



Felicia Marcus, Chair
State Water Resources Control Board
PO Box 100
Sacramento, CA 95812-0100

Dear Chair Marcus:

The Santa Cruz County Business Council would like to express our support for the Soquel Creek Water District's (District) application for an implementation grant for \$50,000,000 under the Proposition 1 Groundwater Grant Program for its Pure Water Soquel Project.

The District relies 100% on groundwater with no imported water from state or federal water projects. The groundwater basin shared by the District, other municipal water purveyors, and utilized by over 40,000 residential and commercial customers is currently in a state of critical overdraft and has been for over 20 years.

Last year, in light of the imminent danger of seawater contamination to this regional water supply, the District commissioned an innovative aerial hydrological investigation of the groundwater basin with the country of Denmark—an investigation that verified that seawater intrusion is significant within the groundwater basin along our entire coastline. Should this intrusion continue unabated, it could jeopardize the district's entire groundwater supply for years to come.

On a very related note, Santa Cruz County is also in the midst of the worst housing crisis in the history of our community, having recently been named the least affordable metro area, of less than 500,000 people, in the country. The lack of available water, and thus the reluctance of the district to grant additional will-serve letters to supply any new development, has severely hindered our ability to build enough housing to meet the present, and certainly the future needs of our community. Securing additional funds for the construction of a supplemental water supply option will support the other public planning agencies in our area to provide for more housing.

Pure Water Soquel would take municipal wastewater and use advanced water treatment methods to produce 1,500 acre-feet annually of purified water. This purified water would then be injected into the ground to provide a barrier against seawater contamination and replenish the groundwater basin. The Pure Water Soquel project will provide a safe,



high-quality, reliable, and sustainable water supply to support current and future generations in the Santa Cruz Mid-County region.

This grant offers a substantial jump-start for this project that addresses the state's mandate of basin sustainability by 2040.

Thank you for your consideration of this funding request, and please do not hesitate to contact Business Council staff or member companies to learn more about why we support this project and accompanying grant proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Singleton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R" and a long, sweeping underline.

Robert Singleton,
Executive Director
Santa Cruz County Business Council