

co.org>;

Subject: Arroyo Seco Canyon Project appeal to Council, 7/19/21. Where things stand:the citizen view.

This e-mail is addressed to the Mayor and Members of the City Council, Trustee Agencies for the Arroyo Seco Canyon Project ASCP, and members of the public who have commented on and followed the ASCP.

On June 7th, the Appeal hearing for the PWP Arroyo Seco Canyon Project was "continued" (postponed) to July 12th. The July 12th hearing was "continued" to July 19th. It is now Agenda Item #13 on Monday, July 19th 2021:

CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING: APPEAL OF THE BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS' DECISION ON MODIFICATION TO CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 6222 REGARDING THE PROPERTIES LOCATED AT 3420 AND 3500 N. ARROYO BLVD (ARROYO SECO CANYON PROJECT).

The reason for the initial continuation was a communication from PWP to the Appellants that PWP was willing to meet with the Appellants to hear their concerns.

Two meetings were held at the PWP offices and with the City's attorney via Zoom. The first meeting, held on June 16th, was mostly in person, all parties vaccinated, masks worn. Participants included the Appellants, PWP's General Manager, and two water employees, and the Deputy City Attorney.

At the first meeting, the Appellants requested that minutes of the meeting be taken for the record.

This request was turned down by PWP management and the City Attorney.

PWP General Manager Gucharan Bawa asked: "What are you concerned about, that we will agree on something and then deny it later?"

One of the Appellants said: "There have been numerous examples over the years where encouraging comments have been made 'off the record' and then never admitted or reflected publicly or in documentation."

The goal of this e-mail is to report to the Mayor and City Council, the public and Trustee Agencies the arc of those meetings and where things lie between the Appellants and PWP. It is important that this background is available prior to the Appeal Hearing.

The Appellants consist of the Arroyo Seco Foundation represented by Tim Brick, Pasadena Audubon represented by Laura Solomon and Mark Hunter, Ken Kules a former MWD water engineer, and Hugh Bowles a local resident living adjacent to Hahamongna. All are PWP customers.

As Appellants, we had to make clear that we were not affiliated with a single organization and we covered a broad range of interests relating to Hahamongna. However, we have common cause on the issues of water management, protection of the aquifer as an essential resource for the City, and protection of the natural environment through sound stewardship.

Underlying this common interest is a sense the City of Pasadena must commit, in deed, to the intent of its re-establishment of the area's Native American name: Hahamongna — flowing water, fruitful valley. This name is never used by PWP or the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works.

The Appellants have been clear that the ASCP EIR needs to be returned with instruction to include an “environmentally superior alternative” (required under CEQA) that adheres to the conditions of approval outlined by the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA).

The BZA conditions include:

1. Measuring the percolation capacity of the stream; maximizing that percolation and working to receive pumping credit for flows absorbed by the stream.
2. Providing for fish passage around or through structures in the stream in line with California Department of Fish and Wildlife codes.
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We spent time re-working the language in the fish mitigation measure of the EIR to what appeared to be a satisfactory outcome.

A second area of discussion at this first meeting focused on the ability of the natural processes in the basin to enhance percolation and help shore up the declining aquifer.

It was pointed out to PWP that a study they commissioned from Converse Consultants West, as long ago as 1995, found the spreading basin percolation rate to be “by orders of magnitude” worse than the rest of the basin.

Also, in 2000, the City of Pasadena commissioned Philip Williams and Associates (PWA) to look at options for water features to include in the Hahamongna Park Plan. The Williams Study, using the earlier Converse Study as a base, concluded the best water feature was to restore natural flows to the stream and hold water intermittently behind the dam. They estimated this strategy could improve aquifer re-charge by 160% in a normal rainfall year.

With this, PWP was asked how they could be so “incurious” about these scientific studies that the City paid for. The EIR shows percolation rates in the old JPL parking lot are worse than most of the spreading basins.

The Appellants pointed out that the Hahamongna Basin was a natural spreading basin... an alluvial fan — “fan”, in this context, synonymous with “spread.”

PWP and the City Attorney agreed that they should not be “incurious” about the science.

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PWP expressed concern that the Raymond Basin Management Board (RBMB) might not approve pumping credit for natural percolation.

The Appellants pointed out that with clear measurement, the Appellants and the public can help support a PWP proposal to obtain pumping credit for stream percolation.

The RBMB is chartered to “ensure the sustainability of supply and protection from drought.” There is a strong case to maximize the high percolation rate of the stream compared to the spreading basins.

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A week later, the Appellants received revised language from PWP based on the discussion. While language was changed on fish passage, much of the old contentious language remained. The changes represented no commitment that the project would provide for fish passage from the start. The plan to manually rescue stranded fish when the dam gates were up remained. There was still emphasis on “future” vs “current” fish in relation to steelhead trout. There was no acknowledgement that there are fish living in the Arroyo today.

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This was unhelpful. First, it presumes City Council will certify the EIR without question. It also relies on a public agency having tax payer funded attorneys to represent their position against the public. It shows unwillingness on behalf of the Lead Agent to follow the intent of CEQA and address issues with "meaningful public engagement".

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However, after the second meeting, the Appellants submitted a document outlining what they felt needs to occur — including the provision for fish passage, measurement of stream percolation, and plans on how to arrest the decline in the aquifer. PWP informed the Appellants they could not support these requests.

PWP then asked for another continuation and the hearing was moved from July 12 to July 19. PWP wanted this time to "prepare."

We anticipate that PWP will urge the City Council on July 19 to certify the EIR. There will likely be a claim that new language buried in the Mitigation Plan meets the Appellants concerns. It does not.

The EIR must be returned to allow the CEQA process to continue in the public eye. A proper "environmentally superior alternative" must be considered. The Appellants' requests, and the BZA conditions, provide the framework for that alternative. PWP may claim that they are going to follow through, but CEQA requires "meaningful public engagement." Following through on these issues with no public review renders the process worthless.

There was agreement in the meetings that the CA Department of Fish and Wildlife will likely have requests that need to be met before permits can be issued. The Appellants' position is that the Department's Code requires provision for fish passage from the outset and the project design should be changed publicly to reflect that.

PWP would prefer to negotiate with CA Department Fish and Wildlife privately, out of the public gaze, no doubt with a City Attorney present; this allows PWP to apply maximum pressure on CA Department of Fish and Wildlife to assent to the current design. There will be promises to rescue fish stranded by their operations and build fish passage when "future" steelhead return to the Arroyo.

Similarly, measurement of the percolation capacity will be done privately by PWP. Perhaps by the same engineers who declared publicly that measuring stream percolation was "irrelevant."

The Appellants' position is that these activities should be conducted through the public CEQA process. The environmentally superior alternative should be circulated for public comment and review.

PWP may claim that further delay will damage the local water supply, or public grant funds might be lost due to delays. The fact is, PWP have yet to provide one scrap of science to support their claim that the project will "improve aquifer re-charge."

Sadly, too, the science that opened the window to a water conservation strategy 20 years ago has been ignored. Had there been the slightest curiosity about those studies we could have been banking water underground over the last two decades rather than letting it rot in surface ponds.

There is one tantalizing uptick in the graph marking the steady decline of our aquifer. This was over the 2009/10 rain season. That year there was no diversion because of the high debris flows after the Station Fire. Water flowed down to the dam and was held there for short periods. Wells up and down the Hahamongna basin rose by up to 20 feet and by 40 feet below the dam. The following year (2010/11) the wells dropped by an equivalent amount. Per the RBMB Annual Report for 2010/11 there was a 30% increase in precipitation that year, just a 4% increase in extraction, but a 70% increase in diversion. Water flowing in the stream in 2009/10 was diverted in 2010/11.

When confronted with this data in 2015, PWP responded that in 2009/10 the wells were all offline. However, the RBMB Annual Report for 2009/10 hints that if the stream is allowed to flow, and water is held for short periods behind the dam, the science from 1995 and 2000 appears to hold true. To the curious, this could be a path forward to slowing the decline in the aquifer.

Under the Williams Study, there was also provision for debris removal that could have provided an environmentally acceptable framework for removal of debris from the Station Fire.

Council needs to return this EIR with clear direction to develop an environmentally superior alternative. This alternative should be developed with "meaningful public engagement" and then re-circulated for public comment and review.

Certifying the EIR shuts the public out.

The public know the high stakes of this project: the protection and stewardship of our most valuable local resource, water.

Regards,

Hugh Bowles

> Please feel free to forward this e-mail to any interested parties.

> This e-mail is also submitted to the City Council "correspondence" e-mail to be included in the Council package for Agenda Item 13 on July 19, 2021.

Martinez, Ruben

From: Duncan Sinclair <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, July 19, 2021 9:24 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: ASCP feedback

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Dear Councilmembers,

I share the views of the Arroyo Seco Foundation. Please scrap the ill-advised ASCP, thank you.

Duncan Sinclair

.a

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Martinez, Ruben

From: Pilar Reyanldo
Sent: Monday, July 19, 2021 9:45 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Save the Hahamongna

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- We love Hahamongna. Hahamongna is sacred. Don't degrade it further.
- Stop the depletion of the Raymond Basin. Heal the Basin.
- Protect the native fish and wildlife in the Arroyo.
- Let the River Flow. A living, natural stream is a better way to conserve water than artificial spreading basins.
- Pasadena Water & Power should be a steward of the natural resources it exploits.
- Pasadena Water & Power should listen to the community.
- ASCP is a foolish investment in the past. Develop a resilient plan for the future.

Sincerely,

Pilar Reynaldo

Sent from my iPhone
PRM

07/19/2021
Item 13

Martinez, Ruben

From: Robert Staehle
Sent: Monday, July 19, 2021 9:02 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Cc:

Subject: Re: Arroyo Seco Canyon Project appeal to Council, 7/19/21.

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*Please enter into the record for today's Arroyo Seco Canyon Project Appeal meeting.

Dear City of Pasadena and All CC'd,

With time having run out before this morning's 3rd rescheduled meeting for the Arroyo Seco Canyon Project Appeal to the Pasadena City Council, we only have time to express our alarm and frustration in concurrence with the following *excellent* summary of events involving the mismanagement of the Raymond Basin Aquifer along with the associated surface waters of Hahamongna Watershed Park's over-excavated basin. We agree with Hugh Bowles' detailed points as well as Marietta Kruell's concise complaints.

There is still time at this late juncture for the City of Pasadena — along with the County of Los Angeles and the Raymond Basin Water Master — to step back, stop the current course of action dependent upon failed "spreading basins," and move to implement innovative, environmentally sustainable water recapture; bio-swale naturalization of the entire Hahamongna Watershed Park basin; and restoration of natural streams and associated wildlife habitat, including protection of existing trout populations in the Arroyo Seco water course. The operative demand here is STOP, reconsider objectives utilizing common sense, good science, robust CEQA compliance (heretofore lacking) and public engagement. That has *not* been the process Pasadena has followed to date. Worse, and for the record, public notification and broad participation in protecting Raymond Basin and Hahamongna Watershed Park has been dismal.

As Ms. Kruells put so succinctly based on the excellent chronology of the situation to date: Do the right thing now. There is still time to turn this tanker in the right direction for preservation of our shared aquifer, for the larger watershed, for fish and wildlife, and for better management of all these things for public good.

Respectfully,
Lori L. Paul and Robert L. Staehle

(no email; no texts)
(no iPhone; unreliable signal at home)

Altadena, CA 91001

*Lincoln Avenue Water Company shareholders

Sent from my iPad

On Jul 19, 2021, at 6:40 AM, MARIETTA KRUELLS <mariettaemail@aol.com> wrote:

The appellants have clearly explained better methods for protecting and enhancing the Raymond Basin Aquifer. Why Pasadena chooses to ignore the health of our surface and underground water supply remains a mystery.

As the Raymond Basin Water Master continues to allow various water purveyors, especially, Pasadena, to claim to percolate water through an inefficient, ineffective manner, it will and does cause overdraft and subsidence. This is leading to the collapse of the aquifer. As this occurs, less and less local water will be available for pumping and more and more imported water will be necessary. This will be a crime.

We stand at a crossroads right now. The Water Master can and must modernize its approach to percolating, metering and crediting water. Pasadena can and must lead this effort. The science is there at our fingertips and better choices are evident.

Pasadena- DO THE RIGHT THING NOW!

Thanks to the appellants for leading this charge.

Marietta Kruells
Lincoln Avenue Water Co. customer

On Jul 18, 2021, at 6:59 PM, Joan Hearst <joanhearth@comcast.net> wrote:

Thank you, Hugh for a excellent statement outlining what we all want to see for the future of our precious Arroyo Seco.

You have my support.

To the Pasadena City Council...please add my name as a supporter of the requests made in this letter.

Thank you.

Joan Hearst

Arroyo Seco
Pasadena, 91105

Joan

From: Hugh Bowles < >
Sent: Saturday, July 17, 2021 3:58:18 PM
To: [Original Distribution]
Subject: Arroyo Seco Canyon Project appeal to Council, 7/19/21. Where things stand:the citizen view.

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Certifying the EIR shuts the public out.

The public know the high stakes of this project: the protection and stewardship of our most valuable local resource, water.

Regards,

Hugh Bowles

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> This e-mail is also submitted to the City Council "correspondence" e-mail to be included in the Council package for Agenda Item 13 on July 19, 2021.

Novelo, Lilia

From: Christine Echeverri <cecheverri@cityofpasadena.net>
Sent: Saturday, July 17, 2021 8:59 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Opposition to the Arroyo Seco Canyon Project

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Hi,

I am a resident of Pasadena and I strongly oppose the Arroyo Seco Canyon Project. I am an avid birwatcher and come to Hahamongna often to bike, see birds, and go on nature walks with Chris Nyerges. Diverting the river and over pumping it would have a disastrous impact on this habitat.

Please do not approve this project!

Christine Echeverri

., Pasadena, 91104

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Martinez, Ruben

From: Geri Johnston
Sent: Monday, July 19, 2021 10:40 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: RE: Item 13, CUP 6222 Arroyo Seco Canyon Project

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Dear City Council Members,

I oppose the Arroyo Seco Canyon Project because.....

Please stop this project. Thank you Geri Johnston 91001

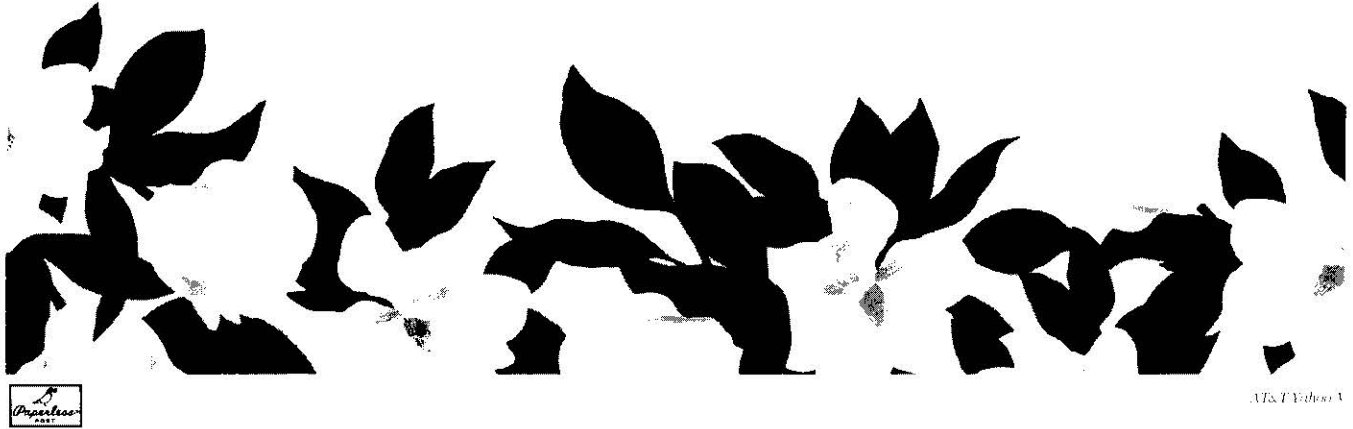
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Dear City Council Members,

I oppose the Arroyo Seco Canyon Project because it will deprive the Arroyo Seco of natural stream flow and would destroy habitat for birds and fish, as well as severely degrade Pasadena's largest open space area, which is part of the headwaters flowing into the LA River. This will further deplete the Raymond Basin.

This is a destructive project.

---Maria Elena Diaz, RN
Pasadena Audubon Society member
Pasadena Group 22 Amnesty International Member
SEIU 121RN Executive Board member



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Novelo, Lilia

From: Jennifer Ho
Sent: Monday, July 19, 2021 11:29 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: 7/19 City Council Meeting - Correspondence

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Dear Honorable Mayor and City Council:

Thank you for your service in your mission to deliver exemplary municipal services and for the opportunity to provide comment about **Agenda Item #5 (Compressed Natural Gas Vehicles)** and **Agenda Item #13 (Arroyo Seco Canyon Project)**.

My comments are below:

Agenda Item #5 (Compressed Natural Gas Vehicles)

I oppose the spending of \$3,170,903 for 8 compressed natural gas vehicles. In light of the rapid intensification of natural disasters like drought and wildfire, it's time to lean in and take bold climate action. **Fossil fuels not only fuel our climate crisis but also bring about particulate air pollution into the air.** In fact, LA has received an **F for ozone grade, F in short-term particulate matter, and F in year-round particulate pollution** according to the American Lung Association. I urge the City Council and the Pasadena Department of Public Works to **reassess the lineup of vehicles to be purchased.**

There are **clean-powered vehicles in the market.** **See what New York City is doing to welcome 7 new electric garbage trucks.** NYC's move provides quieter streets and cleaner air. We could do the same, too.

Agenda Item #13 (Arroyo Seco Canyon Project): I reside by the precious gift of life and habitat that is Hahamongna Watershed Park. As someone who cares deeply about stewarding the precious resources around us, I am urging you to **stop PWP's proposal to construct more ineffective, artificial spreading basins.** I propose that the City Council and Pasadena Water and Power work with the community to **review nature-based alternatives that heal the Raymond Basin, by protecting native fish and wildlife in the Arroyo and stewarding a living, natural stream as a way to rehydrate the landscape.**

The current ASCP proposal is short-term and inadequate, and has been proven to be insufficient and not durable, as seen already by the existing and damaged "diversion & intake structures" in the Arroyo Seco. **Please work with the community to create a long term, climate-resilient plan that re-establishes the relationship between the community and the land, and that naturally heals the landscape for generations to come.**

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your response and continuing the conversation about considering alternatives to Agenda Item #5 (Compressed Natural Gas Vehicles) and Agenda Item #13 (Arroyo Seco Canyon Project).

Sincerely,
Jennifer

Novelo, Lilia

From: Ashley Estabrook
Sent: Monday, July 19, 2021 11:37 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: please save the arroyo trout!

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I love Hahamongna. The community loves Hahamongna. Hahamongna is sacred. Don't degrade it further. Please stop the depletion of the Raymond Basin. Instead, heal the Basin. Protect the native fish and wildlife in the Arroyo. What an amazing discovery of trout there was; this is huge for our city and the planet! Pasadena Water & Power should be a steward of the natural resources it exploits. Let the River Flow. A living, natural stream is a better way to conserve water than artificial spreading basins.

Pasadena Water & Power should listen to the community.

ASCP needs to develop a resilient plan for the future.

Thank you.

07/19/2021
Item 13

Novelo, Lilia

From: richard luczyski
Sent: Monday, July 19, 2021 11:35 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse; Williams, Felicia; Jomsky, Mark; Pasadena Now; Kennedy, John J.; Hampton, Tyron; Gordo, Victor; Madison, Steve; Rivas, Jessica; Tim Brick; Masuda, Gene; Wilson, Andy; Bawa, Gurcharan
Subject: Arroyo Seco CUP # 6222

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So the Now News is back with a message that I don't think reads completely true. I don't think there is a problem with diverting the necessary water as today's Now News story indicates. It is how the water is diverted. Under what conditions to protect the habitat of the Arroyo Seco as well. The story makes it sound as if the public doesn't understand the process? Guess what! PWP hasn't communicated the process to the public and that is why there is so much confusion.

If PWP has been committed to improving and enhancing the habitat in Hahamongna and protecting the groundwater basin? Then tell us what they have done the last 20 years on that commitment? Even though PWP has known about the damage of the stream structures reducing the capacity to divert more water from the Arroyo Seco stream. Why wasn't there more urgency to fix the structures starting 11 years ago right after the fire destruction? So what water capture records do they have from the past years since the fire and the droughts? There must have been budget money spent to realize the problems and start some kind of fix?

What concerns me more about the project and the water it will bring again, when it rains and capture starts again. Is there has been no conversation with regards to public health hazards with toxic chemicals that lie within the Raymond Basin. JPL is still spending millions of dollars cleaning up from the past dumping of toxic chemicals. What health studies have been communicated by our Health Department or other agency's of where all the toxic materials reside in the Basin? How often is the groundwater tested before being blended with MWD water? The citizens want a better answer beyond what is now being addressed. "more water capture" We want to know is the water we drink beyond safe? By mixing other chemicals with the toxic materials, are we sure we aren't making another compound that might be missed in the testing process? I realize water regulation does change but can we be sure all the other chemical compounds gathered from our water sources have been considered. What is the reference number in our complete water system over the years of the incidents of Thyroid problems? Is there a relationship that is known about the toxic chemicals in the water we drink with certainty that it isn't the cause of higher incidents in our valley population?

So we need more water and what price are we willing to pay if we develop a health risk that we should have been told about and wasn't?

Once again conservation of water would help but we are not getting conservation efforts from city planning. All we are getting is much higher demand for the water we already have available.

Richard Luczyski

07/19/2021

Item 13

Novelo, Lilia

From: Patrick Reagan <patrick@prag.email>
Sent: Monday, July 19, 2021 11:29 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Take pride in Hahamongna

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<https://mydoit.cityofpasadena.net/sp?id=kb_article_view&sysparm_article=KB0010263> .

Greetings,

I'm writing to encourage the officials of the City of Pasadena to take pride in the Hahamongna area, and protect it for future generations.

The current plans to degrade it are alarming and short-sighted.

Instead we should recognize the Hahamongna for the wonderful natural resource that it is.

Instead of continuing the destructive path that we've been on, we need to develop and follow a sustainable plan to care for the area - so it may heal.

Please treat the fish as the canaries in the coal mine. When they flourish, we benefit.

Patrick Reagan

Novelo, Lilia

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Patrick Reagan

Martinez, Ruben

From: Kristin Roberts ·
Sent: Monday, July 19, 2021 2:26 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: RE: Item 13, CUP 6222 Arroyo Seco Canyon Project

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Dear City Council Members,

I oppose the Arroyo Seco Canyon Project because I believe in protecting and restoring our native, natural resources now and for our future generations.

I ask you to vote against this project, to let the natural river flow, to conserve water and protect wildlife habitat.

Sincerely,
Kristin Roberts
District 2 (N. Catalina Ave.)

07/19/2021
Item 13

Jomsky, Mark

From: Patrick Reagan <patrick@prag.email>
Sent: Monday, July 19, 2021 11:29 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Take pride in Hahamongna

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Patrick Reagan

07/19/2021
Item 13

Jomsky, Mark

From: Grace Doyle <gracemckd@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, July 19, 2021 1:58 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Draining the stream public comment

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I oppose draining the stream in Hahamonga. Where is the responsibility of Pasadena Water and Power in protecting the natural asset that they exploit? Climate change could not be more apparent to us. Conserving what we still have MATTERS. Do not drain the stream.

Grace Doyle

07/19/2021
Item 13

Jomsky, Mark

From: Christine Echeverri <homeschool@newasptech.com>
Sent: Saturday, July 17, 2021 8:59 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Opposition to the Arroyo Seco Canyon Project

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Hi,

I am a resident of Pasadena and I strongly oppose the Arroyo Seco Canyon Project. I am an avid bir watcher and come to Hahamongna often to bike, see birds, and go on nature walks with Chris Nyerges. Diverting the river and over pumping it would have a disastrous impact on this habitat.

Please do not approve this project!

Christine Echeverri

935 N. Oakland Ave., Pasadena, 91104

626-283-8272

07/19/2021
Item 13