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**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

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**COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA**

October 12, 2010

The Honorable Congressman Elton Gallegly  
301 E. Carrillo Street, Suite A  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

**RE: Sedimentation Issues Downstream of Twitchell Dam**

Dear Congressman Gallegly:

The Santa Maria Valley Water Conservation District (District) has alerted County staff, and some County Supervisors, to the physical conditions downstream of Twitchell Dam that are now problematic.

The County understands that sedimentation of the downstream channel has accumulated to the extent that releases from the dam would flood and obscure the toe drain of the dam and make routine releases problematic. In addition, should winter rains add more water to the reservoir and make flood releases necessary, downstream conditions also complicate the situation and we recognize that action is necessary to allow continued operation of the dam.

The County also understands that the District is taking steps to abate this issue and is currently seeking permits and funding from the appropriate agencies to allow the prompt completion of pilot channel work downstream of the dam to allow continued safe operation of the facility.

The County of Santa Barbara supports the Santa Maria Valley Water Conservation District in its efforts. Twitchell Dam is an extremely important facility to the County in that its benefits provide for flood control and water supply. The District has also declared the work to be an emergency and as such the County also requests that the Federal Government as well as the State of California provide the necessary funding and expedite all approvals to allow the work to be completed in a timely manner.

If you have any questions or are in need of any assistance, please contact Tom Fayram, County Public Works Department, by email at [tfayram@cosbpw.net](mailto:tfayram@cosbpw.net) or at (805) 568-2475.

Sincerely,

Janet Wolf, Chair  
County of Santa Barbara Board of Supervisors

c: US Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District, Ventura Field Office  
US Department of Interior, Bureau of Reclamation, Fresno  
California Department of Fish & Game  
California Regional Water Quality Control Board