



# CITY OF EL PASO DE ROBLES

*"The Pass of the Oaks"*

October 24, 2012

Ms. Susan Harvey  
North County Watch  
Post Office Box 455  
Templeton, California 93465

Dear Ms. Harvey:

Thank you for your October 18, 2012 letter to the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin Management Plan Steering Committee. As a member agency of the Committee, the City received a copy of your letter.

On behalf of the City, thank you for recognizing and expressing concern regarding the status of this region's groundwater. It is a matter of vital importance to all who reside and do business across the Basin, and the Steering Committee calls upon every pumper to understand its role in affecting in regional water supplies.

The challenge that you pose is appropriate for all pumpers, not just for agriculture. We all need to cultivate water consumption practices and develop water supplies that keep pace with demand. To single out one sector is to discount our collective responsibility. Your letter correctly reports the steps that Paso Robles citizens are taking to supplement groundwater supplies. Paso Robles citizens have also successfully reduced water consumption by 20% over the past two years, and are planning for water recycling. These are significant undertakings and require cooperation from every Paso Robles resident. So it must be with every Basin user - all should cooperate in conserving, supplementing supply, and working to establish a balance of supply and demand to maintain their livelihood and household.

In that spirit, we would like to better understand your letter. First, you mention your organization's commitment to sustainable development in the North County. That term means different things to different people, so we would invite you to describe that vision to the Steering Committee. For example, what would the North County look like upon reaching that state? Are there other areas in California that your organization believes have attained that balance? What specific measures do you believe would help groundwater users achieve that balance? Also, we take it that you observe inefficiencies specifically in agricultural water application, crop selection, or the number of acres in production in the North County. It

would be helpful if you could share your observations and supporting data with the Committee so it can better understand your concerns.

Finally, and most importantly, the City would urge all groundwater users, including the members of North County Watch, to work cooperatively through the Groundwater Committee to address our common concern. The Committee has been working diligently to inventory and analyze water conservation and supply strategies. Focusing on just one group as being responsible for a solution is inconsistent with the Committee's mission and could hinder the collective opportunities for success.

Again, thank you for your letter and we look forward to receiving the background information on the points you raised. We urge North County Watch to join with agriculture and other basin pumpers in the cooperative water resource planning effort. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the City's Water Division staff and other members of the Groundwater Committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "J. App", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the left.

James L. App  
City Manager