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To: [Downstream Distribution Group](#)
Subject: Pescadero Canyon Sewer Proposal
Date: Monday, September 26, 2022 1:10:19 PM

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Dear Ms. Buikema,

It has come to my attention that the Wastewater District is in favor of a plan ("Plan B") to relocate the downhill sewer main serving the homes in Carmel along Pescadero Rd under the street, requiring sewage waste to forevermore be pumped uphill from each residence. Having read the engineering review of the options under consideration, I strongly encourage the district to choose "Plan A", which will replace the existing aged pipe and connect to the existing sewer laterals. This will keep sewage flowing with gravity - which works even when the power goes out, as it frequently does in our neighborhood.

I focus on risk assessment by profession as a corporate credit analyst, and the list of risks and long term negatives from Plan B is quite long. The most devastating risk to consider is the increased potential for fire. A spark to vented sewer gases could quickly become a conflagration in our high fire hazard zone, and destroy not only our own properties but spread through the entire wooded neighborhood (potentially right into our precious village) and nearby Pebble Beach and Del Monte Forest areas. The environmental impact from such a wildfire event would be calamitous, off the charts compared to the temporary (once in 80 years) disturbance to wildlife associated with replacing the downhill sewer line. From a financial standpoint, the potential implications for the area could easily run into the billions, considering the impact to tourism and businesses as well as loss of high-value property. Our very lives would be at stake in such a disastrous situation. While the risk may be low in any given year, the cumulative risk over time is meaningful, and not worth taking unless there simply is no alternative - which is certainly not the case in this situation. This is a pivotal moment to avoid making a choice that increases the risk of unparalleled devastation to our beloved Carmel and surrounding region in the years and decades ahead.

Under Plan B, even if all the pumps were to work perfectly forever (a practical impossibility), the direct negative impact to homeowners on Pescadero Rd would be significant in terms of damage to property during installation and high upfront expense, maintenance effort and operating costs, and noise pollution in our peaceful canyon - impacting enjoyment of our homes and devaluing our property. The inevitable pump failures that would occur over time would threaten both environment and health, with potentially severe financial consequences for residents.

Our neighborhood has been serviced by a gravity sewer system for some 80 years, and all of us purchased our homes with the expectation for that service to continue. The easements required to provide our essential services should not be considered onerous to obtain, nor should clearly suboptimal rerouting plans be pursued in order to avoid requesting them. California regulations appear to include significant exceptions to environmental permitting for maintenance and repair of existing vital infrastructure, but even a lengthy permitting process is worthwhile to maintain a better (gravity-based) solution over the long term.

I would urge the district to take a holistic view to the environmental impact from work along

the existing sewer line. The total impacted forest area is less than one acre, and the disturbance would be of limited duration. The clearing necessary to create an access road would also provide a protective benefit in the event of a forest fire, creating a break and access for fire crews. Amid our changing climate, this could help to shield our community from a profound disaster, and potentially save endangered species in our forest from an extinction event.

I would also stress that the engineering analysis grossly underestimates the total project cost of "Plan B", as it fails to properly assess the cost to install the grinder pumps and new uphill sewer laterals required for each property. With difficult rear yard access for residences on Pescadero Rd, time-consuming and laborious demolition and reconstruction of structures and landscaping (and potential disturbance to protected trees) would be necessary, and aggregate costs from these efforts alone could easily figure into the millions of dollars - hardly the \$14k per property estimated. The upfront costs residents would be expected to shoulder are extraordinarily onerous.

The district should be under no illusion that the relative impact to residents of each proposal is "neutral" (as suggested by the engineering report). I endorse the concerns raised by my neighbors Nicholas De Luca, Laura Armev and Doug Armev, but wanted to also send this letter to underscore how seriously we urge the CAWD to "stick with gravity". The residents of Pescadero Rd are unanimous and determined that our sewer line not be relocated uphill, and I expect deep concern from the broader community as awareness grows of the long term risks presented by putting high voltage, high failure rate sewage pumps in a high fire hazard zone.

Sincerely,

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