CalEPA
California Environmental Protection Agency

Gavin Newsom
Governor

Jared Blumenfeld
Secretary for Environmental Protection

April 13, 2021

Deborah Jordan
Acting Regional Administrator
Region 9
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94104
jordan.deborah@epa.gov

Re: Remediation of DDT off Palos Verdes Peninsula

Dear Acting Regional Administrator Jordan:

Thank you for all that you and the U.S. EPA Region IX team are doing to implement the proactive environmental agenda shared by both President Biden and Governor Newsom. It is most welcome.

I am writing today in regard to the extensive contamination of dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane ("DDT") waste from the Montrose Chemical Corporation plant property in Los Angeles, California. This DTT remains on the ocean floor on the Palos Verdes Shelf and in the San Pedro Channel, resulting in significant environmental and public health issues for neighboring communities and for marine life.

Recent reports have highlighted the appalling legacy of ocean dumping of barrels of DDT waste in the San Pedro Channel. Given that California's jurisdiction extends three nautical miles from the coastline, I wanted to take this opportunity to confirm our understanding that the entirety of the recently discussed deposit of DDT barrels, October 25, 2020 *Los Angeles Times,* fall within federal waters and are subject to federal jurisdiction.

As you are aware, the U.S. EPA has removal authority and access to funds through this authority to evaluate the environmental impacts of the barrels. As a result, any funding, development of plans, and remediation or removal would be the primary responsibility of the federal government. I would like to discuss the use of these funds to investigate the nature and extent of the problem in the San Pedro Basin. I'm looking forward to seeing the results of the recent deep-sea expedition by the Scripps Institution of Oceanography that I expect will provide critical ocean floor mapping to help support focused action.

U.S. EPA leadership and decisive action is necessary in this matter to properly protect marine life, wildlife, and human health from risk of harm. With the imperative of addressing these serious impacts, I am requesting that we set up a meeting to discuss what action U.S. EPA is currently taking, how the State of California can be supportive, and identify additional opportunities to advance resolution of this critically important issue.

Sincerely,

Jared Blumenfeld
Secretary for Environmental Protection