



# FARM BUREAU San Diego County

**The Voice of Local Farmers**  
Serving San Diego agriculture since 1914

December 3, 2020

Keene Simonds, Executive Director  
San Diego Local Agency Formation Commission  
9335 Hazard Way, Suite 200  
San Diego, CA 92123

Dear Mr. Simonds:

On behalf of the San Diego agricultural community, we are submitting this letter in regards to the December 7<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting where LAFCO will be considering the Municipal Service Review for the Resource Conservation Districts. We also understand that LAFCO may be evaluating a recommendation for some sort of re-organization affecting the Mission Resource Conservation District (MRCD) and the Resource Conservation District of Greater San Diego.

MRCD has played a vital role in sustaining and enhancing agriculture and water body/watershed protection in North San Diego County. In 1992, with agriculture struggling to deal with the devastating impacts of the '90-91' drought cutbacks and rising water costs, the San Diego County Water Authority and MRCD entered into contracts to provide Irrigation Water Use Efficiency Evaluations and other technical assistance to both Agriculture and Landscape customers within the CWA service area. That very effective and critical relationship between wholesale/retail water agencies has been maintained continuously for almost 30 years to the great benefit of San Diego County Agriculture. More recently, in partnership with Valley Center, Rainbow, Carlsbad, and Rincon del Diablo Municipal Water Districts, Fallbrook Public Utility District, San Dieguito and Vallecitos Water Districts, the City of Escondido, the City of Oceanside, and SDCWA, the MRCD secured a \$1.5M Regional Conservation Partnership Program Grant from the National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) to assist local growers addressing water and soil resource conservation concerns on their farms. Through this program, growers have been able to upgrade their irrigation systems for greater irrigation efficiency and address issues with runoff and erosion for greater soil and watershed health. Over the past 5 years, MRCD has worked with 2,500 property owners in both the Landscape and Agriculture sectors to improve water use efficiency in irrigation and eliminate irrigation run-off into storm drains, water courses and ultimately, the Pacific Ocean.

Whatever LAFCO determines in term of re-organization of the region's Resource Conservation Districts, there needs to be specific provisions in the LAFCO decision which guarantee preservation of the scope and effectiveness of the Mission Resource Conservation District's long-standing, specialized and critical services to the San Diego Region for the preservation of commercial agriculture, watershed protection and water quality.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

**HANNAH GBEH** *Executive Director*