



July 24, 2013

Mr. Jeff L. Grubbe

Chairman

Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians

5401 Dinah Shore Drive

Palm Springs, CA 92264

Dear Chairman Grubbe,

On behalf of the Southern California Water Committee, I am writing to you in an effort to protect the best interests of the public and the Coachella valley as a whole, by urging you to end your lawsuit against the Desert Water Agency (DWA) and Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD). This unprecedented lawsuit seeks to take away the public's groundwater and storage rights in the Coachella basin and prevent DWA and CVWD from delivering water to their customers.

The Southern California Water Committee – established in 1984 – is a nonprofit, nonpartisan public education partnership that is dedicated to not only informing Southern Californians about our water needs and resources, but also working to ensure the health and reliability of Southern California's water supply. In doing so, we have become deeply concerned about the nature of this lawsuit and the great uncertainty that it's creating, with regard to future water supply reliability, potential increases in customer rates, and impacts to the region's economic recovery.

DWA and CVWD have consistently provided a safe, affordable and reliable supply of water to their customers – including the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians – and worked collaboratively with regional stakeholders on the careful management of the groundwater basin. Furthermore, Coachella Valley groundwater belongs to the public as a whole, including members of the tribe.

Having said that, the tribe is now suing DWA and CVWD for these water rights without saying what it would do with the water or even how much water it wants -- raising serious questions and creating great cause for concern. The tribe has no pipes, pumps or other infrastructure to





deliver the water to customers, and no history or expertise in water management – and has not answered questions about its intentions for the water rights.

DWA and CVWD must function differently. They are both non-profit public agencies with elected boards of directors and complete accountability to the public by operating under the recognized transparency and disclosure laws of the State of California. In other words, we all have the ability to participate in their decisions, scrutinize their records and understand their objectives.

The Southern California Water Committee is one of the most respected voices in the region on water education and policy advocacy, and we are the only water organization in the state that approaches our education and advocacy efforts from an all-inclusive perspective. With that said, we strongly urge you to end the lawsuit and do what's best for the entire valley by joining stakeholders in the community in working with the two agencies through the Integrated Regional Water Management Plan to chart the future for the region's water supply. By doing so, you will be supporting economic recovery and the ratepayers of the region.

On behalf of SCWC, we would like to thank you for your time and greatly appreciate your consideration regarding this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Richard W Atwater  
Executive Director

CC: U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer  
U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein  
SCWC Colorado River Task Force  
Jim Barrett, General Manager, Coachella Valley Water District  
David Luker, General Manager, Desert Water Agency

