

Oceano seawater intrusion deemed a scam

February 13, 2012



By KAREN VELIE

San Luis Obispo County government agencies have been using data known to be phony to secure state and federal grants.

Following a 2009 report of seawater intrusion contaminating the unincorporated community of Oceano's groundwater supply, numerous local agencies used the information to apply for federal and state funding or to legitimize high-dollar water projects.

However, for more than a year, Oceano Community Services District board members have been saying reports of seawater intrusion are nothing but propaganda.

During last Wednesday's board meeting, directors penned a letter to the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors asserting that there is no truth to the allegation of seawater intrusion in Oceano.

"The level of exploitation of this anomaly has reached critical mass and is being quoted from everything from commercial development, other agency needs and willful suspensions of the truth," the letter says.

In 2009, John Wallace, owner and president of the Wallace Group, a private engineering consulting firm, was paid to oversee the monitoring of the Sentry Well in Oceano. Wallace then reported that the testing well was contaminated by seawater intrusion.

"At the time that this Sentry Well was tested, there were significant external contaminants," the district letter says. "The board at the time was directed by its contracted engineer (Wallace) to take a position that the event was actually a benefit because it would elevate the priority level in case of any state water contractor allocation cutbacks.

“The same engineer is on contract with several San Luis Obispo agencies, which (have exploited) this information to their benefit.”

Shortly after Wallace first made his claim of seawater intrusion, critics argued that because the well’s seal was broken, and it was located behind a liquor store in an area where vagrants were known to gather, the contamination was more likely the result of urination and debris.

In early 2010, the district had the seal repaired and further testing of the well demonstrated that there was no contamination and no seawater intrusion.

Nevertheless, the allegations became the basis for requests for government monies including Proposition 84 funds, Department of Water Resources Local Groundwater Assistance program, and United States Geological Survey Water Management Plan.

In early November, the San Luis Obispo County Planning Commission approved a project citing the issue of seawater intrusion in Oceano. Concurrently, in Nipomo the false allegation of seawater intrusion was used to promote a \$26 million pipeline project.

On Nov. 9, the Oceano Community Service District board discussed the issue of seawater intrusion being used as propaganda throughout the county. Board members then instructed District Manager Tom Geaslan to assemble a brief history of the issue in order to put the false claim to rest.

Instead, Geaslan signed a letter on Nov. 30 along with representatives from Grover Beach, Arroyo Grande, Pismo Beach and the Nipomo Mesa that requested funding to implement groundwater management activities because of seawater intrusion into their collective basin.

Meanwhile, the Oceano Community Service District board was pressuring Geaslan to prepare a letter to the SLO County Board of Supervisors explaining the claim of seawater intrusion was untrue.

And while the issue of the letter was listed on the Jan. 25 agenda, Geaslan again failed to produce the letter and claimed the district’s computers had been hacked.

“Our server has been hacked, our website has been hacked, my personal computer has been hacked,” Geaslan said at the meeting.

However, sources inside the district contend the district’s computer system froze and just needed to be reset and that Geaslan deleted several files in an attempt to promote his notion that the computers had been hacked.

Two weeks later, at the board’s Feb. 8 meeting, Geaslan again failed to produce the requested letter.

Geaslan did, however, admit to the board that he had signed a separate letter in November which claimed Oceano's ground water was endangered because of seawater intrusion. He explained the letter was used in an attempt to get a portion of an \$8.5 million dollar surplus in funding from the Nacimiento water project. He noted the letter was supposed to have been kept out of the public's view.

"I resisted signing, but I wanted to be a team player," Geaslan said during the meeting. "I'm kinda falling on my sword here. In retrospect I probably should have stuck to my guns and not signed.

"I need to point out that this did manifest itself into somewhat of a good way and because we all did band together and used that to go after the \$200,000 that we are trying to get from the WRAC (Water Resources Advisory Council)."

During a break in the meeting, board President Matt Guerrero took upon himself the task of writing the letter notifying county leaders that claims of seawater intrusion in Oceano are untrue. Guerrero then instructed Geaslan to deliver the letter to the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors.

Geaslan was the campaign manager for San Luis Obispo County Supervisor Paul Teixeira. His wife, Deb Geaslan, is the legislative assistant to Teixeira.

See the high resolution document from the [Friday Reports](#) at the [Oceano CSD website](#)

Comments

59 Comments

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1. *MaryMalone* says:

[02/13/2012 at 6:26 pm](#)

Here's a pretty well-known photo of ground level subsidence in the Central Valley, California. This occurs from pumping to irrigate crops.

<http://polizeros.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/05/land-subsidence.jpg>

Like or Dislike:   0



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2. *MaryMalone* says:

[02/13/2012 at 6:09 pm](#)

Looking at the photos accompanying the letter from OCSD, it seems clear that the first set of photos show the well to appear to not even be secured. If it was not secured by a locking device, then how can they possibly say the readings were accurate?

I'm not even going to discuss the foul, putrid fluid sitting on top of the well access point.

Like or Dislike:   0

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1. says:

[02/13/2012 at 4:05 pm](#)

Anything Wallace is involved in is likely dishonest, but our elected officials still refuse to do anything. Again, time to get rid of them all.

Like or Dislike:   2

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2. MaryMalone says:

[02/13/2012 at 1:49 pm](#)

It's not just SLO County. Nipomo CSD has filed for loans and grants for the Santa Maria pipeline project.

They have consistently told the public that the pipeline was needed and, especially in the last few years, the "fact" that there was saltwater intrusion demonstrated in a sentry well, was one of the big scare tactics the NCS D board and its general manager used.

In June 2011, the SM Times ran an article entitled "*PIPELINE WILL FORESTALL SALTWATER INTRUSION, NCS D EXPERTS SAY*" (<http://tinyurl.com/77qpmt8>)

Mike Hodgson, the reporter for the SMTimes, has (in my experience) pretty much wrote what Nipomo CSD told him. So the timbre of the opening of the above-referenced article is interesting:

"Slick color brochures began arriving in Nipomo residents' mailboxes last week in the first salvo of a growing battle over a pipeline to bring supplemental water to the Mesa.

Produced by a consultant for the Nipomo Community Services District, the brochures don't even mention the proposed pipeline or the assessment district to pay for the \$25 million project.

Instead, they plant seeds for thought about the Mesa's limited water supply, potential saltwater intrusion and the need for additional water.

And those brochures were slick. I happen to know they paid a lot of money to the outside consulting group they brought in to help them shove this pipeline project down the throats of the Nipomo people.

Later in the article Nipomo CSD's general manager (Michael LeBrun) gives some lovely quotes. Notice that, again, Hodgson gets a little terse about the information the general manager is feeding him: "

But even more important, they say, is the need to prevent saltwater from flowing into the basin from the Pacific Ocean, which could happen if the groundwater level drops too low.

"We've got 30,000 people here and one source of water," LeBrun said, noting that increasing demand has brought the groundwater level down.

"But the Pacific Ocean is not going down," he continued. "As we pump the groundwater down, (seawater) will continue to advance. It is advancing today, although it's not in the basin yet."

The fact that no saltwater intrusion has been detected in sentry wells near the coastline is one reason critics say there's no need for a supplemental water

project.

“Our opponents say we’re scaring people, we’ve got a boogie man,” LeBrun said. “But back in 2009, there was an indication of seawater intrusion up in the Northern Cities, and that’s pretty scary.”

Possible saltwater intrusion was detected in a sentry well that monitors the Northern Cities Management Area of the basin that serves Grover Beach, Arroyo Grande and Oceano Community Services District.

(When LeBrun says “Northern Cities,” he’s talking about the northern of the five-cities/Nipomo Mesa area [Oceano, GB, Pismo], not Paso and Atascadero).

When the Nipomo CSD board was anti-raising water rates and anti-water conservation, anybody who tried to talk to them were ridiculed. At one board meeting, the staff person who brought it up was accused of using “scare tactics” by the president of the board of directors, Jim Harrison.

So who is using the scare tactics now? And why are they?

Someone is profiting from this, and it is not the people of Nipomo.

Like or Dislike:   5

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1. *Lynette_Tornatzky* says:

[02/13/2012 at 1:26 pm](#)

The Prop 84 grant money is only obtained by REGIONS applying for it. Oceano is just one of a group hoping to find funding for the many different water projects in the county. I sure hope that this “revelation” is not going to jeopardize everyone else’s projects.

Like or Dislike:   3

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o *MaryMalone* says:

[02/13/2012 at 1:53 pm](#)

Since the County is alleged to be involved in the fraud—I would say that, if the SS Saltwater-Intrusion Boondoggle goes down, the County is going down with it.

If the County is investigated for one instance of fraud on state and federal grant or loan documentation, they will probably be investigated on other similar documents on other projects they have submitted.

Like or Dislike:  3  3

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o *pismo20* says:

[02/13/2012 at 2:07 pm](#)

Oceano did not apply for Prop 84 funds. They know there is no seawater intrusion. Nipomo applied based on seawater intrusion in Oceano

Like or Dislike:  1  1

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▪ *Lynette_Tornatzky* says:

[02/13/2012 at 2:24 pm](#)

So the Velie quote,

“Nevertheless, the allegations became the basis for requests for government monies including Proposition 84 funds, Department of Water Resources Local Groundwater Assistance program, and United States Geological Survey Water Management Plan”

is not about Oceano applying for the grant , but Nipomo applying for the grant? Boy, that sure wasn't very clear in this article!

In any case, Nipomo's request for the pipeline isn't just based on Oceano's SWI but on the very well documented SWI in Los Osos.

Read about it here:

https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&q=cache:HObk13gy-SEJ:ncsd.ca.gov/Library/EdH2Oshortage%2520FAQ%2BFN2.doc+nipomo+oceano+sea+water+intrusion&hl=en&gl=us&pid=bl&srcid=ADGEESh1yT7fdqQvQU3L71f-uiJqhx_A-khL6CNP5K0IVf_CRNT9BwQIVU_lhrQzee-j1yTuUZwC5-hjUSaIrhaNN2wsItlcWXeGP8gfXwz5I2Gi63xq2JTS2vyRBC1st0GhtVC-poe&sig=AHIEtbTEOWKHr2w37IqcfKDrdTSNqFIOIQ

Like or Dislike:  3  1

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- *MaryMalone* says:

[02/13/2012 at 3:43 pm](#)

The county was in on some of the requests from funds based on the saltwater intrusion report.

The NCSD's request for the pipeline is as I described in the post, above. An alternative source of water has to be brought in to the Nipomo Mesa, per the adjudication of a huge lawsuit. The pipeline is the method decided on, although others, such as desal, were considered.

I don't think it has anything to do with Los Osos's saltwater-intrusion issues, other than to use what has been found in Los Osos as a scare tactic to frighten the residents of Nipomo into submission.

In the document you cite, Los Osos is used as an example of how saltwater has happened "locally."

Like or Dislike:  0  0

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- *MaryMalone* says:

[02/13/2012 at 3:37 pm](#)

Pismo20, the Nipomo water purveyors are required under an adjudication agreement of a huge groundwater-rights lawsuit to bring another source of water to the Nipomo Mesa.

Over the years, they have investigated desal, state water, Nacimiento, and the Santa Maria pipeline. The board decided on the Santa Maria pipeline.

The report of the saltwater intrusion evidenced in the sentry well (by Todd Engineering) has been used by NCSD as a cudgel to beat the pipeline project opposition into submission, and to force the residents of the NCSD water customers into accepting a huge

water-rate increase and an equally huge special assessment on their properties.

NCSD very likely used that report of saltwater intrusion in the sentry well as reasons to bolster their request for grant/loan money from the state. The last I heard, they *may* have been apportioned \$2million, which is nothing compared to what that project is going to cost.

Like or Dislike:  2  0

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2. *MaryMalone* says:

[02/13/2012 at 12:59 pm](#)

Pardon me for just getting off the short bus, but I didn't know Paavo Ogren used to work for The Wallace Group.

Also, the Nipomo CSD has The Wallace Group up to its hips in the Santa Maria waterline project. Those poor Nipomoites are going to end up in the same kind of financial disaster as the Los Osos WWT project turned out to be.

I don't know what the NCSD board was thinking, to allow Wallace within 10 miles of the waterline project, especially after what has been revealed on CCN about the SSLOCSD and after the Grand Jury Report on the SSLOCSD.

Is the board trying to bankrupt the acre- to five-ten acre property owners so they'll be forced to sell, and then NCSD and the county can turn Nipomo into one big condo project?

The county has to find somewhere in the county to shove sustainable, low-income development. That would be either north county or the Nipomo Mesa. That kind of zoning is pretty much built out elsewhere in the county.

Also, one of the reasons that the Nipomo CSD board keeps banging Nipomo residents over the head with is the reported saltwater intrusion (now deeply in question) in the sentry well is to get public support for both the pipeline, with its assessments and water rate increases.

Somebody is profiting from this, and it is not the residents of Nipomo. That pipeline will change the character of Nipomo forever.


Like or Dislike:  5  5

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3. *SLOChuck* says:

[02/13/2012 at 11:25 am](#)

John Wallace behind another SLO County scandal. Why am I not surprised? How long are the residents of the service areas he's stealing from going to stand by and let him get away with this?

Like or Dislike:  13  2

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o *MaryMalone* says:

[02/13/2012 at 1:56 pm](#)

And wouldn't you know, the Wallace Group's Kari Wagner is doing a lot of the Nipomo CSD's work.

Like or Dislike:  2  2

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4. *doggin* says:

[02/13/2012 at 9:33 am](#)

“Resisted signing but wanted to be a team player”? Mr. Geaslan, don't you mean ass kissing as one of the members of the self serving tax payer funded good old boy network?. I certainly hope there's no well near the poop plant that Wallace manages in Oceano. For as long as I've lived here Ive watched his crew dump truck loads of processed human waste in the holding lagoon and every rainy season it turns into a pit of stinky black muck that sits for months leaching into the ground water. To add to the concerns, over the last few years Ive watched what looks like the staff dumping large square containers of some sort of white chemical into the mix that is like snot as it sticks to the tractor tires as they try to disguise it in the black goo.I see stacks of these empty containers hidden in an area that's out of sight back by some tanks when they finish dumping the contents.

As the purveyor of all that is corrupt in SLO county I suppose you know who has also been responsible for the ground water studies that have been done on this location, next to the AG creek mind you, and with a little creative paper work from his buddies everything is just fine. Id say its time for Karen to notify the

same bunch to look into this chemical dumping that was called upon to oversee the SLO chemical release a few months back.

Like or Dislike:  14  2

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5. *Typoqueen* says:

[02/13/2012 at 9:26 am](#)

Here we go again. It's always nice to hear both sides of a story. It would have been nice to hear statement from someone on WRAC or someone that has a good understanding of this issue such as Ed Eby or Mike Winn.

I recently had a discussion with a 'water guy', someone in the know on this on issue. I was told that even though the well might have had it's seal broken that it doesn't change the fact when Oceano used it's ground water that salt water intrusion was found in this sentry well. I was told that Oceano was pumping/using it's ground water at the time of the testing so the water levels had gone down. So when the level of water goes down this sentry well was tested for salt water intrusion (which is when it should be tested) and the tests showed salt water intrusion. When the water isn't used the sentry well fills up and stops the salt water from going into the well, the fresh water forms a type of barrier that keeps the salt water out. Due to this issue Oceano stopped using it's ground water and started using its state water (he might have said that they also started using Lopez water as well, can't remember). So then the sentry well was tested after they stopped using the ground water and it tested okay but that's because they weren't using the ground water so the sentry well filled back up.. But if they started using the ground water again it would again lower the water table and show signs of salt water intrusion, it doesn't go back to being salt free. He said that to this day Oceano isn't using their ground water. He explained that although it's not the well that they get the water from that it's the canary in the coal mine, it is a sentry well to warn of what's to come. So if Oceano isn't worried about salt water intrusion why did they stop using ground water and why to this day they continue not to use it?

Don't kill the messenger, this is only what I've heard on the other side of this issue. It makes sense and the guy that told me this is very knowledgeable on this issue. On the other hand, I'm not knowledgeable on this issue, I don't know how to read the findings and the tables so I can only go by what I hear. I just feel that it's good to hear both sides of an issue.

I watched the part of the OCSD meeting where they discussed this last week and man oh man they were p!ssed off about this, I thought Mary Lucey was going to blow a fuse, I could almost see steam coming from her ears.

Like or Dislike:  10  15

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- *Vagabond* says:

[02/13/2012 at 9:37 am](#)

So if NOT using their groundwater STOPS the intrusion and the city doesn't need that water then why is anyone giving them money to study ways or implement ways to mitigate seawater intrusion? And if the BASIS of acquiring those funds is Seawater intrusion (which can, and apparently is rectified) How is that not,, well fibbing?
I don't see two sides here at all.

Like or Dislike:  10  1

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- *Typoqueen* says:



[02/13/2012 at 10:28 am](#)

Oceano doesn't want any more studies, it's the county that wants the studies as this alleged salt water intrusion effects other cities besides Oceano. As far as Oceano is concerned the ground water is fine and they want everyone to just stop talking and worrying about it. They don't need to use their ground water, Oceano has plenty of water besides ground water. The prior OCSD board wanted to sell their state water to generate revenue so perhaps that's why they were using their ground water, but I'm just guessing on that. Karen's friend John King and other cities would pay top dollar for their state water, it's more valuable than gold. But now Oceano needs their state water because their ground water might not be as reliable as they once thought.

I do know that the part of the story about the fresh ground water holding back that salt water is true. After he told me about this I thought that it sounded weird so I did look that part of this up. Fresh water does hold back salt water but if a low well fills up with salt water then that's what will come down the pipes. So that part of the story makes sense to me.

I don't have the answers and I don't really know how accurate my explanation is so don't get me wrong, I'm not saying that I'm completely correct. I'm just explaining what I've been told. Due to

Oceano's over all issues I feel that it's a good idea to look outside of the box. So you don't want to hear from someone about the other side of this issue? You don't care about making your mind up even though you've only heard once side of an argument?

Like or Dislike:  5  11

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- *pismo20* says:

[02/13/2012 at 10:48 am](#)

The well is tested regularly. Is it a test well. The yearly report is due shortly. They have been numerous regular tests since the well cap was fixed in early 2010, all showing no sea water intrusion. It is pretty black and white.

Like or Dislike:  9  3

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- *Typoqueen* says:

[02/13/2012 at 11:09 am](#)

Because they don't use the well water anymore. From what I was told, if they used the well water then the water level would drop and that would allow salt water to enter the sentry well, then it would once again test for salt water intrusion. If this is true the what is black and white is that Oceano needs to use their well water at the rate that they were using it when the well tested positive for salt and then test it again at that point.

Again, this is hearsay. This info should only be processed by those with an open mind.

Like or Dislike:  6  6

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- *pismo20* says:

[02/13/2012 at 1:08 pm](#)

It is a test well it has never been used for water. They have not changed the water source. It only tested salty for a few months when the issue of saltwater intrusion was being promoted. At that time the well top was not there and anyone could pour anything into the well. Since then it is sealed and clean.

This changes nothing in Oceano. They have been aware for years there is not intrusion. This is about other agencies and cities using the lie to illegally apply for funding. Oceano has said they do not want to sell its water because they may build at the airport in the future.

Like or Dislike:  2  2

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- *Typoqueen* says:

[02/13/2012 at 2:00 pm](#)

I am aware that this is a 'test' well AKA sentry well, as I've repeated a few times. So you are saying that Oceano only uses 100% ground water and that they don't use their state or and I believe Lopez water? I've heard that since finding saltwater intrusion that Oceano has stopped using ground water but you say that isn't true. I wish that I had time to look that up, maybe later.

I remember the last board saying that even if they sell some of their state water that they would still have enough water for 100% build out even if the airport was developed, is this not true?

Like or Dislike:  1  2

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- *pismo20* says:

[02/13/2012 at 2:42 pm](#)

No, they are not using their groundwater and were not at that time either. They have a purchased amount of state and Lopez water they have to pay for. They sell some of their Lopez water to AG.

Like or Dislike:  1  1

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- *Lynette_Tornatzky* says:

[02/13/2012 at 2:53 pm](#)

So why is it that Oceano is NOT using their groundwater? Why did they purchase state and Lopez water?

Like or Dislike: 
3  0

- *MaryMalone* says:



[02/13/2012 at 3:47 pm](#)

What you state about “freshwater holding it back” is only partially true. Freshwater will prevent saltwater from coming in to an aquifer or groundwater basin if the pressure of the freshwater in the aquifer is higher than the pressure of the other water (seawater, in this case).

Once the amount of water in an aquifer drops sufficiently that there is no longer enough pressure to keep the other water back, it will come in.

Once an aquifer is contaminated, that part of the aquifer can never be used again for fresh water storage. Similarly, if pumping is so much that it drops the level of the aquifer too low, even if there isn't other water waiting to flow in, it can cause a collapse of the drained part of the aquifer. Again, that part of the aquifer can never be used for fresh-water storage again.

This is not just a local problem, but is happening in many places in California, and in other states, as well.

Like or Dislike:  0  0

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- *doggin* says:

[02/13/2012 at 11:35 am](#)

That's what's known as "sustainable design" the design is to send SLO counties tax dollars to Wallace's bank account.

Like or Dislike:  8  1

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- *MaryMalone* says:

[02/13/2012 at 2:22 pm](#)

It's the County and the Nipomo CSD that are applying for state funds to deal with a "water shortage." A dominant bit of "evidence" they use is the saltwater intrusion in the sentry well. If there is no saltwater intrusion, then both the county and Nipomo CSD will know about it.

Now, whether they want to admit it, now that they have approved for the submission of applications for grants and loans based, at least in part, on this saltwater intrusion, is a different matter.

Like or Dislike:  1  0

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- o [SLORider](#) says:

[02/13/2012 at 10:13 am](#)

Those positing alternate theories that seawater intrusion exists almost always have a motive... a pipeline to build, a development project to stop, federal money to gain... the list is long.

The bottom line is there is no credible evidence of seawater intrusion. Further propagation of this false claim is spreading a lie, especially when those that do it leave out the story of the sentry well.

This sentry well is located directly behind the liquor store on Pier Avenue. The same place where all the bums hang out and drink (and rape, if you recall that story).

Seawater intrusion claims need to stop. Boards and officials need to start refuting this allegation. They serve the public, and should do so based upon facts, not greed.

Like or Dislike:  14  6

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- *Typoqueen* says:


[02/13/2012 at 11:02 am](#)

That's a load of crap. You are saying this because you know that I'm trying to stop Price Canyon. I don't have any motives about this. How is stating this in CCN going to effect PC? I clearly said that I don't know how accurate these claims are. You know that I've had meetings with people that understand the local water issues, I simply asked what the story was with Oceano as I like to learn about all sides of issues. I specifically asked this man about the broken seal or issues with the sentry well because of what YOU told me about it being behind the liquor store and the homeless people around it. He said that it has nothing what so ever to do with the test results.

I'm not making this up. I might be told faulty information but I would never make anything up to serve my cause. Oh what a tangled web... It serves no purpose for me to lie or make anything up, it would only come back to bit me on the a\$\$\$. This is why I

asked someone that knows a lot more about the local water situations than most if not all of the people here. He seems to be an honest man but I'm not going to make a judgement on that. Maybe he has me fooled, maybe he's a liar but he doesn't have a reputation as being a liar. He's not a partisan type of guy and he seems fair. That being said, I might be wrong, he might be a terrible guy, a liar. Don't you even want to hear both sides of an issue?

Instead of attacking me how about dissecting the story that I wrote above and tell me where it's wrong. Tell me how rape and drinking homeless people effect the sentry well? Did they take buckets of water from the ocean and throw them down the well? What are the facts that make the story that I said wrong?

Like or Dislike:  4  12

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- [SLORider](#) says:

[02/13/2012 at 11:34 am](#)

I am open to "both sides" when documentation is presented that demonstrates ground water was being significantly pumped prior to the salt test, and that pumping was discontinued prior to the clean test.

Further, I'd like documentation of other instances of similar, or more intensive, pumping of ground water that did not coincide with a dirty test so that we may form an informed believe as to the likelihood of the alleged single coincidence being a result of pumping.

The matter deserves study, but deserves no further credit or discussion on its current face which is just ugly rumor being used for political gain. Get back to me when a detailed report exists. If your informed source believes his alternate theory is likely, then he should adduce documentation to support his belief.

Like or Dislike:  5  3

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- *Typoqueen* says:

[02/13/2012 at 11:55 am](#)

Hey, as I said, don't shoot the messenger. I don't have that info and frankly if I had it I wouldn't have the time to figure out how to interpret it, I know how complicated these water issues can get, but if I had more time then I would do that. I am assuming that if this information is true that it would be out there already but I don't know if he reads CCN so I can't say that he'll provide this information.

It seems that this would be a good thing for Karen to find out as part of this story, perhaps a few interviews with the people on WRAC or from the Supes. But since that isn't happening and if you are truly interested then it would be good for you to see if these claims are true or if it's false before simply blowing them off. You're a smart guy, you can read these reports and find information that many others might have a difficult time doing. If you are truly interested in balance then perhaps you could look it up. I'm interested but not enough to take more time out of my day to dig any deeper. I can only go by what I read in the media and what people like this guy and you tell me. I wouldn't go as far as to say that it deserves no discussion as it's good to hear from both sides. A lot of people don't agree with Oceano's stance on this, maybe it's political but maybe there's truly something to it. BTW, I doubt very seriously that this has anything to do with political gain.

Like or Dislike:  3  8

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- *pismo20* says:

[02/13/2012 at 1:24 pm](#)

The only agency testing the water is Oceano. The others are just applying for taxpayer monies based on a lie.

Why ask the WRAC, they asked for money knowing the intrusion was questioned. No

test, just we need taxpayer money because the basin they all are part of is “contaminated.”

Like or Dislike:  1  1

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- *MaryMalone* says:

[02/13/2012 at 3:52 pm](#)

“That’s a load of crap. You are saying this because you know that I’m trying to stop Price Canyon. ”

Using that logic, you’re saying its true because you want to stop Price Canyon.

Look, I don’t want Price Canyon developed, I totally agree the Nipomo Mesa residents are using water in an unsustainable manner which will, if it has not already done so, cause future generations a great deal of problems.

But that doesn’t mean that the sentry-well claims made in the past are true.

I don’t like it when citizens are lied to so a government can do what they want, and the threat of saltwater intrusion into an aquifer is a huge, scary threat. So those backing this claim are using scare tactics, too.

We don’t always have to be on opposite sides of the fence. I’m with you on Price Canyon, 150%. I just don’t like citizens being lied to so the government can scar them into allowing the government to do something.

Like or Dislike:  0  0

[Log in to Reply](#)

- *Typoqueen* says:

[02/13/2012 at 4:27 pm](#)

I don’t like being lied to but I don’t feel that at this stage of the game that we know who is lying. Why

isn't Oceano using their ground water? Why doesn't Oceano just use their ground water as to lower the water level again so the sentry well can be properly re-tested?

I honestly don't know who to trust. Mary I know that you've seen the past OCSD boards and their past GM. So do we trust what they say?! Of course everyone knows that the Wallace group is dodgy at best. So who do we trust? We can't just trust that if OCSD or Wallace says this or that that it must be wrong or right. I believe that it needs to be re-tested in the correct fashion which includes lowering the water table. It needs to be done, what if there really was salt water intrusion and we just didn't believe the tests? Then we'd end up like Cambria, we'd all be screwed.

Like or Dislike:  1  0

[Log in to Reply](#)

- *doggin* says:

[02/13/2012 at 11:36 am](#)

Why does Los Osos and their sewer problems keep coming to mind?

Like or Dislike:  4  0

[Log in to Reply](#)

- *Vagabond* says:

[02/13/2012 at 1:51 pm](#)

Perhaps because this kind of shenanigan was used there too? Remember the famous mud sample that Lois Capps waded into the muck to get then disappeared? Or how about the contaminated water warning signs placed all over the Baywood shore with out a lick of evidence? All of SLO county is Los Osos.

Like or Dislike:  1  1

[Log in to Reply](#)

- *Lynette_Tornatzky* says:

[02/13/2012 at 4:52 pm](#)

A mud sample, “disappeared” or not, has nothing to do with the need for a sewer in Los Osos. As to the contamination signs, where did you look for evidence Vagabond, and not find it?

Like or Dislike:  0  0

[Log in to Reply](#)

- *Josixpack* says:

[02/13/2012 at 12:10 pm](#)

Leave it to kevin Rice to Blindly advocate for ANY development-any project-Money grubber!
You are not serving the public as you tout until you actually get FACTS about the water which we all know is scarce-Wallace is a crook-but why are you always railing against GOOD regulation-Not ALL regulation is bad-You won't open your eyes long enough to seek the truth-just blind allegiance-It IS a load of Crap Typo

Like or Dislike:  2  4

[Log in to Reply](#)

- *cch* says:

[02/13/2012 at 12:47 pm](#)

Whether saltwater intrusion is occurring in Oceano, I have no idea, although in my long-held opinion, OCSD is rotten to the core, cannot be trusted, and should be dismantled by the County. All that aside, you seem to be of the opinion that saltwater intrusion is not a real phenomenon. It is real, and it occurs in coastal areas around the world. At the very least, look at the wikipedia page, which has 6 references on it. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saltwater_intrusion

Like or Dislike:  2  0

[Log in to Reply](#)

- *Typoqueen* says:

[02/13/2012 at 4:33 pm](#)

I agree, I wouldn't trust the OCSD as far as I could throw them, especially some of their past board members and who can forget their last GM., sheez. You're spot on. These coastal communities have to be really careful. Salt water intrusion is a big issue for coastal communities..

Like or Dislike:  1  0

[Log in to Reply](#)

- *MaryMalone* says:

[02/13/2012 at 2:31 pm](#)

They need to, but they won't. The Nipomo CSD and the County have gone too far on this project to turn back.

Besides, a judge who ruled on the big water-rights lawsuit for the Nipomo Mesa and Santa Maria instructed the Nipomo Mesa water purveyors to bring in surplus water to help take the pressure off the Nipomo area groundwater basin

It is true that the Nipomo residents use a lot more water than nature can replenish in a normal year. It is true that the judge has ordered the purveyors to form a technical group to deal with this (which the purveyors have done), and to bring in another source of water.

It is also true that bringing in another source of water is extremely prudent because the Nipomo Mesa's "water source portfolio," as they say in the trade, sucks big time because it only has one source: the groundwater underlying the Nipomo Mesa.

What appears not to be true is that there was saltwater intrusion in a sentry well in Oceano.

Up to the point where the saltwater intrusion was stated to have occurred, the opposition forces in Nipomo had been able to raise enough questions that held the Nipomo CSD board and the county accountable.

However, that report of the saltwater intrusion in the sentry well is a very scary finding. It's gone past the "canary in the mine"

scenario, and makes bringing in an alternative sort of water much more immediate.

Now, to learn that it was all a big scare tactic is going to infuriate the opposition forces in Nipomo.

Like or Dislike:  0  0

[Log in to Reply](#)

- *Typoqueen* says:

[02/13/2012 at 4:39 pm](#)

I just want to know what evidence there is that demonstrates that this is a scare tactic? I could easily be swayed off of my fence if I saw something credible that proves that this is merely a scare tactic.

Like or Dislike:  0  0

[Log in to Reply](#)

- *MaryMalone* says:

[02/13/2012 at 2:04 pm](#)

TQ: “Here we go again. It’s always nice to hear both sides of a story. It would have been nice to hear statement from someone on WRAC or someone that has a good understanding of this issue such as Ed Eby or Mike Winn.”

LOL. What a kidder you are!

I don’t know if you are aware of it or not....Ed Eby and Mike Winn are on the board for the Nipomo CSD, and the Nipomo CSD is using John Wallace’s Wallace Group for a big part of the Santa Maria water line project? The board also had to approve for the filing for every one of those loans and grants Nipomo CSD applied for? They allow their general manager, Michael LeBrun, to repeatedly tell Santa Maria Times that the report of saltwater intrusion in the sentry well was true.

If there is an investigation over this by the state, the board members will be held accountable, just like the City of Bell board members were held accountable for the fraud they perpetrated against the citizens of Bell and against the State of California..

If you want a truly independent take on the issue, someone who hasn't been a benefactor for the Wallace Group, and who doesn't have a vested interest

Like or Dislike:  1  1

[Log in to Reply](#)

▪ *Typoqueen* says:

[02/13/2012 at 2:24 pm](#)

Fine, I have no problem with that. By all means have an independent study, that absolutely should be done. I'm simply stating what I've heard. I used Ed Eby and Winn as I've heard them speak on numerous occasions and they appeared to be honest people but if everyone thinks that they're liars then fine. Regardless, the facts should be black and white.

1) was the sentry well tested correctly, did the transients, liquor store and breached seal make a difference in the results?

2) did Oceano stop using ground water after it tested salty as to fill the sentry well back up with fresh water?

Those are pretty basic questions that experts and even non experts on this topic should be able to review and answer even without new testing.

I've heard that this sentry well was hard to find as it was covered up so if that's true then I'm sure that no one would have messed with it. But if there is any question, which there is then it needs to be re-tested correctly. Once again, I'm not taking sides I'm simply stating what I've heard. To be frank I have to say that I am a little biased against the OCSD. Even though they finally seem to have a fairly cohesive board they've (along with they're staff) had so many issues in the past. IMO it's wise to be sceptical and check out all possibilities especially when it concerns the OCSD and Wallace. This concern isn't so much about the current board but the previous boards, they along with Wallace were the ones around when the well was tested bad so start from scratch. Have Oceano start pumping (if they're not) and retest the sentry well by an independent source.

Like or Dislike:  1  2

[Log in to Reply](#)

- *MaryMalone* says:

[02/13/2012 at 2:33 pm](#)

“I used Ed Eby and Winn as I’ve heard them speak on numerous occasions and they appeared to be honest people but if everyone thinks that they’re liars then fine. Regardless, the facts should be black and white.”

You need to rethink that. Seriously. They are both well informed (on a lot of topics), but the rest of it, not so much.

They are part of the board that approved John Wallace to their district engineer for years, and now the Wallace Group is involved in the Santa Maria water line project.

Why would “honest” board members allow that to happen?


Like or Dislike:  0  1

[Log in to Reply](#)

- *Typoqueen* says:

[02/13/2012 at 4:41 pm](#)

Because they didn’t know at the time that Wallace was shady??

Like or Dislike:  0  0

[Log in to Reply](#)

- *pismo20* says:

[02/13/2012 at 2:47 pm](#)

There are pictures of the well and the letter above and on the OCSD web site. It might help to read the reports, look at the pictures and take a look at the testings before you make conclusions. The testing is done by an outside entity, not in house.

Like or Dislike:  0  0

[Log in to Reply](#)

- *Typoqueen* says:

[02/13/2012 at 4:42 pm](#)

Thanks, I'll do that.



Like or Dislike:  0  0

[Log in to Reply](#)

6. *Russ J* says:

[02/13/2012 at 9:02 am](#)

I guess if you were on the fence about whether or not to vote for an expensive water pipe for Nipomo; you just fell off.

Like or Dislike:  13  2

[Log in to Reply](#)

- *doggin* says:

[02/13/2012 at 9:37 am](#)

Yes, and who was hired to provide the data etc to get this job moving? you guessed it the Worthless group. Must have something to do with the former Wallace group employee who now runs the Nipomo CSD. Gotta love the economic benefits of keeping things local.

Like or Dislike:  9  3

[Log in to Reply](#)

- *MaryMalone* says:

[02/13/2012 at 2:47 pm](#)

The Wallace Group does a lot for Nipomo CSD. They charged \$19,000 for a "FOG" (fats, oils, and grease) program, targeting Nipomo CSD restaurant and other grease-dumping businesses: the proposal read "25" facilities.

This isn't for all of Nipomo Mesa. Just the pertinent Nipomo CSD customers.

That works out to about \$760 per facility.

Here's a link to the proposal, terms and conditions:
<http://tinyurl.com/8a98os5>

Like or Dislike:  0  0

[Log in to Reply](#)

7. *Lynette_Tornatzky* says:

[02/13/2012 at 8:36 am](#)

Who did the testing in 2010? Wallace Group again? Or who? The article does not say.

Based on what is reported above, why does the Board trust Geaslan to deliver the letter to the BOS after what is ALLEGED here and not just fire him?

Did the composition of the Board change between 2009 and now? Didn't it instruct the GM to go after that money? What took them so long to figure out they needed to say there was no SWI? Sounds like either the Board composition changed and is trying to now weasel out of an earlier decision a different Board made or it is trying to blame Wallace to try to weasel out.

And the Water Resources Advisory Committee is shorthanded as the WRAC, not the RAC.

Like or Dislike:  9  3

[Log in to Reply](#)

o *MaryMalone* says:

[02/13/2012 at 2:55 pm](#)

That would be Todd Engineering. John Wallace, serving as OCSD's district engineer while Montemurro was general manager, details the situation in this report: <http://tinyurl.com/7gdptmc>

Like or Dislike:  0  0

[Log in to Reply](#)

8. *Disgusted* says:

[02/13/2012 at 8:13 am](#)

Is this similar to what many claim to be a flawed dust report for the Oceano Dunes area?

Like or Dislike:  17  2

[Log in to Reply](#)

o *Josixpack* says:

[02/13/2012 at 8:59 am](#)

GET RID OF WALLACE GROUP! Once and for all! What a bunch of crooks!


Like or Dislike:  22  4

[Log in to Reply](#)

9. *fireandrain* says:

[02/13/2012 at 8:06 am](#)

Please sweep out the “supervisors.” They are a keystone cop version of machine politics. Whether it’s the poop tax (thanks Gibson) or this blatant false science lie that Teixeira is behind to get federal funds (I’m sure the others are behind it too as most of them seem to be adverse to science (think of the “dust” from the dunes—do you really think dune buggies create it when the wind can build the dunes into 200 foot-high landforms? Yeah, me neither). Science my eye.

Like or Dislike:  21  3

[Log in to Reply](#)

o *MaryMalone* says:

[02/13/2012 at 2:57 pm](#)

The boards of directors and city councils of local governments need to be swept out, too. The fact that so many still use The Wallace Group is testimony to the rampant corruption in SLOCo.



Like or Dislike:  1  0

[Log in to Reply](#)

10. *winedude* says:

[02/13/2012 at 7:37 am](#)

Fraud and thievery in SLO County...I'm shocked!

Hot debate. What do you think?  34  4

[Log in to Reply](#)

o *MaryMalone* says:

[02/13/2012 at 2:57 pm](#)

You're cute.

Like or Dislike:  0  0

[Log in to Reply](#)