

June 29, 2023

Dear Planning Commissioners, Associate Planner Phil Angelo & Members of the CAWD Board,

Thank you for giving the Carmel Meadows Association a “voice “ to express our concerns on the matter of replacing the current sewer line. “Strength in numbers”... how grand to have a supportive neighborhood and hear eloquent speakers share the concerns. I am excited to share my enthusiasm to support all the sharing of replacing the existing sewer line with kind. I humbly ask that you take the time to listen and have an “open” mind and heart. We need to work together and make good decisions. As homeowners, would you want people with decision making authority to do the very BEST for your family and neighborhood?

“Strength in Numbers”...we are here to bring attention that the map with houses showing the location of the pumping station, pipes, and location of ejector pumps represent families with strong feelings about their environment, air quality, and healthful, safe living. Your decision will affect our entire neighborhood. What is planned for the secluded existing pumping station at the end of Calle De La Cruz? With the locked gate, paved road, room for vehicles, it seems to be ideal, so why are you considering a new pumping station location at the end of Mariposa Court where families will be impacted financially and their wishes for optimal well being a major concern! We do not know the future, so what we can do today to assure the best results for tomorrow is most important! We are invested in what our neighborhood offers and ask that you understand with an open heart why we are here. Thank you

Let me introduce you to Carmel Meadows! It is a paradise unique in so many ways. There are 156 lots with only one way in from Hwy 1 using Ribera Rd. This is a dog friendly neighborhood where dogs are often greeted before owners! Our Association President Larry encourages us to walk on the left side of street for safety and to say “howdy” by waving to residents and visitors.

My husband and I moved from So. California and are grateful to live at 2915 Ribera Rd. Our back window has views of the meadows with butterflies, birds flying or perched on a log in the man-made tributary. We can see and hear cows grazing on the hills while cars zoom by on Hwy 1. We see cautious deer, quails watching over their babies, bunnies scurrying in the backyard. We do not have an ocean view, but we can walk a short distance to Carmel River Beach to see pelicans, Scenic Dr., Point Lobos, Monastery Beach and spectacular sunsets. We can walk the trails and thoroughly enjoy the serenity of Earth and its magnificence. Saving the environment and safeguarding the healthful way of life is our responsibility for generations to come! Do you feel this way about your neighborhood? This is why I am passionate to express the importance of making the very BEST decision for the new sewer line!

Residents of Carmel Meadows take PRIDE and RESPECT this paradise of ours! We support, care, and we enjoy each other! For many years Carmel Meadows has continued (not during pandemic) its ANNUAL BLOCK POTLUCK PARTY. We gather to eat, share our hopes and dreams, talk about children, grandchildren, pets, etc.. but most importantly we greet and welcome our new neighbors! In 2014, the day after we moved in, we were greeted with warm smiles and heartfelt hugs. At this BLOCK PARTY, strangers became neighbors, and then our friends and now our OHANA. OHANA means family...never stop spreading a little Aloha!

Since that blessed day in 2014, many of our elders have moved closer to family or have sadly passed away, but their love for Carmel Meadows lingers in my heart. I am grateful for their legacy of acceptance, showing loving kindness, respect for others and the mindfulness of Earth...its land, ocean, air, and humanity. A beaming example is Barbara who is 91 years old. She walks almost everyday with her caregiver who carries a plastic bag and grabber. They pick up trash and dog poop along the trails down by the coast. She continues to set the bar high for us! We, too, must be mindful of our actions to uplift our children and community!

In summary, Carmel Meadows is a hidden "gem". We are passionate about protecting its quality of life, serenity, air quality, and environment, so I humbly ask your support to look into the plan to replace the existence system with kind. With all the effects of strong winds, unsteady climate, fires, and other natural disasters, WHY are you considering a system with ejector pumps that relies on electricity? Gravity has worked without added stress and concerns! Would you as a homeowner be willing to accept responsibilities of these pumps/pumping stations, health and safety risks for you and your family? A mindful plan to include compassion for land and its people needs to bring a better solution. As Debra Ju and others have meaningfully shared there are major concerns and excellent solutions. Life on this wondrous Earth is short! HERE and NOW...Let's work cooperatively and be the "force" to make the quality of life better for today, but more importantly for future generations! Thank you.

"E Malama Pono" means take good care of yourself, each other and the "aina" (land)

With much gratitude,  
Donna Kusumoto  
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