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METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Karen E. Smith
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY 9-8

June 22, 1995

(Special Committee on Water Quality and Environmental
Compliance--Information)
(Engineering and Operations Committee--Information)

To: Board of Directors

From: General Manager

Subject: Body-Contact Recreation at the Domenigoni Valley Reservoir Project

RECOMMENDATION:

For information only.

John R. Wodraska
General Manager

Submitted by:

Gary M. Snyder

Gary M. Snyder
Chief Engineer

Concur:

John R. Wodraska

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General Manager

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This information letter updates the Board on current studies to determine the public health feasibility of permitting body-contact recreation on the reservoir. By the September Board meeting, staff intends to report on (1) the number of body-contact recreators, if any, that could be accommodated on the reservoir within Metropolitan's current baseline water quality level and within regulatory levels and (2) the additional treatment costs required to accommodate all projected body-contact recreators.

DETAILED REPORT:

On June 1, 1994, the Domenigoni Valley Reservoir Project's 37-member community-based Recreation Working Group held a workshop to present to and to receive comments from the general public on the draft plan.

In July 1994, the Hemet City Council established a citizen's committee to promote reservoir-based body-contact recreation and recreation complex development and operation to maximize the economic benefit to the City of Hemet.

Staff decided to study in much more detail the public health, economic, environmental, and legal feasibility of permitting body-contact recreation on the reservoir. On October 6, 1994, and March 21, 1995, staff presented preliminary findings to the working group. Staff's conclusions from these preliminary findings were that:

- the feasibility of body-contact recreation would be subject to computations identifying the amount of pathogens released by recreators and treatment required to inactivate the pathogens,
- body-contact recreation would be economically and environmentally feasible, and
- allowing body-contact recreation would require a statutory change to the State Health and Safety Code.

Following the March 21 meeting, staff's university-based water quality consultants continued their studies to determine the level of body-contact recreation that might be feasible from a public health perspective within Metropolitan's current baseline water quality level and within regulatory levels. Staff has received their draft report and is now reviewing it. The next step is to subject the study methodology and preliminary results to review by an independent "blue-ribbon" panel of renowned academic, regulatory, and industry experts in the fields of pathogen survival and loading rates, risk assessment, reservoir modeling, drinking water treatment, drinking water regulations, and recreation water quality. The panelists will review the draft report and meet in a workshop to discuss its contents.

Following the workshop, the scientists will revise their report (as needed) to determine the level of body-contact recreation that might be feasible under a variety of recreation scenarios within baseline and regulatory levels, and staff will determine the additional treatment (and

costs) that might be required to accommodate all recreators. Staff will then present the revised report to the Recreation Working Group for discussion. Staff will then brief the Board on the results of the studies of the Recreation Working Group for discussion. The schedule for resolving the body-contact recreation issue depends on the extent of the revisions to the scientists' report that may be necessary from the panelists' review. Staff expects that the earliest full briefing to the Board would be in September.