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April 27, 2000

California State Senate

SENATOR
JACK O'CONNELL
EIGHTEENTH SENATORIAL DISTRICT



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JUDICIARY

John Beccia, President
Santa Margarita Area Residents Together (SMART)
P.O. Box 50
Santa Margarita, CA 93453

Dear Mr. Beccia:

Thank you for recently stopping by my card table office hours to express your concerns regarding the Santa Margarita Ranch project. I appreciate your taking the time to stop by.

As we discussed, a member of my staff contact Mr. Patrick Coulston, Senior Biologist for the State Department of Fish and Game, to share your concerns and obtain the status of this project. Mr. Coulston indicated that the Department is currently waiting for the results of an investigation on its water rights complaint to the State Water Resources Control Board (WRCB). Given this, my office contacted Ms. Cori Condon with the Division of Water Rights for the WRCB to determine the status of the Department's complaint. Ms. Condon explained that the WRCB met with representatives of SMART on March 28, 2000, and performed an on site investigation of the project on March 29, 2000. Ms. Condon further indicated that the results of the WRCB's investigation are being processed and should be completed within the next few weeks.

Additionally, Mr. Coulston informed my staff that Department Warden Glenn Sparks recently visited the project site and found no clear evidence of existing violations. It is important to understand, however, that although no current Department violations have actually occurred, there is a possibility that other federal jurisdictional regulations may be cited. In this regard, you may wish to contact your congressional representative to explore this avenue further. In the meantime, the Department will continue to monitor this project for potential violations. Should you have any further questions, please contact Ms. Cathy Boyce in my San Luis Obispo District Office. I hope this information is helpful to you.

Again, thank you for stopping by. As always, if I can provide information or assistance with any other state matter, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,


JACK O'CONNELL

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