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August 26, 2024

The Honorable Maria D. Hernandez
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court of California
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Re: TCWD Response to OCGJ Report *"Emerging Opportunities in South County Water/Wastewater Systems"*

Dear Presiding Judge Hernandez:

The Orange County Grand Jury report released June 21, 2024, titled *"Emerging Opportunities in South County Water/Wastewater Systems"* requested that Trabuco Canyon Water District (TCWD) respond to certain findings and recommendations in the report. In accordance with Penal Code Sections 933 and 933.05, TCWD provides the following responses to Finding F4 and Recommendation R2:

Finding F4: *"There is currently no unified strategy for the future of water/wastewater provision in South Orange County."*

Response: TCWD disagrees partially with this finding.

The group of water and wastewater service providers in South Orange County share a history of collaboration and cooperation in promoting effective water management policy and planning regional infrastructure. At the same time, each individual entity is responsible for the safe, reliable, and cost-effective provision of services that meets the unique conditions and circumstances of the ratepayers within its local communities, even if the entity also participates in a jointly governed organization such as South Orange County Wastewater Authority (SOCWA). The "unified strategy" is a common understanding of the roles and responsibilities of individual water/wastewater providers that also benefit from and rely on regional collaboration and knowledge transfer.

Recommendation R2: *"The OCGJ recommends that by January 1, 2025, LAFCO form a task force comprising representatives of affected water agencies to study the transformation of SOCWA and prepare a report on the future of water/wastewater in South Orange County."*

Response: The recommendation will not be implemented by TCWD because it calls for another entity, LAFCO, to form a task force.

TCWD recently separated from the SOCWA joint powers authority and would not participate in discussions about the transformation of SOCWA as a directly affected agency. However, as a water, wastewater, and recycled water services provider in South Orange County, TCWD understands the value of regional collaboration and participating in discussions about the future of water and wastewater services.

If you need additional information concerning this response, please contact me at (949) 709-5724.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "F. Paludi", written in a cursive style.

Fernando Paludi, P.E.
General Manager