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Clerk of the Napa Superior Court

AUG 29 2003

August 27, 2003

The Honorable Scott Snowden  
Presiding Judge  
Napa County Superior Court  
825 Brown Street  
Napa, CA 94559

Subject: Response to Grand Jury Finding 2 and Recommendation 2 – Formation of a Napa Water Agency

Dear Judge Snowden and Members of the Grand Jury:

This letter is in response to the 2002-2003 Grand Jury Report which was released on June 25, 2003, and is intended to fulfill the legal requirements for response. We appreciate the commendation from the Grand Jury and the opportunity to respond.

The City of St. Helena's response to Napa County Grand Jury Water Report Finding 1 and Recommendation 1 will be submitted under separate cover as a joint response by the Cities of American Canyon, Calistoga, Napa and St. Helena, the Town of Yountville, the County of Napa, the Napa Sanitation District and the Napa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District.

Finding 2: Public awareness of water issues needs to be heightened. Flowing water is constrained by inventory, funding, pipe capacity, entitlement programs and citizen consent.

Response to Finding 2: The City of St. Helena agrees with this finding.

Recommendation 2: Water consumption should be reduced.

- Landscape practices should accommodate environmental conditions
- Reclaimed water should be used for irrigation and landscaping whenever possible
- Potable water, including well water, should be designated for indoor, as well as outdoor use.
- Water saving ideas should be promoted and publicly rewarded throughout the County
- Water use in excess of base line amount should not be subsidized.

Response to Recommendation 2: The City of St. Helena agrees with this recommendation.

The City of St. Helena finalized an Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) in March 2003. The Urban Water Management Plan outlines the City's available supply, projected demands, and need for water conservation. From the finalization of this UWMP, St. Helena is in the process of updating its' water conservation program and now has staff time dedicated to this end. Current water conservation regulations include a toilet retrofit and rebate program, drought tolerant landscape requirement for new development, prohibition of water waste including fines, as well as provisions for more stringent regulations during periods of drought. Additions to the existing water conservation program include public outreach programs through community events, in-school educational programs, informational material, commercial surveys and partnerships. St. Helena is working towards increased community involvement regarding water use-efficiency and conservation and is in discussion with other agencies for a county wide conservation group. In 2001, St. Helena began studying the feasibility of a recycled water project to use reclaimed water for irrigation. The City has been working with the community and businesses to hear their thoughts and concerns regarding this proposal; this summer the first pilot study was completed.

The City of St. Helena is proposing to upgrade its wastewater treatment plant to add tertiary treatment adequate to meet State Title 22 requirements for wastewater reclamations. In order to meet future wastewater treatment and irrigation demand, the City is considering an increase in plant capacity from the current 0.50 mgd dry weather design flow to 0.9 mgd. The project will include distribution pipelines to convey the recycled water between the treatment plant and the irrigation sites. (Within the City limits, there are approximately 1,550 acres of irrigated vineyard area and approximately 60 acres of irrigated turf area.) The City's existing effluent disposal site adjacent to the treatment plant will continue to be used or competitively leased to a vineyard operator with the City providing recycled water for irrigation. The project will offset approximately 20% of the City's current potable water supply being used for irrigation in addition to reducing the amount of privately pumped groundwater.

These comments are respectfully submitted for the City of St. Helena, as approved by the St. Helena City Council at their regular meeting of August 26, 2003.

Sincerely,



Bert Johansson  
City Manager