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Subject: [External] DECLARING THE TJ RIVER VALLEY A SUPERFUND SITE (Please include with docs. for agenda #13)
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Good Morning, Supervisors,

If you ask me, declaring 6 miles of the TJ River Valley all a superfund site means having someone else prioritize the cleanup, probably someone not real familiar with the area. Another way of kicking the can down the road?

And the residents probably do not want the intrusion that is possible with an industrial or wildland site, although the money's nice.

Declaring the whole area a superfund site should be voted on by the whole affected area. If residents are displaced, where do they go? Will this affect neighboring areas? Do the residences really want businesses shut down or severely interfered with? Does it really make sense for a U.S. agency (the EPA) without binational jurisdiction to clean up stuff that keeps coming from another country? What happens when it interferes with Mexico's residents or businesses? We need a comprehensive plan or idea of how exactly this will be done, what will be closed, what to expect, whether there will be off-limits areas or chemical side effects. We need more than just a board letter.

We also need more than a 14-day window to submit testimony, pictures, videos, etc.

The author even admits that "Superfund is designed to addresses toxic waste and not raw sewage, which falls under the jurisdiction of the Clean Water Act," so this will be only a partial solution, requiring another bureaucracy on top of an industrial-scale cleanup in a residential area. As I hinted at above, it involves creation of a plan, so actual cleanup might be some years off. If studies by Federal agencies and others found all this pollution years ago, why are we trusting them for a quick solution?

We have enough evidence and resources to do some or all of this. Volunteers, interested parties, and let's have a 'we can do it' attitude.

I have suggested at least 4 things: concrete lining to speed water flow and sewage out to sea; holding reservoirs like there once were; hand-held air pollution monitors to zero in on the pollution source; and baking soda or lime to cut down on the harmful odors.

You have forwarded several of these suggestions on, but I never heard a yes or no on them. We should have a status report on all cleanup suggestions.

So I'm sorry, but we need to be more self-reliant, and carefully assess the pros and cons of having an industrial-type cleanup in our residential communities. We can and should mitigate this ourselves and not wait for someone to do it for us.

But most of all, we need a better idea of what we're getting into - a better plan - if we're asking for long-term resources and possible disruption to our lifestyle.

Regards,

Paul Henkin