

**TOWN OF FAIRFAX  
COUNCIL MEMBER REPORT**

**To:** Mayor and Town Council

**Meeting Date:** May 5, 2010

**From:** Vice Mayor Bragman

**Subject:** Desalination Ballot Initiative

The Marin Municipal Water District (MMWD) is planning to build a \$400 million desalination plant on San Francisco Bay. This unnecessary desalination plant will double the District's energy use, raise our rates, pollute the Bay, and promote growth and development in Marin County. In addition, the desalinated water may be laced with pharmaceuticals, hormones, pesticides, heavy metals, and other contaminants that are impossible to filter.

The EIR of the project is now being challenged in Marin Superior Court by a number of local environmental groups and individuals, myself included. Like all litigation, the outcome of that case is uncertain. In spite of its self professed intent to pause the desalination project, MMWD is continuing to oppose the CEQA challenge and is exploring formation of a Joint Powers Authority to facilitate financing of large projects.

Because of these severe consequences, the Coalition for the Public's Right to Vote about Desalination is collecting signatures in order to place a ballot measure for this November's election. The measure would require the district to hold a vote of the public before it builds a desalination plant.

Adam Scow works for Food and Watch, a non-profit organization which works with grassroots organizations around the world to create an economically and environmentally viable future. Through research, public and policymaker education, media, and lobbying, Food and Water Watch advocates policies that guarantee safe, wholesome food produced in a humane and sustainable manner and public, rather than private, control of water. Adam has been assisting Marin residents to organize and educate themselves about the MMWD desalination project.

MMWD's desalination plans will have a profound impact on the quality of our water and the management of our watershed. It is hoped that Adam's presentation will provide further information and insights about it to the Fairfax Community.