**MWD**

METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

August 3, 1993

To: Board of Directors (Water Problems Committee--Information)
From: General Manager
Subject: San Gabriel Conjunctive-Use Project Update

Report

In May, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released for public comment its Baldwin Park Operable Unit Feasibility Study (OUFS) and Proposed Plan. The Baldwin Park OUFS describes the nature and extent of the risks posed by groundwater contamination underlying the cities of Baldwin Park, Irwindale, and Azusa and provides a detailed evaluation of four cleanup alternatives to prevent continued migration of volatile organic compounds (VOCs). The Proposed Plan designates a preferred remedial alternative for cleanup in that area.

EPA has concluded that complete restoration of the contaminated portions of the San Gabriel Groundwater Basin (Basin) is not warranted as an objective for the Baldwin Park Operable Unit, because the present level of uncertainty regarding the location and magnitude of contaminant sources is too high. Early Operable Unit alternatives with the objective of maximizing the amount of contaminant removal were sized as large as 100 million gallons per day (mgd) (approximately 100,000 acre-feet per year if operated continuously) with a regional water treatment plant providing conjunctive-use water supply. However, EPA's preferred alternative would just control contaminant migration using local pump-and-treat facilities with a total capacity of 27 mgd.

In parallel, but in coordination with the EPA, Metropolitan has been investigating the feasibility of conjunctive-use in the Baldwin Park area of the Basin. As envisioned, a conjunctive-use project would extract large amounts of water from the contaminated Baldwin Park area, treat the water at a centralized plant to remove VOCs and nitrates, and then export the water via Metropolitan's Middle Feeder pipeline for use as a potable supply within Metropolitan's service area. Metropolitan would deliver imported water to the Basin to offset export of extracted

water. Such a project would remove large amounts of contamination while preserving and increasing the usable storage capacity in the Basin.

On balance, Metropolitan has demonstrated its commitment to a significant conjunctive-use project in the area. To date, Metropolitan has invested about \$1.5 million in furthering a conjunctive-use strategy for the Basin. In addition, Metropolitan has worked successfully with member agencies, U.S. Congressman Esteban Torres, and others to secure 25 percent federal cost sharing for this conjunctive-use project. Metropolitan plans to comment on EPA's Proposed Plan that our approach has broad benefits to the region and greater benefits for clean up than EPA's preferred alternative.

However, in light of EPA's now limited project objectives (containment versus cleanup), their stated preference for local use of the project water, and their preferred minimum level of treatment, Metropolitan staff is re-examining the feasibility of implementing conjunctive use in combination with EPA's downsized preferred alternative. Staff is assessing the conjunctive-use aspects of a local pump-and-treat project and weighing the local and regional benefits of Metropolitan's involvement in a smaller project.

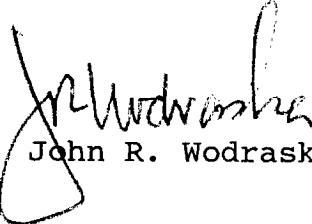
Staff plans to inform the Board of the results of our reassessment and recommend a level of involvement in the Baldwin Park area of the Basin in a future Board letter.

Board Committee Assignment

This letter is referred for information to the Water Problems Committee pursuant to Sections 2481(d) and (i) of Metropolitan's Administrative Code granting it authority regarding policies dealing with the sale and delivery of water for various uses, and underground storage of water and the use thereof.

Recommendation

For information only.


John R. Wodraska

TH:bvf