

April 16, 2019

Mark Isaacson, Division Director
King County
Department of Natural Resources and Parks
Wastewater Treatment Division
King Street Center, KSC-NR-0500
201 S. Jackson St., Suite 500
Seattle, WA 98104-3855

RE: Sammamish Plateau Northern Diversion Project-April 1, 2019 Letter to City of Sammamish

The District appreciates being included on the distribution of your April 1, 2019 letter to Mayor Malchow. As you are aware, as the sewer provider for the City of Sammamish, the District takes great interest in securing access to the regional conveyance infrastructure required to support the build out and development in our service area. For over 40 years the District has aligned its local sewer comprehensive plan with King County's to meet the regional conveyance needs of the District. Over this time period the County directed the District to plan for conveying the flows from the north half of the Sammamish Plateau to the north in anticipation of a new treatment plant. The Brightwater plant is now completed and operational. To accommodate this effluent the County's plans have included a County constructed and owned transmission pipeline which has been called the Northern Diversion.

In recent years, as growth has occurred in alignment with regional and County GMA policies the District has placed additional emphasis on engaging the County regarding its growing sewage capacity needs. The ability of District facilities to continue to move all of its flows to the one southern connection is becoming critical. The District's efforts include placing specific emphasis on evaluating the flow requirements and timing associated with the construction of the Northern Diversion in its last sewage comprehensive plan, and preparing its own interim evaluation study to extend capacity in our local sewage system until which time the County constructs the Northern Diversion.

Given these efforts the District believed it was in alignment with the County for programming and constructing the Northern Diversion, and that the County understood the capacity concerns driving this need. In 2016, based upon interaction with Waste Treatment Division staff, the District believed it had secured a commitment from the County to construct the Northern Diversion and the project was scheduled for construction in the County's transmission capital plan.

Unfortunately, in 2018, the District learned that the County had removed the Northern Diversion from its Conveyance system improvement plan in 2017. This decision was made without notice or engagement with the District. The County is now proposing a further "interim evaluation" study to consider what additional capital improvements may be made to the District's local sewage system, which would benefit the County by allowing the further delay of the Northern Diversion to 2040 or beyond.

Your April 1st letter states that based upon our wastewater contract that you, the County, determine if and when capital projects will be constructed. This statement discounts all of the long-term collaborative planning efforts that have anticipated construction of a Northern Diversion and the financial investment the District has made anticipating a near term connection to the north. Your statement that capital projects are delivered in a cost effective manner for the region's ratepayers implies that because of our geographic disadvantage within the wastewater system that providing additional service to the District may never rise to the level of more centrally located projects.

While the District will likely participate in the second "interim evaluation" study, I want to remind you of additional considerations and significance of the Northern Diversion to the District and region:

- Compared to other participants in the County system, the District is at a disadvantage in relation to access to regional (County) conveyance system. The District has only one connection point to the regional system which limits our flexibility to design and manage our local conveyance system.
- The current design of the regional conveyance system provides no redundancy for the District's sewage flows in the event of a natural disaster, or operator error. A Northern Diversion would provide an option if either the connection to the north or south was disrupted due to an earthquake and potentially avoid a long term outage for our customers.
- In addition to aligning the District's Wastewater Comprehensive Plan with the County's, the District must also align its plan with those of the cities where there are District sewer services. The availability of regional conveyance infrastructure is critical to the District and Cities, particularly Sammamish's ability to meet GMA growth targets.

Although the County has indicated an interest in working jointly with the District to fund interim improvements in lieu of constructing the Northern Diversion, the District is concerned the prior unilateral approach which led to the deletion of the Northern Diversion project will continue. In spite of aligning its local plans with the County's conveyance plans, the District has no assurance the Northern Diversion will ever be constructed. As the District continues to grow, and generate more sewage flow, the need for regional infrastructure at the eastern edge of the regional system will continue to be a concern.

Sincerely,



Lloyd Warren

President, Board of Commissioners

cc: Sammamish Plateau Water Board of Commissioners
Kathy Lambert, King County Councilmember
Mayor Christie Malchow, City of Sammamish
City of Sammamish Councilmembers
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