AGRICULTURAL POOL'S OPP●SITION TO CVWD'S MOTION TO DISCONTINUE APPOINTMENT OF THE SPECIAL REFEREE

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By way of Cucamonga Valley Water District's ("CVWD") motion, it rightly "pats on the back" the various stakeholders for their noble efforts and huge steps which led to the Court signing the December 21, 2007 Order. However, at the same time, in its moving papers, CVWD discounts the large role that the Special Referee and her technical consultant (Joe Scalmanini) also played in directing the course of negotiations and in achieving what ultimately became known as Peace II. Throughout the negotiations, formative concepts and technical data were made known to the Special Referee and her technical assistant. Those formative concepts and technical data were further sharpened and refined through the analysis and peer review of the Special Referee and her technical consultant. Their work and analysis was essential to more fully informing this Court of the wisdom of signing the December 21, 2007 as well as to implementing compliance with Conditions 1 through 6 over the next two successive years. These compliance measures were, in large part, solely impesed as a condition of approval of the Peace II measures, due to the strong urging of the Special Referee and her technical consultant. The Court itself specifically acknowledged the efforts of the Special Referee and her technical consultant in the December 21, 2007 Order. That acknowledgment is further seen through the Court's December 21, 2007 Order, which included language further authorizing the Special Referee to act in such a way as to inform and make recommendations to the Court.

As asserted in CVWD's motion, it may well be true that the appointment of the Special Referee in 1998, was very limited in scope. However, over the past several years, with the Court's implicit knowledge and tacit, if not actual, direction, the Special Referee's duties have evolved to where they seem to have become much broader in scope. However, the Court has always maintained judicial discretion to seek the advice and input from the Special Referee on matters that are beyond the expertise and knowledge of most jurists. Despite any increase in the scope of the Special Referee's duties, now is not the time to remove her. Instead, if the Court believes it to be appropriate, it may keep her duties as is, or it may further "define" and "clarify" the scope of future duties that are appropriate for the Special Referee and her technical assistant to continue to undertake in the future.

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At the present time, despite the near unanimity among the various stakeholders and the efficient operation by the Watermaster Staff, the time has not come, nor likely ever will come, where the services of a Special Referee (at least in some role) will not be necessary. CVWD asserts that the Watermaster should be the sole liaison with the Court as it relates to basin management and oversight of the various stakeholders in the Chino Basin. The Ag Pool lauds the excellent manner in which Watermaster staff has overseen and continues to oversee the basin and how it has always acted in accordance with the fiduciary obligations imposed by this Court and by prior court orders issued by this Court. However, despite Watermaster staff's effort to stay objective, the "lens" through which Watermaster acts will always be subject to outside influence. The simple fact is that Watermaster's CEO is appointed by the Watermaster Board, which is comprised of stakeholders that have and will continue to assert a strong influence on the office of the Watermaster. Unlike a court, where a neutral disinterested body makes decisions, here it is the stakeholders, each with their own constituents, who drive Watermaster's decision-making. So long as there are parties and stakeholders with varying personal financial and vested interests, there will always be a need for oversight and review by an independent and objective court-appointed Special Referee.

As shall be shown below, strong rationale exists for the continued role of the Special Referee in the oversight of the Chino Basin. First, the Special Referee is independent and objective. She does not "have a horse in this race." Second, the issues presented by the 1978 Judgement and from Peace I and Peace II measures call for a keen knowledge and understanding of water law and the unique circumstances of the Chino Basin. The appointment of a Special Referee has been, and will continue to be, a necessary tool for the Court to assist and ensure that the terms of the 1978 Judgment and the Peace II measures are fairly implemented. It will also act to ensure that water resources continue to be safely and adequately managed for future generations. Second, removal of the Special Referee will likely increase, not decrease, future costs to the parties. Third, the Special Referee's continued future service ensures that any future appointment of a new judge to oversee this case, will be as painless as possible and will continue to add the necessary component of continuity to all stakeholders in the Chino Basin.

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ARGUMENT

A. The Special Referee Is Necessary And Provides An Independent and Objective View That Has and Will Continue to Assist The Court

While the role of the Special Referee has evolved since 1998, the Court has continued to acknowledge the usefulness of the Special Referee throughout this evolution. The parties should not discount the role filled by the Special Referee. Despite the obvious talents of Judge Gunn over these past several years as it relates to complex water law issues, due to time constraints, a heavy civil calendar and other pressing matters, the expertise provided by the Special Referee has been invaluable and certainly appreciated by the Court.

The Court has not only expressed its appreciation for the Special Referee, at prior hearings over the past three years, but it specifically stated as follows in the December 21, 2007 Order:

"The role of the Special Referee is to (1) provide the court with as full and complete explanations as possible of what the Watermaster requests or of issues that have been brought to the court; and (2) to make recommendations to the court as appropriate."

The Court further reiterated the desire, in the December 21, 2007 order, for the continued assistance of the Special Referee:

"The Court has said on many occasions that the assistance provided by the Special Referee is invaluable. It is the desire of the Court that the Special Referee continue to monitor the contents, implementation, effectiveness and shortcomings (if any) of the OBMP."

These statements follow a prior acknowledgment in the Order Re-Appointing the Nine Member Board for a Further Five Year Term (Feb. 9, 2006) as follows:

"The Special Referee also is to be commended for providing independent assessments of Watermaster's effectiveness in implementing the OBMP and in managing the basin. . . . The Special Referee's report is largely an effort to assist Watermaster in this regard."

Ignoring the Court's own statements as to the necessity of the Special Referee in assisting both the Court and Watermaster, CVWD aims to deprive both of this expertise and objectivity.

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Instead it asserts that Watermaster should be the exclusive liaison to the Court as Watermaster is objective and is best equipped to provide oversight of the Peace II measures. As stated above, although Watermaster has, and continues to perform an admirable job, the fact remains that it receives pressure from its stakeholders, whether individually or by pools. In theory, the Watermaster can be a "neutral arm of the court." However, as long as one pool or group of stakeholders bears the brunt of expenses and basin costs, the risk always exists that Watermaster staff or its CEO may be "beholden" to the largest and most powerful pool or group of stakeholders. These influences will always pose risk to the role of the Watermaster and its CEO, whose very job is based upon a periodic review by the very parties that he oversees. Consequently, the continued existence of a Special Referee is needed to ensure objectivity and independence.

Removal of the Special Referee at this time would ask the Court to make future decisions based solely on what the parties before the court have agreed to do or stipulated to. Rarely does a judicial officer make decisions based solely upon what the parties before it have agreed to (even if the parties were unanimous in their approval). Instead, the court ensures compliance with the law and the appropriateness of the action through its own consideration; part of this analysis may well require the expertise of a Special Referee to assist in the decision-making process and provide a check on the parties' actions.

В. Removal of the Special Referee May Result in Increased Future Costs

One of CVWD's primary arguments is that the Special Referee, her staff and technical consultant have incurred substantial costs that are being borne by the Appropriative Pool, and ultimately its rate-payers. The argument is that in many cases, these charges are duplicative in nature and constitute work that doesn't need to be done. The Ag Pool does not object to closer oversight on the work to be undertaken by the Special Referee and her technical consultant in the future. However, the larger issue that appears to be lost in CVWD's motion is while this Court relies heavily upon the Special Referee, any successor judge will have an even greater need for the Special Referee. The current Special Referee, possesses vast knowledge of the Chino Basin, its water issues, and the long history of the parties and the Court dating back to the 1979 judgment. To

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appoint a new Special Referee to bring a new judge "up to speed" and then to hire a new technical consultant to help the judge more fully understand these issues could result in significantly higher costs than to keep the current Special Referee and technical consultant. One can only imagine how long it would take a new Special Referee and judge to attain even a working knowledge of the Chino Basin. A new Special Referee would end up costing more, both financially and in risks to the wisdom of decisions regarding the Chino Basin.

C. A Further Order Defining the Scope of Duties to be Performed by the Special Referee May Be Needed, But Not Removal of the Special Referee

In 1998, an Order of Reference was issued by this Court which provided specific duties to be undertaken by the Special Referee. Over time, the Special Referee's role has expanded, in large part with written direction and/or tacit approval from this Court. The Court's direction to the Special Referee has been made in order to ensure that the Peace II measures were adequately supported by law, in accordance with the 1979 Judgment, and that the measures were supported by solid technical data and science. The court specifically envisioned continued oversight of Peace II. (See December 21, 2007 Order and quote at page 4 above.) Regular periodic reporting by the Special Referee was also included in the Peace II measures to ensure optimal basin management, safe yield and overall implementation of the OBMP.

The Special Referee will continue to play an important role to the Court for many years to come. Although Watermaster has proven it can, and has, successfully carried out its obligations under the Judgment and can serve as a reliable arm of the Court, a Special Referee will play a key rele to this Court and to the future of the Chino Basin. The Court can make the best determination of how it defines the Special Referee's role. To the extent that the Special Referee's role requires re-definition or clarification, the Ag Pool does not object. However, complete removal of the

The Court may consider (if it is helpful to the Court) the preparation of a new Order of Reference, that more clearly articulates and defines the scope of the Special Referee's (as well as her staff and technical consultant) current duties and specifically defines the scope and nature of any future work. Should the Court so choose, it could also invite further briefing by interested parties on the nature and extent of the Special Referee's duties that should be included in any future Order of Reference.

Special Referee is not the answer. To take such action would not be in the best long-term interest of the parties.

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CONCLUSION

The Ag Pool respectively submits to this Court that CVWD's motion should be denied. The Ag Pool acknowledges the key role that each party, Watermaster and Watermaster legal counsel played in obtaining the approval of the Peace II measures. It further acknowledges the approval of the management strategy known as Basin Re-Operation, which is a real milestone for the current and future residents of the Chino Basin. The Ag Pool further submits that the Special Referee and her technical assistant also played a vital role in advising and providing peer review to ensure that the implementation of the Peace II measures was in compliance with the 1979 Judgment. The Ag Pool further submits that the continued oversight by this Court (through the Special Referee) is essential to maintaining an independent and objective view of the implementation of the Peace II measures.

To the extent that there is confusion or disagreement regarding the Special Referee's scope of duties, the Ag Pool would not object to a further definition of those duties to ensure that the best interests of the Chino Basin are protected for future generations.

DATED: August 2, 2008

REID & HELLYER A PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION

Steven G. Lee

Attorneys for Agricultural Pool Committee of the Chino Basin

CHINO BASIN WATERMASTER Case No. RCV 51010 Chino Basin Municipal Water District v. The City of Chino

PROOF OF SERVICE

I declare that:

I am employed in the County of San Bernardino, California. I am over the age of 18 years and not a party to the within action. My business address is Chino Basin Watermaster, 9641 San Bernardino Road, Rancho Cucamonga, California 91730; telephone (909) 484-3888.

On August 7, 2008 I served the following:

1)	AGRICULTURAL POOL COMMITTEE OF THE CHINO BASIN'S OPPOSITION TO
·	CUCAMONGA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT'S MOTION TO DISCONTINUE THE
	APPOINTMENT OF THE SPECIAL REFEREE

/_x_/	BY MAIL: in said cause, by placing a true copy thereof enclosed with postage thereon fully prepaid, for delivery by United States Postal Service mail at Rancho Cucamonga, California, addresses as follows: See attached service list: Mailing List 1
<i></i> /	BY PERSONAL SERVICE: I caused such envelope to be delivered by hand to the addressee.
I <u></u> I	BY FACSIMILE: I transmitted said document by fax transmission from (909) 484-3890 to the fax number(s) indicated. The transmission was reported as complete on the transmission report, which was properly issued by the transmitting fax machine.
/_x_/	BY ELECTRONIC MAIL: I transmitted notice of availability of electronic documents by electronic transmission to the email address indicated. The transmission was reported as complete on the transmission report, which was properly issued by the transmitting electronic mail device.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the above is true and correct.

Executed on August 7, 2008 in Rancho Cucamonga, California.

Alex Perez

Chino Basin Watermaster

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