



September 16, 2011

The Honorable Edmund “Jerry” Brown
 Governor of California
 State Capitol Building, Suite 1173
 Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 833 (Vargas) Water Quality Protection in San Diego County – SUPPORT

Dear Governor Brown:

The above listed organizations urge you to sign SB 833 by Senator Vargas. This bill would protect the San Luis Rey River, the drinking water aquifers it feeds, and sacred Native American sites in northern San Diego County by making it illegal to build or operate a landfill within 1,000 feet of those sensitive resources. The bill would apply only to new landfills and not existing, permitted landfills or any expansion of an existing, permitted landfill.

The proposed Gregory Canyon Landfill would be built in a pristine canyon adjacent to the San Luis Rey River. A leak from the landfill due to poor design or operation, a catastrophic event, or simply long-term deterioration after the operators are gone would release toxic pollutants into the river and the underlying aquifers that supply drinking water to tens of thousands of residents and businesses throughout San Diego County. Further, the landfill would destroy a pristine canyon, desecrate sacred Native American sites including Gregory Mountain (Chokla), one of the most important sacred sites of the Luiseño people, jeopardize a vital imported water pipeline, and destroy acres of endangered species habitat.

State legislation is needed because the landfill’s proponents **circumvented the normal siting and approval process** so that no elected official will have the opportunity to vote on the proposed project.

In the early 1990s, the County of San Diego rejected Gregory Canyon as a landfill site for the same reasons that we oppose the project. In response, the landfill’s proponents spent close to \$1 million to fund a misleading county-wide initiative, which not only sited the proposed landfill in a sparsely populated area next to an Indian reservation and sacred

sites, but inaccurately described the project as a recycling measure, and falsely claimed that a "solid waste crisis" existed.

This "crisis" has not materialized. In fact, the amount of waste disposed of in the County has decreased by 25% since 2005. Increased recycling, new technologies for the resource-efficient management of waste, and the expansion of existing landfills, make the proposed landfill unnecessary. SB 833 would prevent the construction and operation of this unneeded landfill and ensure the protection of drinking water and sacred sites in northern San Diego County.

We urge you to please sign SB 833. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Damon Nagami
NRDC



Michael Endicott
Sierra Club California



Warner Chabot
California League of Conservation Voters



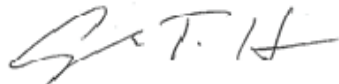
Jena Price
Planning and Conservation League



Susan Jordan
California Coastal Protection Network



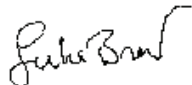
Mark Murray
Californians Against Waste



Angela Howe
Surfrider Foundation



Dan Silver
Endangered Habitats League



Luke Breit
Forests Forever



Laura Hunter
Environmental Health Coalition



Tara Hansen
California Native Plant Society



Betsy Reifsnider
Catholic Charities, Diocese of Stockton

cc: Senator Juan Vargas