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November 1, 2006

Mr. Bob Bowling
Old Barona Road Association
13189 Old Barona Road
Lakeside, CA 92040

Re: Old Barona Road Water Supply Problems

Dear Mr. Bowling:

At the request of County Supervisor Dianne Jacob and Chief Administrative Officer Walt Ekard, the Department of Planning and Land Use (DPLU) has reviewed and provided the following response to your letter dated September 11, 2006 regarding a request for a hydrological study and amendment of the current County Water Authority service area. The groundwater supply problem that you and your neighbors along Old Barona Road continue to have is an unfortunate and difficult situation. Our department will continue to provide information through our groundwater monitoring program and will provide additional groundwater information to you as detailed below.

In your letter you have requested the County to perform a hydrological study of the groundwater in the affected area of Old Barona Road. As part of the General Plan 2020 (GP2020) update, DPLU is currently working on a comprehensive groundwater study of the backcountry area of the County which will include Old Barona Road and the Barona Indian Reservation. Both of these areas lie within the Barona hydrologic sub-basin. The groundwater study is unprecedented in its scope, and is receiving technical support from the DPLU Groundwater Technical Advisory Committee, a group of local hydrogeologists with approximately 150 years of combined experience in hydrogeology. The study will estimate the amount of groundwater in storage in the Barona sub-basin and also calculate the estimated amount of groundwater recharge that has occurred over the past 30 years in a computer model that has been developed by the County. By understanding the amount of storage and recharge to the sub-basin, the study will indicate whether there are adequate groundwater resources to meet the needs of the Barona sub-basin under existing conditions and potential maximum build-out conditions under GP2020, which will

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take into account existing tribal water demand as well as water demand from County uses. The GP2020 groundwater study is projected to be completed in 2007 and the results of the Barona sub-basin will be made available to you.

As you are aware, the County has a groundwater monitoring program and has been collecting groundwater depth to water information from three private residential wells along Old Barona Road since 2000. To augment the current well network along Old Barona Road, the County has been working with you and local residents to add several new private wells to the monitoring network along Old Barona Road. These wells will be monitored along with existing wells on a quarterly basis to provide an increased understanding of groundwater conditions in your neighborhood. In addition, the County continues to work with the Barona tribe in an effort to exchange groundwater information. To date, no information has been shared. Jim Bennett, the County Groundwater Geologist will provide you with any updates on progress made in sharing of information between the Barona tribe and the County.

Your letter requested that the County Board of Supervisors give consideration to the request to amend the current County Water Authority (CWA) service area and begin the review of municipal water services to residents of the Old Barona Road Association. The CWA, the Lakeside Water District (as well as most other water districts) and the County of San Diego are separate entities and the County has no authority over the CWA or most water districts. Therefore, the Board of Supervisors has no authority over amending the CWA service area. However, the County is taking steps to provide information and analysis in the daunting process of potentially amending the CWA service area to Old Barona Road. At the last San Diego LAFCO meeting on September 11, 2006, the proposed Upper San Diego River Reorganization was discussed. As you are aware, Old Barona Road is not within LAFCO's sphere of influence and the Lakeside Water District has indicated that it is unable to cost-effectively extend water service to include Old Barona Road. Supervisor Dianne Jacob, acting as a LAFCO Commissioner, put forward a motion that the Old Barona Road area be designated as a special study area. LAFCO designated the Old Barona Road area as a special study area per Supervisor Jacob's motion. According to LAFCO, this designation will serve as the impetus for water districts to meet with Old Barona Road residents and reevaluate overall service and infrastructure capabilities. To annex into CWA is an expensive and complex process. For your reference, a letter sent from Michael Ott, the Executive Officer of LAFCO to the County CAO Staff Officer is attached which explains some of the issues regarding extending water service to Old Barona Road. For any additional details regarding the annexation process or questions you may have regarding the recent special study designation, please contact Michael Ott with LAFCO at 619-531-5400.

In your letter you suggested that in lieu of dealing with existing water districts, that a new water district be formed. According to LAFCO, it is unlikely a new water district would have sufficient revenue sources or exhibit the necessary economies of scale

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to achieve financial feasibility. LAFCO further indicated that the CWA and Metropolitan Water District generally discourage the formation of new water districts as a means of obtaining rights to imported water.

The County appreciates the opportunity to be of service to you and each of the residents that have been suffering water shortages, and will provide the results of the GP2020 groundwater study for the Barona sub-basin when completed. If groundwater information becomes available from the Barona tribe, it may also provide a better understanding of whether a correlation can be conclusively be determined from Barona Reservation's water use and water problems along Old Barona Road. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact Jim Bennett at (858) 694-3820.

Sincerely,



GARY L. PRYOR, Director
Department of Planning and Land Use

GLP:JJB

cc: Eric Gibson, County of San Diego, Department of Planning and Land Use
Jim Bennett, County of San Diego, Department of Planning and Land Use
Robert Barry, San Diego LAFCO
Michael Ott, San Diego LAFCO

Attachment – Letter from LAFCO to CAO Staff Officer Regarding Old Barona Water Supply