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JOHN D. MCINNES

March 4, 2018

Honorable Steve Lavagnino, Chair  
Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors  
105 East Anapamu Street  
Santa Barbara 93101

RE: Termination of Proclamation of Local Emergency Caused by Drought Conditions

Dear Chair Lavagnino

The County of Santa Barbara (County) declared its drought emergency on January 17, 2014 under the California Emergency Services Act, Government Code sections 8550 set seq., and has continued to renew its emergency declaration over the last five years. The Goleta Water District (District) respects the County's discretion and authority to declare a state of emergency when it determines there is a potential threat to the health and safety of County residents due to drought. Further, the District recognizes that the historic drought has receded as a result of recent rains and runoff into Lake Cachuma. However, it is important to recognize that a water shortage emergency persists for the District.

While the U.S. Drought Monitor is a helpful indicator of conditions effecting drought as it tracks precipitation and relative soil moisture readings across regional areas, it does not evaluate local water supply portfolios or take into consideration various other factors that determine the existence of water shortages in any given community. Under the California Water Code and the Goleta Water District Code, the District's Board of Directors has the exclusive authority and responsibility to determine and declare the existence of water shortage emergencies within its territory. Specifically, the District is required to declare a water shortage emergency whenever it finds and determines that the ordinary demand and requirements of its customers cannot be satisfied without depleting the water supply to the extent that there would be insufficient water for human consumption, sanitation, and fire protection.

To determine whether a water shortage exists, projected supplies are compared to demand over 12 and 24 month periods, as called for in the District's adopted Drought Preparedness and Water Shortage Contingency Plan. Currently, the District remains in a Stage III Water Shortage Emergency primarily because the US Bureau of Reclamation has allocated the District only 20% (1,865 Acre Feet) of its annual entitlement (9,322 Acre Feet) of Cachuma Project water. Given that there is now approximately 45,000 Acre Feet of unallocated/uncommitted water in the lake, the District is hopeful that the US Bureau of Reclamation will act to make this water available to the District and other water purveyors in the very near future. Of course, if the District receives additional water allocations, a new supply demand ratio will be calculated to determine whether a water shortage exists and, if so, its severity.

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Should the County determine that the conditions of extreme peril warranting the proclamation of a local emergency caused by drought conditions no longer exist, the District would appreciate the County's recognition that a water shortage emergency persists for the District.

Thank you for your time and attention on this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you or your staff have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,



John McInnes  
General Manager

Cc: Goleta Water District Board of Directors