great concern. Groundwater contains high levels of selenium, and the City has been unable to comply with the selenium limits contained in waste discharge requirements issued by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board. The City received substantial fines in December of 2010 for exceeding Selenium limits. Unfortunately, those fines are anticipated to continue from this point until changes can be made to our water supply source.

The City anticipates that future wastewater discharge limits for boron, selenium and dissolved salts will exceed the current discharge limits, and expects to have difficulty complying with these limits as well.

I have personally met with staff at the Regional Water Quality Control Board and am satisfied that there is no other practical option for our City than to convert its water supply from groundwater to surface water. We understand that treatment of groundwater or effluent to solve these water quality problems, such as reverse osmosis, would be prohibitively expensive. Additionally, such a process would produce large quantities of brine that would present difficulties in disposal as identified in our Environmental Impact Report that was certified by both Davis and Woodland in 2007. Thus, not only would this option be prohibitively expensive but there would be potentially harmful impacts of brine disposal on the environment.

As a practicing dentist in Woodland since 1981 I have personally observed the corroding

and costly effect of the high concentration of salts in our current water supply. Sensitive equipment, water supply lines, and delicate instruments are all adversely impacted. We anticipate that a higher quality water supply will help our City attract industries that require better water than we are currently able to provide. We also anticipate that higher quality water would enable our customers to abandon the use of water softeners; extend the life of water heaters and other water-using appliances; and that household landscape and gardens will no longer be impacted by poor quality irrigation water. Additionally, the lifespan of our municipal infrastructure will be prolonged due to the decrease in salinity.

Permits must be issued now in order to give the agency sufficient time to complete its project by early 2016. Prohibitively costly fines from regulatory agencies dictate the need for project completion by 2016. The permits will also enable us to provide a substantial benefit to the environment. Completing the project as quickly as possible will more than halve the salt load being introduced by our effluent to the Sacramento River and the Delta Estuary.

Additionally, we must act quickly to not lose the opportunity to work jointly with Reclamation District 2035 in the construction of an environmentally superior joint agricultural-urban intake facility. This joint facility would replace the antiquated RD 2035 intake which is one of the largest in the state that has no fish screens of any kind.

I respectfully request the State Water Resources Control Board act promptly to issue the requested water-right permits to the Woodland-Davis Clean Water Agency.