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Mr. Fred McPherson  
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Dear Sir:

Since our conversation at Daniel's farewell potluck, I have given thought to your suggestion of putting together a history of the San Lorenzo Water District. Five years ago, when I undertook my study of the Felton Water Company, it soon became apparent that, to present an accurate account, it was necessary to consider the greater San Lorenzo valley and the various companies that served it. As the work progressed into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, I was fascinated by the steady, if gradual, movement toward public control of our local utilities. Although I was able to provide a brief summary of the evolution of the SLVWD, my research provided more information than I could contain within the framework of the story I was telling. The Noel Patterson archive, part of the Special Collections at U. C. S. C., was a particularly rich source of information, providing detailed documentation on the Newell Creek Dam project and a trove of photographs and maps as well.

As you may recall, I chose to end my chronicle in the early '60's, when Citizens Utilities purchased the Felton company from Florence Fetherston, at almost the exact moment it surrendered control of its other holdings in the Valley. The successful conclusion of the campaign to include the Felton system into the publicly-owned system provides an opportunity to bring the story up to date, not to mention a more happy ending.

Following is a brief outline of a general history of the San Lorenzo watershed and the SLVWD.

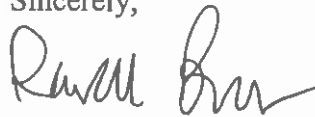
- I. Description of the natural features of the San Lorenzo River and its various tributaries.
- II. The frontier era, focusing on the various sawmills, and public attempts to control the "sawdust" menace in the 1870's.
- III. The development of water resources by the various local patrons—Stanly and Treat in Felton, Peery and Middleton in Boulder Creek, Pierce in Ben Lomond, and Logan in Brookdale.

- IV. How disastrous fires in Felton and Boulder Creek led to improvements in the various systems and the role of volunteer fire companies in promoting positive changes.
- V. The formation of the various local water utilities between 1889 and 1920—discussing their benefits and limitations.
- VI. The consolidation of the local systems during the 1920's, and the loss of local control to the forerunner of Citizens Utilities.
- VII. How the collapse of the Foshay holding company in 1929 and the difficult economy of the Depression brought new demands for public ownership.
- VIII. The efforts of Earl Lyon and his associates to create the San Lorenzo Water District, including victories and reversals.
- IX. How acquisition of watershed land and shrewd deals with oil companies provided the District with a firm financial base in spite of voter resistance to bond issues.
- X. The increasing concerns over the Santa Cruz water supply and the building of the Newell Creek Dam.
- XI. Citizens Utilities yields its old system to the SLVWD, but acquires Felton Water Co.
- XII. The sale of the Felton company to a foreign company, the FLOW movement and the acquisition of the system by SLVWD.

This project offers an opportunity to increase public awareness of our natural resources and the realities of managing them. Local histories have generally focused on old buildings and colorful characters, but few things are more important than the provision of an adequate and clean supply of water. I feel strongly that a thorough but entertaining account of our unique watershed and our progress toward local control of it, can help educate the community and provide a basis for further study.

I would be happy to discuss this proposal in greater detail with you and your associates at any convenient time, as well as the possibilities for funding it.

Sincerely,



Randall Brown

