

MBCA



morongo basin conservation association

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March 20, 2018

Board Members
Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District
602 East Huntington Drive, Suite B
Monrovia, CA 91016

RE: Non-Binding Letter of Intent Regarding Purchase and Sale Agreement for Cadiz Project Water

Dear Board Members:

The Morongo Basin Conservation Association (MBCA) urges you to select staff recommendation-Option 3- and take no action to ratify the non-binding letter of intent regarding the purchase and sale agreement for Cadiz Water. The Cadiz Project is unsustainable and will irrevocably harm groundwater resources and springs in the newly created Mojave Trails National Monument. Moreover, the purchase of Cadiz water runs counter to the Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District's strong commitment to water conservation.

The Morongo Basin Conservation Association is a 501(c)3, community-based, California Nonprofit Corporation that is dedicated to preserving the economic and environmental welfare of the Morongo Basin. Our Mission is to preserve a healthy desert environment that nurtures our rural character, cultural wealth, and economic well-being.

The Cadiz Project is fundamentally unsustainable as the United States Geological Survey and National Park Service have found that Cadiz would pump up to 25 times the recharge rate of the target aquifer. Specifically, the Cadiz Inc. seeks to pump between 1 to 2 million acre-feet of groundwater out of a fragile desert aquifer underneath the newly created Mojave Trails National Monument for a fifty-year period. The aggressive pumping will jeopardize seeps and springs that are the source of sustenance for a wide variety of desert wildlife, including mountain lion, golden eagle and bighorn sheep. MBCA is also concerned that the project also stands to harm a tourism-based economy that relies on healthy ecosystems and that supports jobs and communities throughout the California desert.

In contrast, the Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District has invested heavily in sustainable practices and conservation. The District's Water Use Efficiency Master Plan of 2012 saves an estimated 52,250 acre- feet of water- a five-year allocation of Cadiz Water. Your direct water reuse projects that

obtain recycled water from the San Jose Creek and Whittier Narrows Water Reclamation Plants demonstrate your commitment to sustainability, while the Cadiz Project would pump unsustainable amounts of fossil groundwater, depleting a fragile desert aquifer.

Obtaining Cadiz Project water will also raise water rates and introduce health hazards as the Cadiz water has high concentrations of Chromium 6. The State Water Resources Control Board stated in a 2015 fact sheet that, "The hexavalent form, also commonly known as Chromium-6, is more toxic and has been known to cause cancer when inhaled" and states that, "In recent scientific studies in laboratory animals, Hexavalent Chromium has also been linked to cancer when ingested."

Although the Superior Court of Sacramento issued a judgement on May 31, 2017 invalidating the state of California's Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for Chromium 6, it is likely the state will issue a new Chromium 6 MCL in the next several years. This situation creates uncertainty for both public health and for the costs associated with the purchase and treatment of Cadiz Water.

The San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District should instead support local water projects and conservation measures that address local infrastructure needs, create local jobs, and increase water supply. Our communities expect the Water District to make decisions that support the protection of our water, parks, and wildlife. We urge you to select staff recommendation-Option 3- and take no action to ratify the non-binding letter of intent regarding the purchase and sale agreement for Cadiz Water.

Sincerely,

Pat Flanagan, Board Member
Morongo Basin Conservation Association