



# Carmel Area Wastewater District

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June 15, 2022

Deborah Ju  
2805 Ribera Road  
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**SUBJECT: Project # 19-03 Carmel Meadows Lift Station and Sewer Replacement  
Project -Response to May 9, 2022 Letter**

To Deborah Ju:

Thank you for your questions and interest in the Carmel Meadows Sewer Replacement Project environmental review. Many of the comments were not considered to be environmental issues and therefore were not addressed in the initial study/mitigated negative declaration (IS/MND) response to comments. They are important questions and CAWD is providing responses to each question in **BLUE** following the question that you provided.

- 1) Please explain all alternative options to the proposal that involves moving the pump station to Mariposa and installing grinder pumps at 2795 Ribera, 2805 Ribera, 2815 Ribera, 2825 Ribera. Is there an option (even if it is more expensive to the district) that would serve all homes without the use of grinder pumps? **As discussed in the presentation there were two other alternatives provided by Kennedy Jenks in 2017. Neither of these options were feasible due to environmental significance as discussed in the response to the comments to the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration on June 30, 2022.**
- 2) Please explain why the above 4 homes cannot be served by the proposed new gravity system. Mr. Lauer explained that the canyon between 2795 Ribera and Calle de Cruz is a barrier to connection in the current location but why can these 4 homes not be connected to the proposed new location on Mariposa without grinder pumps? **The four homes currently gravity flow to a sewer line**

downhill and west of the homes. That sewer line is being relocated to a location that is not downhill from the homes. An ejector pump is needed to lift the residential sewage to a nearby sewer line to the east.

- 3) Will any of the work on either the new lift station at the end of Mariposa or the work on the residential grinder pump stations require the removal of any trees? [No trees will be removed due to this project.](#)
- 4) Is there any danger of disturbing the root and/or mycorrhizal network underlying any of the oak trees behind our home (there is a vast and mycorrhizal network underlying these trees and disturbing this network can adversely impact all the neighboring trees)? [This question is addressed in the response to the comments to the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration on June 30, 2022.](#)
- 5) Will CAWD assume responsibility for damage to any of the oak trees and replacement of the same with mature oak trees? [No trees will be removed due to the project.](#)
- 6) Is there any danger to the integrity of the hillside behind the homes on Ribera that would be caused by this project cutting into the hillside? [This item is addressed in the response to the comments to the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration on June 30, 2022.](#)
- 7) If any erosion resulting from this wastewater construction project damages the stability of the hillside homes at 2795 Ribera, 2805 Ribera, 2815 Ribera or 2825 Ribera, does CAWD assume full responsibility for repair and/or replacement of these homes? [The stability of the hillside will not be affected by this project.](#)
- 8) Will there be any damage to the landscaping at any of these 4 homes by installation of a grinder pump? If so, does CAWD assume the responsibility of the cost of replacement of the damaged landscaping. [If the contractor has to remove any landscaping for construction of this project the contractor will be required to replace in kind the landscaping.](#)
- 9) Will there be any audible noise from the new pump station on Mariposa Court? [This item is included in the response to the comments to the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration on June 30, 2022.](#)

- 10) Will there be any audible noise from the grinder pumps at 2795 Ribera, 2805 Ribera, 2815 Ribera and 2825 Ribera? [This item is addressed in the response to comments to the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration on June 30, 2022.](#)
- 11) What is the life expectancy of the proposed grinder pumps? [15 years as discussed in the response to the comments to the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration on June 30, 2022.](#)
- 12) Your 4/14/22 bulletin says that CAWD accepts responsibility for all maintenance costs of the residential pump stations until the sale of our homes. If a homeowner dies and the property passes by inheritance (rather than sale) within the next 20 years, will CAWD continue responsibility for these maintenance costs or is inheritance treated the same as a purchase? [Within the next 6 months, a proposed policy will be developed by the Board for all homes within the District that will need to use grinder pumps.](#)
- 13) If one of the property owners were to sell their house, there could be a substantial reduction in the sale price of the home due to the buyer's financial responsibility for their own pump system. Will the current homeowner be compensated for this substantial loss in the value of their home? [There are between 80-100 homes within our district that require the use of grinder pumps. There is no indication that there is an issue with home values due to grinder pumps. Grinder pumps are widely used throughout California.](#)
- 14) We are advised that if a homeowner is "gone for a while", they would need to flush out the system when they return. Please explain what period "awhile" refers to, and what exactly is involved in "flushing out the system". [If the homeowner is absent for over a week, the manufacturer recommends running clean water down the kitchen, laundry, or bathroom sink for about 10 minutes before the homeowner leaves.](#)
- 15) What is the estimated monthly cost to the homeowner for running a grinder pump on their property? [The cost is estimated to be less than \\$7 dollars a month.](#)

- 16) Could there be ANY possible odor associated with a grinder pump either outside the home or inside the home? During operation, no odor impacts associated with the grinder pumps would be expected as long as the pumps are properly maintained.
- 17) Mr. Lauer explained that if a grinder pump malfunctions, there would be an audible noise and a flashing light to alert the homeowner. What would happen if the homeowner were out of town? Would the noise and light continue indefinitely? If the homeowner is out of town or away the sewer system will not be used. The ejector pump system only works when water runs down the drains to the pump. If the house is not occupied no water will be going into the sewer system and therefore there will be no malfunction to report.
- 18) If the grinder system malfunctions when the homeowner is away, could this result in any backup of wastewater in the home? See answer to 17, also the lateral has a SRV (Sewer Relief Valve) in the yard that allows the sewage to overflow outside should there be a backup.
- 19) If there is ever any damage to one of these homes caused by a malfunctioning grinder pump, such as backup wastewater flooding or fouling of flooring or other material, does CAWD except financial responsibility for such costs? The SRV (Sewer Relief Valve) will not allow a malfunction from the ejector pump system to back up in the home it would overflow outside should there be a backup.
- 20) What is the estimated cost of replacing the grinder pump cost in 20 years (including the cost of the unit and attaching the new unit to both the wastewater system and the electric system)? The pumps are the only item that would need to be replaced in the future. They cost about \$700 each to replace and only need to be replaced if they fail.
- 21) Why is CAWD trying to assign future financial responsibility to the above 4 homes without including it in the overall public cost of the entire system? The private lateral system, which is the 4" diameter lateral that leaves the home up to the connection to the District main pipeline, is owned by the property owner. All costs to maintain and replace the pipe, even if it is in the street, are the responsibility of every property owner in the District.

We hope that this response letter provides you with a better understanding of the project and an understanding that we could not eliminate the need for individual grinder pumps due to the environmental and physical constraints at the project site. The IS/MND is available for review on our website at <https://www.cawd.org/ceqa-notices>.

Sincerely,



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