



April 7, 1999. Once the District issues the PDOC, it has a thirty-day comment period (concluding approximately May 1) and thirty days to prepare the Final Determination of Compliance (approximately by June 1). The federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has also indicated it may be providing comments, and staff will also be conferring with EPA in revising its staff analysis.

Even if staff is allowed to file its testimony on May 10 as requested, the testimony will be in advance of the FDOC, which could be issued as late as June 1 or shortly thereafter. If a hearing on air quality is held before the FDOC is issued, the record will have to be reopened to admit the FDOC, as well as testimony explaining changes, if any, from the PDOC.

Water Resources. Staff requests additional time to prepare an analysis of alternative means of water supply, specifically, produced water from oil fields. At the time the applicant filed its AFC, Chevron stated that it was unable to supply the project with water. It has since changed its position. Staff will need to address issues of feasibility, reliability and quantity of water supply in its supplemental testimony. Furthermore, EPA will have to issue the permit for the injection wells proposed by La Paloma. EPA has indicated it will be taking a closer look at the applicant's application for well permits. Staff believes EPA has serious concerns about permitting the proposed wells.

Biological Resources. Staff expects to receive a draft biological opinion from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on April 16, 1999. Staff will then confer with USFWS on the conditions, incorporating them into staff's testimony and revising the

testimony accordingly. A final opinion from USFWS is not expected until mid-May or June. In addition, prior to May 10, staff will also be conferring with the Department of Fish and Game to resolve current issues regarding protection for the blunt-nosed leopard lizard, a fully protected species under the state law.

Based on the above, Staff respectfully requests an extension of time until May 10, 1999 to file supplemental testimony in the areas of Air Quality, Water Resources and Biological Resources.

DATED: April 7, 1999

Respectfully submitted,

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