

Friday, August 17, 2007

## **Congressman Herger states support in Cortina battle**

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Tuesday north state Congressman Wally Herger met with Colusa County Supervisor Chairman Mark Marshall and members of the Colusa County Citizens for Safe Water [CCCSW], a local citizen organization that opposes the siting of a controversial landfill on the Cortina Rancheria.

Following the meeting, Congressman Herger stated to the Sun-Herald, "I met with the CCCSW and we had a very good, very productive meeting."

On August 7 the Colusa County Board of Supervisors voted 5-0 to adopt the CCCSW's opposition resolution. The resolution formally requests the assistance of elected representatives at the State and Federal levels of government to assist Colusa County in its stated landfill opposition. The resolution also formally requests that the federal government hold the landfill construction to the strictest permitting standards of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and to, "[deny] those permits on any lawful basis."

Following the resolution's adoption, the CCCSW participated in a series of meetings with State and Federal legislators regarding the County's official opposition to the landfill. CCCSW representatives met with north state Congressman Wally Herger on Tuesday and expressed their desire for government intervention in this matter.

Congressman Herger stated Tuesday evening, "Now that I have the unanimous support of the Colusa County Board of Supervisors, I plan to move forward on this issue. I will be checking with the Department of the Interior and will want a briefing from them on the step-by-step process that would be required for this dump to move forward - so we in turn can counter that. It is very helpful to have the unanimous support of the Board of Supervisors and the Farm Bureau."

Following the meeting with the Congressman, Colusa County Citizens for Safe Water issued the following statement: "CCCSW met with Congressman Herger to voice our concerns about the siting of the proposed Cortina Landfill. It was quite apparent that the Colusa County Board of Supervisors Resolution was the 'magic bullet' to get him and the other officials involved and willing to meet our group. Wally Herger listened to our story and gave us some reassurance that he will represent us through the permitting process."

Following the meeting with the Congressman, Chairman Marshall stated in a Sun-Herald interview, "I was encouraged by the Congressman's willingness to help the citizens of Colusa County. We have serious concerns about the environmental impact of this landfill and the health and safety of our citizens. Congressman Herger gave us assurances that the permitting process will adhere to all of the standards that are appropriate by law and that was very encouraging to hear."

Responding to the Congressman's statement, North Bay Project Manager Bryce Howard - who heads the landfill construction efforts - stated to the Sun-Herald, "We are encouraged by

Congressman Herger's interest in the project, and look forward to working with him as we move ahead. We share a common interest in the health and safety of our neighbors in Colusa County. His attention will help educate the public about the science of a modern landfill, and about the numerous public hearings and environmental evaluations, and the extensive input from state and federal agencies, that occurred prior to the Department of the Interior's final approvals for the project."

District 3 Supervisor Tom Indrieri stated, "We, as a Board, have unanimously opposed this project from the beginning. I am anxious to see what support Congressman Herger can muster up at the State and Federal level regarding the Cortina issue. The language in our new resolution opposing the Cortina Landfill was written in such a way as to allow neighboring County Boards of Supervisors and both State and Federal officials to step in and offer their support in defeating this project. I am pleased to see Mr. Herger step up to the plate and help with the fight."

Regarding the Congressman's statement, District 1 Supervisor Kim Dolbow-Vann stated, "I look forward to following Congressman Herger's progress on this issue."

Supervisor Yerxa stated Thursday, "I think it's great that Congressman Herger has become involved in this issue and I hope he can drum up enough support in Congress to help us out down here."

The CCCSW have also met with California State Senators Sam Aanestad of District 5 and Darrell Steinberg of District 4.

William Bird, communications director for Senator Aanestad's office, stated to the Sun-Herald Tuesday, "Senator Aanestad is aware of the grave concerns posed by landowners and Colusa County in regards to this landfill. He is also aware of the county lawsuit. Based upon the information he's received so far - he shares those concerns about the landfill project and has been in contact with the California Environmental Protection Agency [CalEPA]."

The office of Senator Steinberg failed to return multiple Sun-Herald phone calls requesting a statement from the Senator regarding the landfill project.

In October of last year, the County Board of Supervisors voted 4-1 to dismiss the County's lawsuit against the United States Department of the Interior and the Bureau of Indian Affairs due to mounting legal costs. This lawsuit contended that the Environmental Impact Study did not adequately account for off-site environmental impact.

A project construction timeline, provided to the Sun-Herald by North Bay representatives, states that next week North Bay will file a request to use "engineered alternatives that better complement the project."

The environmental exemptions sought by North Bay, according to Howard, concern EPA regulations, which require that waste containers be lined with two feet of clay. In lieu of clay, the Cortina facility would use Ground Containment Liners [GCLs] if given EPA approval. Also included is a Seismic Impact Zone Demonstration, which is a test to ensure that containers could withstand an earthquake of a "certain magnitude".

Regarding these waivers, Howard stated, "The term 'waiver' doesn't capture the process very well. For the liner, we're requesting the EPA review our engineered alternative to show that it's as good or better than required, while the seismic zone stability demonstration is a common analysis throughout California for these projects. Ultimately, sound science will be

the deciding factor."

Congressman Herger said Tuesday, "I believe that this is going to be a long process, but we will ensure that the safety and health concerns of the citizens of Colusa County and all of northern California are respected in that regard."