



Orange County Taxpayers Association

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John Laird, Chair
California Ocean Protection Council
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland CA 94612-2350

Chairman Laird and Honorable Council Members:

In the early 1980s I watched your colleague, then-Mayor Golding, streamline the permitting process in the City of San Diego by creating a one-stop shop for businesses. Thank you, Mayor Golding. Now we need to streamline the permitting process for the Poseidon project.

In the water world we are handicapped by a proliferation of regulatory agencies and contradictory rulings. For example, a few years ago the California Coastal Commission (agency #1), advocated that desalination facilities co-locate with power plants in order to use existing infrastructure.

Now, the Draft Strategic Action Plan of the California Ocean Protection Council (agency #2) states that desalination facilities should not co-locate with power plants. The recommendation was made without waiting for the scientific analysis currently underway by the State Water Resources Control Board (agency #3). I hope staff appreciates the difference between the “once-through” cooling designed for power plants and the much smaller need for seawater intake for desalination projects.

Alternate desalination methods have been analyzed and have been found to be impractical. There is no large-scale desalination plant in the world that does not use open water intake.

The Orange County Taxpayers Association first testified in support of this project in 2003. We told the California State Lands Commission (agency #4) and many others that Orange County needs the project in light of the “prospect of serious water shortages” predicted by the National Resources Defense Council (agency #5). Now your staff’s speculation that desalination facilities should not co-locate with power plants threatens to stall this excellent and needed project even longer.

In light of your Draft Strategic Plan Objective 9.2 (which calls for coordination between agencies), please wait for the State Water Resources Control Board’s scientific conclusions about the project, which we expect to have next year.

Reed Royalty, President
Orange County Taxpayers Association