

January 22, 2013

Cindy Lin (WTR-2)  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Southern California Field Office  
600 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1460  
Los Angeles, Ca 90017

Dear Ms. Lin:

My name is Elizabeth Stephens and I am the President of the Calabasas Highlands Homeowners Association. I am writing to express concern for the Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) being proposed for the Malibu Creek Watershed.

As homeowners we are quite concerned about any new standards that are brought forth. We as the homeowners will bear the costs for compliance through our property taxes and sewer service rates. The following are a few issues of concern.

- 1) The draft of the TMDL document was only released for review on December 12, 2012, with a January 23, 2013 deadline for comments. This was an unreasonable amount of time as the document contains large amounts of material and information to digest and compute during the busiest time of the year. Most organizations do not even meet during the Holiday season. All parties need to do their due diligence otherwise if there is a rush to adopt the new standards before properly examined then poor policy could result.
- 2) Our Community has invested more than \$10 million to meet the EPA standards of 2003 but now EPA states they are not adequate to address the continuing presence of algae. How can ratepayers be guaranteed that the proposed TMDL will be any more effective? The constant revisions for more stringent standards could prove to be extremely costly. We need a thoughtful approach especially during these difficult economic times, so again let us not rush into the adoption of these standards. Allow reasonable time to investigate.
- 3) We appreciate the passion of advocacy groups (NGO) who desire to protect our environment but ultimately the residents are responsible for paying for the compliance measures they promote. Our concern is that the EPA has mainly focused on recent data compiled by NGO that supports their positions, but EPA has ignored the scientific data collected by government agencies over the last four decades. These government entities must follow strict EPA standards for sample collection, laboratory testing and personnel certification; NGOs do not. We ask as homeowners and ratepayers that the EPA consider all the information, so that the analysis and any resulting regulations demonstrate a greater degree of scientific rigor.

The Calabasas Highlands Homeowner Association respectfully asks that the EPA not proceed with adopting new, revised, or additional TMDLs until evaluations can be completed. We ask that the EPA conduct a scientifically sound evaluation of the Malibu Creek watershed, with appropriate allowance of time given to homeowners and businesses in the region to examine the data and comment on the findings.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Stephens

President of Calabasas Highlands HOA

