



**Save
Our
Seashore**



August 27, 2021

Marin Water
District Operations Committee
220 Nellen Avenue
Corte Madera, CA 94925
Submitted via email: CKoehler@MarinWater.org

RE: Agenda Item 4. Oppose Proposed Temporary Usage Change Petition

Dear Chair Koehler,

The undersigned organizations submit this letter in strong opposition to Marin Water staff's request that your Board approve submission of a Temporary Urgency Change Petition (TUCP) for California State Water Resources Control Board Order WR 95-17 for Lagunitas Creek.

Lagunitas Creek supports the southernmost remaining population of Coho salmon in California. The currently required flow releases are essential to maintaining a stable population and genetic diversity of this unique and irreplaceable wild salmon population. Reducing flows that support the survival of endangered salmonids in Lagunitas Creek is likely to have unforeseen consequences for these species, while the same savings of water can be achieved through modestly increased conservation by Marin Water customers, or the district's identified conservation target.

Water releases mandated by WR 95-17 are critical to maintaining the survival of this population. In addition, WR 95-17 already provides for reduced minimum instream flows in a "dry year," as defined by the Order, which Marin Water has already instituted. Reductions in natural creek flows from lack of rainfall have already resulted in negative impacts to salmonids such as diminished suitable spawning habitat, loss of access to tributary spawning areas, and superimposition of redds by successive spawning fish. As detailed in the ESA habitat suitability modeling, these negative impacts will be

exacerbated under the terms of the TUCP. For example, ESA's analysis shows a 30% reduction of redd habitat in the modeled reaches.

In contrast, according to data provided by Marin Water staff, an additional 10% of conservation by Marin Water customers, over what has already been realized, would save as much water as the flow reduction requested in the TUCP. As of August 20th, realized conservation by Marin Water customers was 30% of average weekly use. Your Board's stated goal is 40% conservation.

We understand the circumstances that Marin Water is facing in this historic drought and that water storage is rapidly dwindling. Nevertheless, We urge you, therefore, to reject staff's request to approve submission of the TUCP, and to instead focus Marin Water's efforts on increasing conservation by water users, whether through voluntary or mandatory measures.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and protect this valuable, irreplaceable species and its ecosystem.

Respectfully,

Morgan Patton
Executive Director
Environmental Action Committee of West Marin

Megan Isadore
Executive Director
River Otter Ecology Project

Preston Brown
Director of Watershed Conservation
Turtle Island Restoration Network
Salmon Protection And Watershed Network (SPAWN)

Gordon Bennett
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Save our Seashore

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Laura Chariton
President
Watershed Alliance of Marin

Scott Tye
Vice-Chair
Marin Surfrider

CC: Larry Rusell, Jack Gibson, Monty Schmitt, and Larry Bragman