

## News Release

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### MESA COMMUNITY ALLIANCE TO NCSO: FESS UP

In mid-March, Nipomo Mesa customers of the four water companies – NCSO, Golden State, Woodlands Mutual and Rural Water – will be sent ballots to vote on whether to increase their property taxes to fund construction of a pipeline to bring water from Santa Maria to the Mesa.

Unfortunately, people are being asked to vote without full and accurate information, because NCSO's slick PR campaign omits some very important facts. Here are examples of what is missing from their brochures and Town Hall presentations:

- The Environmental Impact Report cited two negative impacts that cannot be mitigated: Impacts to Planning and Housing and perhaps more importantly, impacts to Growth. The EIR states: "The proposed project's potential long-term and cumulative population and housing impacts resulting from the elimination of a constraint upon future development of areas served by the additional water supplies provided by the proposed project are considered to be *significant impacts which cannot be reduced to an insignificant level.*" **This fact should have been made clear to those who will have to vote.**
- The NCSO has divorced the pipeline cost from the increases in water rates that must follow. There is no reason to build a pipeline without putting water through it. That water will cost customers dearly, and the rates are sure to continue to increase. Furthermore, the pipeline operation and maintenance costs are being folded into the water rates. It is easy to see how costly O&M will be! Their presentations are geared to make customers feel comfortable with the amount of tax increase on their property when that is one small part of the cost customers will have to bear. **Voters are entitled to know the ultimate financial impacts before they vote!**
- The NCSO should answer questions about what happens to Santa Maria's water supply in drought. When Santa Maria cannot get its allotment of State Water, what happens then? This topic is deflected in public meetings.
- The Technical Groups advising the NCSO and the courts have strongly recommended that a hydrology study of the aquifer be conducted. This is the only way we will know the impacts of additional pumping on the aquifer. So far, NCSO has not funded the necessary hydrological study on this issue, which somehow also was not addressed in the EIR. **Should not the voters be advised that these impacts are before they vote?**

In addition to not telling the entire story, the NCSO consistently misleads the voters in its brochures and Town Hall meetings in an effort to scare them into supporting the project. One example is the claim that the project is needed because of impending saltwater intrusion. The attached letter blatantly refutes this argument.

These are just some of the issues that voters should consider before casting their ballots in March. And if the NCSB is not forthcoming, or worse, not telling the truth with regard to these issues, what else do we not know?

Mesa Community Alliance is a group of Nipomo Mesa professionals and retirees who have been studying this issue for some time. We encourage Mesa water customers **to vote** as soon as they receive their ballots, **and vote NO**. For more information, go to [www.nonewwiptax.com](http://www.nonewwiptax.com).