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May 1, 2006

Board of Directors, Marin Municipal Water District  
220 Nellen Avenue Corte Madera, CA 94925

Dear MMWD Board:

On behalf of our Marin County members, we request that MMWD make its ownership of water in the creeks of San Geronimo and Lagunitas watersheds unequivocally clear and notify residents in these watersheds that diversion of water for landscaping or other purposes is prohibited.

Such diversions directly impact endangered salmon by pulling fish into the pumps, by drawing down the creek, drying up pools, and making the salmon more susceptible to predation.

Because such diversions are upstream from the Samuel P. Taylor gauge where the streamflow required by SWRCB's 95-17 is measured, they can also force MMWD to release water from behind Peter's Dam to make up the flow difference, which would reduce MMWD's already over-extended water reserves.

Unmetered use of MMWD water also reduces MMWD's revenue and removes an important price signal to customers this Mediterranean climate to choose appropriate landscaping. Neither the salmon nor other MMWD customers should have to bear the burden of these unauthorized diversions.

MMWD has made it clear to the Lagunitas Technical Advisory Committee that it has documentation that riparian rights in the Lagunitas/San Geronimo watersheds were severed from the land many years ago and are now owned by MMWD. This fact may not be well known to the residents of these watersheds.

Consequently, our organizations urge MMWD to notify and remind residents in these watersheds at least annually that diversion of creek water (whether directly from the creek or from nearby wells that pump the creek underflow) is prohibited.

Gordon Bennett, Chair  
Sierra Club Marin Group

Todd Steiner,  
Director, SPAWN

Catherine Caufield,  
Executive Director, EAC

cc: Lagunitas Technical Advisory Committee