



Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

May 19, 2026

Guy Savage, General Manager
Los Olivos Community Services District
P.O. Box 345
Los Olivos, CA 93441
Email: gm.locsd@gmail.com

Sent Via Electronic Mail

Dear Guy Savage:

LOS OLIVOS COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT (CSD); REITERATING IMPORTANCE OF ACTIONS THE CENTRAL COAST WATER BOARD COULD TAKE IN RESPONSE TO A 'NO PROJECT' SEWER PROJECT DECISION BY THE CSD

The Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Coast Water Board) is a state regulatory agency with the responsibility for protecting the quality of the waters of the state within its area of jurisdiction. Throughout the past several decades, the Central Coast Water Board has supported and continues to support the County of Santa Barbara's and the Los Olivos Community Services District's (CSD) efforts to replace onsite wastewater treatment systems (OWTS) with some form of a community wastewater treatment and disposal system or connection to an existing collection and treatment system for the Los Olivos community. The Central Coast Water Board strongly supports implementation of a long-term solution to address the water quality impacts from waste discharges from OWTS in Los Olivos to protect groundwater quality.

On April 3, 2025, the Central Coast Water Board sent a letter to the CSD outlining the Central Coast Water Board's regulatory options if a 'No-Project' decision is made and the CSD does not proceed with a solution to address the community's wastewater needs (April 2025 letter).¹ The Central Coast Water Board is sending this follow-up letter to reiterate that the Central Coast Water Board does not support a 'No-Project' decision. The April 2025 letter states that "continued use of individual OWTS is not protective of water quality and must be discontinued," leaving no ambiguity about the regulatory expectation. If the Los Olivos community proceeds with the 'No-Project' option, the Central Coast Water Board could pursue the regulatory options outlined in the April 2025 letter.

¹ Central Coast Water Board April 3, 2025 'No Project' Letter to LOCSD
<https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/?surl=29yuw>

A 'No-Project' path would immediately expose the community, the CSD, and individual homeowners to significant regulatory and financial consequences, including groundwater impairment, mandatory system upgrades, prohibitions on septic discharges, and direct enforcement actions such as cease-and-desist orders, cleanup and abatement orders, and monetary penalties. These actions, while available to the Central Coast Water Board, are last-resort tools intended to ensure compliance with statewide water quality protections.

Importantly, the Central Coast Water Board underscores its desire to work collaboratively with the CSD, County of Santa Barbara, and the community to reach a solution that works for the community and is protective of water quality. We reiterate our readiness to support the CSD through their actions in finding technical guidance and potential funding. The Central Coast Water Board finds that a proactive, community-driven solution is often the most effective and least disruptive path forward, because it allows the community to retain control over timing, design, and cost—whereas a 'No-Project' outcome could shift decision-making to state regulators and create more burdensome requirements for individual property owners.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact **Cecile Blancarte at (805) 542-4782** or by email at cecile.blancarte@waterboards.ca.gov or Tamara Anderson at tamara.anderson@waterboards.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Ryan E. Lodge
Executive Officer

cc:

Julie Kennedy, Los Olivos CSD President,
julie.kennedy.locsd@gmail.com

Lars Seifert, Santa Barbara County, Deputy Director of Operations,
lars.seifert@sbcphd.org

Jason Johnston, Santa Barbara County, Environmental Health Services Director,
jjohnston@sbcphd.org

Supervisor Joan Hartmann, Third District, Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors,
jhartmann@countyofsb.org

Mike Prater, Executive Officer, Santa Barbara County Local Agency Formation Commission, lafco@sblafco.org

Ryan Lodge, Executive Officer, Central Coast Water Board,
ryan.lodge@waterboards.ca.gov

Angela Schroeter, Assistant Executive Officer, Central Coast Water Board,
angela.schroeter@waterboards.ca.gov

Tamara Anderson, Permitting Section Manager, Central Coast Water Board,
tamara.anderson@waterboards.ca.gov

Harvey Packard, Senior WRCE Specialist, Central Coast Water Board,
harvey.packard@waterboards.ca.gov

Cecile Blancarte, Water Resources Control Engineer, Central Coast Water Board,
cecile.blancarte@waterboards.ca.gov

WDR Program GeoTracker, rb3-wdr@waterboards.ca.gov

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