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August 12, 2008

To: Board of Supervisors  
From:   
Gerri Silva, Director of Environmental Management Department  
Reference: (1) Solid Waste Rate and Service Study; (2) Discussion Regarding Recycling Programs and a New Materials Recovery Facility

The "Solid Waste Rate and Service Study" has been completed and the County's Consultant, NewPoint Group, will be presenting their findings during the workshop on Monday, August 18, 2008. Please see the attached report from the NewPoint Group setting forth their findings and their Power Point presentation.

In addition, staff will be presenting information and seeking direction regarding solid waste recycling programs and the potential for a new MRF

Based on the findings of the NewPoint Group report, the Environmental Management Department is asking the Board to provide direction to County staff on the following three key questions:

- 1) To date, a materials collection and recycling infrastructure exists in the County to achieve the statewide diversion rate of 50 percent. However, proposed legislation would establish higher diversion or recycling requirement for counties and cities. One legislative proposal (SB 1020) that has broad support would require that by December 21, 2012, 60% of all solid waste generated in the state must be recycled or composted, and by January 1, 2020, 75% of all solid waste generated in the county or city must be recycled or composted (note two previously proposed bills below).

#### **Diversion Bills**

##### **SB 1016 (Wiggins) Diversion: compliance: per capita disposal rate**

This bill changes the existing solid waste diversion management system to a disposal based measurement system from the current emphasis on meeting the 50 percent solid waste diversion requirement to emphasizing local programs that help meet the new goal of reduced per-capita disposal of solid waste.

League position: Support

##### **SB 1020 (Padilla): Diversion (as proposed to be amended)**

This bill, as proposed to be amended, increases the mandated statewide diversion rate from 50 percent to 60 percent by 2012 and requires a target

statewide aggregate goal of 75 percent waste diversion by 2020. The bill also includes mandated commercial recycling on any business in California that produces over four cubic yards of waste per week. SB 1020 would require any city or county, or city and county within a county with a population of over 200,000, to adopt an ordinance to enforce the commercial recycling mandate in the bill.

League position: None

Status: Assembly Appropriations Committee Suspense File

Specific strategies to comply with these new laws could include increasing recycling opportunities, increasing commercial recycling, expanding recovery of construction and demolition debris, and increasing the diversion from land filling of organics (e.g., yard waste).

The County's current waste management system has well served our rural County population to date. However, the current system has reached its practical limit of achieving additional recycling. As the County has grown, especially in the more urban areas, the waste management system has not adequately or uniformly experienced corresponding growth and maturity.

Given the probability that we will need to expand the programs for future State diversion and recycling requirements, it is prudent for the County to begin planning to implement new programs and services to increase diversion and recycling levels. Where feasible and practical, the County needs to increase curbside recycling.

**Question: Should County staff research and bring back to the Board a status report and recommendation regarding new and increased recycling programs for the unincorporated area of the County, by franchise area? Should staff's recommendations include two and three cart programs and bluebag programs that could be implemented in the hard to service areas?**

- 2) Per the NewPoint Group report, the current El Dorado Disposal Services Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) was not originally designed to handle today's waste stream going to that facility. This is because the MRF, when designed and built, was to be a "dirty MRF"—a MRF that would handle waste from which no recyclable materials had been separated. That is not the case today. Today, we estimate that a significant number of the households whose waste is directed to the MRF have already removed recyclable materials and green waste from their waste stream, substantially reducing the effectiveness of a "dirty MRF." Similarly, source separated recyclables now must go to a "clean MRF" processing facility, as opposed to a "dirty MRF" for further materials separation, processing and recycling.

Without additional investment in the MRF, the existing facility has significant limitations in handling projected West County growth (e.g. limited to "dirty MRF processing operations; tight self hauling drop off turn around area, large weekend traffic volumes, and limited storage areas and small overall site footprint). The current MRF is becoming functionally obsolete and is unable to handle the established "single stream" 3 cart recyclables collection system. As such, there is no current capacity to process and store single stream material. In addition, the current dirty MRF utilizes low technology manual sorting and is not effectively capturing recyclable materials. The current facility cannot meet future diversion mandates, and is at the end of its operational life. Without additional capital investments, this facility is not likely capable of handling the growth demands of the County.

The siting and construction of a new facility, or various facilities, provides a unique opportunity to build a state-of-the-art MRF that will serve the present and future needs and goals of El Dorado County's businesses and residences for many years to come. The development of a new material recovery and transfer facility must align with the County's future solid waste management goals. A new material resource and transfer facility must contain a vibrant and dynamic source separation system that is continuously evolving to embrace and accommodate the expansion of new products (i.e., textiles and small electrical appliances) and address challenges in the future. The facility must have the capability to expand in the future.

**Question: Does the Board want staff to start conceptual planning related to the prospect of a new MRF on the West Slope?**

- 3) The current MRF location was procured by the original owners of El Dorado Disposal Service. It was originally an abandoned office and warehouse building and was retro-fitted to function as a "dirty MRF." There was no siting study performed by the County at the time to determine if the current MRF location was the optimal location for a MRF to service the Western Slope of the County. If, as we believe is the case, the current MRF needs to be substantially re-designed and reconstructed, then the County has the unique opportunity to revisit the location of the current MRF, and analyze alternative sites and ownership options.

The siting process for a new facility location employs a two step process for potential site consideration and evaluation. The first step is to check whether the potential sites have constraining features which would limit or prohibit siting of a MRF. The second step is to rank the sites according to detailed criteria and comparative ranking against other potential sites. The ideal location would be evaluated based upon environmental considerations, environmental impacts, socio-economic considerations, legal considerations and any additional criteria (as approved by the County and City agencies).

The County does not own or operate any waste management facilities or locations open to the public. The recent Solid Waste Rate and Service Study conducted by the NewPoint Group recommends that the County have some direct involvement in terms of ownership and/or control of its waste management facilities. At this time, the County should assess the possibility of some direct involvement in ownership and/or operation of MRF.

**Question:** Does the Board want staff to present alternatives to the Board's consideration for the location of a new re-designed and reconstructed MRF? Does the Board want staff to present alternatives for the Board's consideration regarding possible County and/or public ownership of the MRF? [Note: Any relocation of the MRF would require environmental (CEQA) analysis before any final decision can be made.]

**Recommendations:**

- Accept the Solid Waste and Service Study performed by the NewPoint Group as final.
- Direct staff to research and bring back to the Board a status report and recommendation regarding the feasibility of increasing residential (curbside) recycling through a programmatic approach by franchise area, including multiple cart service programs and bluebag programs, that could be implemented in the hard to service areas.
- Direct staff to start conceptual planning related to the requirements for and designs of a new MRF on the West Slope. Bring back to the Board a status report with recommendations. This task may require additional support from outside consultants and or counsel. Staff will return to the Board with appropriate contracts as necessary.
- Direct staff to explore and bring back to the Board a status report and recommendation regarding alternatives for the MRF location. Direct staff to explore and bring back to the Board a status report and recommendation regarding County and /or public ownership of a new MRF. This task may require additional support from outside consultants and or counsel. Staff will return to the Board with appropriate contracts as necessary.

Cc: Gayle Erbe-Hamlin, CAO  
County Counsel

Attachments: NewPoint Microsoft PowerPoint Presentation  
Solid Waste Rate and Service Study