



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: Planning &
Development
Department No.: 053
For Agenda Of: December 9, 2008
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Tme:
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department John Baker, Director, Planning & Development, 568-2085
Director(s)
Contact Info: John Baker, 568-2085

SUBJECT: **Toro Canyon Oil Facility Operation – Request to State Water Resources Control Board for Funds for Operation and Maintenance**

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- A. Approve the submission an application to the State Water Resources Control Board for funds to operate and maintain the Toro Canyon Oil Facility.**

Summary Text:

Toro Canyon Oil Facility. The County of Santa Barbara is requesting \$96,500 from the Cleanup and Abatement Account of the State Water Resources Control Board and Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board to operate and maintain the oil/water separator located in Toro Canyon in Santa Barbara County. The current operator of the facility, the USEPA, has notified the County that federal funding for the project will cease as of December 31, 2008. The USEPA will complete all necessary repairs and upgrades to the facility prior to transferring the operation and maintenance to the County. The County will operate the facility through a contract with an oil service company who will collect and transport the oil. Staff projects Cleanup and Abatement Account funds to cover approximately 20 years of operational costs including maintenance. The County will have access to the property as a result of a transferable access agreement between USEPA and the property owner.

Background: The Toro Canyon Oil Facility consists of an oil water separator that collects petroleum crude oil and spring water from a natural seep. The oil water separator was installed with Cleanup and Abatement Account funds by the Department of Fish & Game (DFG) and the Central Coast Water Board in 1992 in response to three significant oil spills. After a spill in 1997 of 3,000 gallons of crude oil into Toro Canyon Creek, the USEPA repaired and assumed operation of the oil water system. The

recovered crude oil is stored in an onsite underground storage tank which is periodically pumped out by Venoco Inc. and transferred to the Carpinteria Oil and Gas Processing Facility.

The Toro Oil Mine and active oil seep property is owned by Mr. John Thorndike. Mr. Thorndike does not have the resources to operate and maintain the OWS facility. The USEPA's ongoing funding for OWS system operation and maintenance is no longer considered to be emergency response, thus funding will cease December 31, 2008. DFG has no legal authority or funding under the Lampert-Keene-Seastrand Act to operate and maintain the Toro Canyon OWS facility. DFG's responsibility is restricted to emergency oil spill response and clean up activities.

The County is requesting Cleanup and Abatement Account funding to continue system operation. Without the oil water separator operation, crude oil will be discharged to Toro Creek, creating nuisance conditions for neighbors and adverse, potentially toxic effects, on area wildlife, including several California Species of Special Concern.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts: Staff projects County operational costs to be funded by the subject funding request. It is planned that the costs of collection and transport of the oil will be funded by the sale of the oil to an oil processing company.

Attachments:

Authored by:

Dean Dusette