

Alexander, Jacquelyne

Subject: FW: petition of 125 New Cuyama residents opposed to proposed "water district"

Correction of email address:

Mr. Hood and staff. I'm forwarding what I cc'd Lisa Sherrat of Carbajal's office and to you with what hopefully is now the correct address:

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **John Mackenzie** <j7a9mac10@gmail.com>

Date: Mon, Aug 1, 2016 at 3:21 PM

Subject: petition of 125 New Cuyama residents opposed to proposed "water district"

To: ceo@co.santa-barbara.ca

Cc: "Valencia Sherratt, Lisa" <lvalencia@sbcbos1.org>

Dear Mr. Hood and staff,

Today I am mailing copies of the above mentioned petition by priority mail. You should receive them by Wednesday.

It is important that the LAFCO commissioners receive copies or at minimum have access to them prior to the Friday August 5th meeting regarding the #2 item on the Changes of Organization/Reorganizations portion of the agenda.

It has been a disservice to the people of this community to have been effectively excluded from adequate knowledge and participation of the proposed district which will surround them and further proposes objectives which may be in conflict with the continued well-being of the largest population center in the Cuyama Valley.

It is incumbent upon the commission, as you well know, to work closely with the citizens as well as the county in general and the special district. This can't be said to have been accomplished. Notification has not been in a timely manner.

It is hoped that the commissioners come to recognize that they too have insufficient information from the summary of objectives provided them to make a balanced and objective and fully informed determination of the precedent setting decision they are being asked to make. A decision which may attach added responsibilities to the County governments ultimate responsibilities under SGMA and the likely intervention by SWRCB because of the narrow objectives of the proposed new "water district". This commission needs the opportunity for a comprehensive unbiased and expert analysis of what complications may result from the approval of this petition in its present form. (Not the opinions of a water rights lawyer who is not serving the County's interests even if S B Water Agency thinks so).

I would appreciate both a response and an assurance that the members of the commission be provided in a timely manner, with access to these petitions/signatures.

Sincerely,

John Mackenzie (former CCSD board Member)

805 234 1167

Alexander, Jacquelyne

Subject: FW: Cuyama Basin reorganization petition

From: John Mackenzie [mailto:j7a9mac10@gmail.com]

Sent: Tuesday, August 02, 2016 12:31 PM

To: lafco@sblafco.org

Subject: Fwd: Cuyama Basin reorganization petition

Dear LAFCO Chair, Greg Geyer,

Please accept my appologies for having to forward this to you rather than the earlier email as included here.

Thank You,

John Mackenzie

Forwarded message -----

From: John Mackenzie <j7a9mac10@gmail.com>

Date: Tue, Aug 2, 2016 at 10:57 AM

Subject: Cuyama Basin reorganization petition

Dear Commissioners,

I have priority-mailed copies of a petition signed by 125 New Cuyama residents to Paul Hood to be provided to all commmissioners prior to August 5th. I should have mailed it to Greg Geyer as I've had less than timely action from Paul Hood. The LACFO required notice to affected parties was dated July 8th but didn't reach anyone in the Cuyama Valley until approximatey July 20th. Some affected stakeholders within the proposed district/ Ventura never got the required notice. No newspaper notification was found by Santa Barbara News Press staff when asked if it had been published. No other paper - Santa Maria or Taft found record of it either, though Paul Hood claimed it was published in Santa Barbara.

Please contact your staff to be sure you can review these citizen's concerns before you are compelled to make your decision. This petition covers the sense of disenfranchisement and sense that the "Cuyama Basin Water District" being proposed may hurt the community it surrounds. This is not about inclusion, it is about the narrow purpose and unprecedented nature of said district. Further, it is incumbant upon LAFCO to work closely with affected citizens and others to discover potential unanticipated outcomes. This has not been achieved as this "water district" proposal is being fast-tracked to avoid opposition.

You are being asked by grower-Petitioners to grant almost soveriegn power of a public agency to a private cartel. The ostensible purpose is so they will 'have a place at the SGMA/GSA table'. The County of Santa Barbara will bear the ultimate responsibility for SWRCB compliance, not this "water district" which is positioning itself to limit its own liability and gain maximum control under the new conditions of the State Ground Water Deficit. S B Water Agency seems to believe that this arragement will work for the County as a whole as said district will absorb associated costs, but no objective, independdent analysis has been conducted regarding unanticipated outcomes for the county who must have the entire basin covered by one or more GSAs by June 30 of next year and will bear the burden of whatever falls through the cracks. Dudek in conjunction with SBCWA and the water rights attorney for Petitioners cannot be considered to be either objective or thorough in this context, nor is the information as presented to you by Paul Hood.

A "water budget" will have to be determined for the whole basin as DWR has determined that it IS a single basin even though by its nature the sub-regions will have their individual overdraft problems. Areas excised from the Petitioners Map include Forest Service and BLM land that is none-the-less required to be monitored

under SGMA. Only at the last BOS meeting was staff directed to attend to SGMA requirements and acknowledge that the west end must be included, a zone with no baseline water table/well data. The county will get no help from this special interest group in that.

Recent estimates are that the basin was overdrawn by 30,000 acre feet per year and that estimate was prior to new cultivated land and new wells and the massive new vineyard operation in the west end in district 5. This will put such stringent compliance pressure on the overdraft in the Petitioner's "main zone" that changes in agricultural practices and down-scaling their operations will be the minimum necessary for SWRCB compliance. They will fight this and there is already in-fighting among these grower Petitioners before this proposal is even presented to you. Where does that leave the County? Further, no inter-county MOU is likely to have reached adequate understanding regarding the probable implications and risks of managing a basin with exceptionally complex conditions, competing interests and no history of any kind of management except the non-agricultural CCSD.

Only an Army Corp, Bureau of Reclamation project could impound enough recharge over time to begin to have any real effect on the overdraft in the Cuyama Basin which gives its flood-stage water (and silt to Twitchell) to the Santa Maria Groundwater Basin. Granting Petitioners this much authority and autonomy could in fact obstruct effective solutions to the management of this Cuyama Basin.

I could continue with additional concerns but I hope that LAFCO will recognize on August 5th, that with regard to the Cuyama Basin, it is being asked to endorse an experiment that may backfire to the County's detriment and the public's displeasure for years to come. Squeezed between the emergency powers of the State and the private interests of this newly-empowered proposed district, you will have left County Government with considerable unknown consequences and perhaps fewer solutions.

The Petitioners boilerplate description of its purported form and management purpose of "works" is false on its face in terms of what it does and will actually do and what a water district normally accomplishes, and simply grafts a known form onto a different purpose. These same Petitioners have been the principle cause of the Cuyama Basin overdraft. I urge you to deny this petition so as to require a broader, more honest, clearly-stated purpose and commitment to increase its responsibility for this Basin. Or at minimum to continue it for much needed additional LAFCO discovery with more transparency of purpose and public participation.

Thank you for your attention to this and to the greater good,
John Mackenzie