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County Water Report Prompts Call For Nipomo Incorporation

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NIPOMO — "We can scare hell out of the county by threatening to incorporate," Glenn Peck Sr. told the Community Services District on Wednesday.

Peck — a former district board member and father of Glenn Peck Jr., who is currently a director — also said the directors are "the only responsible" body in Nipomo.

He derided the Chamber of Commerce as "a Wednesday lunch meeting club."

The county wouldn't want to lose Nipomo's growing tax base to a new city, he said during a discussion on water supplies.

Asked later why he doesn't run for county supervisor, Peck replied, "I'm going to run Glenn (Jr.) as soon as I can recall (Supervisor Jim) Johnson." Johnson is completing his first year on the county board.

Later, real estate broker Jim Backus remarked that he agreed with the elder Peck's complaints about the county and added: "As far as Supervisor Johnson is concerned, he's bad news as far as I'm concerned."

Peck Sr. said Johnson "has to check with his no-growth buddies" before voting. He said fees imposed

on a new house top \$10,000 because of county actions.

Johnson could not be reached for comment Thursday.

Peck cited the approval Tuesday by the Board of Supervisors of housing developments on the Nipomo Mesa that will bring 102 new homes but will levy a fee of \$2,800 per house for traffic improvements.

The elder Peck also cited the county's consideration of a \$27 million parks plan, \$7 million of which might be financed by development fees.

"The county is stealing you blind and I want you to keep it in mind," Peck told the directors.

"They (county officials) are using water to kill us. . . . They're stalling (on developments). They're going to keep doing it. They're trying to stop growth. They refuse to give us any commercial (zoning)," he said.

To get commercial zoning, he said, Nipomo might have to incorporate.

Peck's remarks came during the period set aside for public comment. He said he would submit a written comment to be discussed at the board's next meeting, Dec. 9.

He began by referring to the new

Nipomo Mesa Water, Wastewater and Drainage Studies report by private consultant Charles Lawrance.

Copies of the report were given the county, libraries and the district. The report says the mesa basin has a 4,200-acre-feet-a-year overdraft.

Peck said the sentence saying that moratoria or down-zoning are not necessary now was the only valid one and the rest of the report was "a bunch of musused figures."

His main complaint about the report was that it put current storage in the underground Nipomo Mesa basin at 172,000 acre-feet. That is the amount above sea-level.

Peck said that for the past 25 years the area has had above average rainfall and that about 5 million acre-feet have been estimated in deep aquifers that could be pumped for 80 years.

County Deputy Engineer Clinton Milne told the Times-Press-Recorder that the Lawrance report was an update of a 1979 study by the state Department of Water Resources in cooperation with the county Flood Control and Water District.

Milne said that the deep storage lakes, cited in the 1979 study, go

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down as far as 1,000 below sea level and are onshore and offshore.

He said that while the percentages of sea water and fresh water in the deep pools are unknown, overdrafting the 172,000 acre-feet of storage above sea level wouldn't be a problem for maybe 40 years.

He also said that the intrusion of sea water could be centuries away.

assuming normal rainfall.

The risk in overdrafting, said Milne, is similar to depleting a savings account. Importing additional supplies, such as from the State Water Project, would keep the backup water savings in the "bank."

An acre-foot of water equals 326,000 gallons and will serve about five to seven people for a year.