

**Washington D.C.** – Today, Congressman Kevin McCarthy and Congresswoman Lois Capps announced that the community of Los Osos, California, has been made eligible for programs in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Rural Utilities Service, specifically the Water and Waste Disposal Program, in the Fiscal Year 2010 Agriculture Appropriations bill. This eligibility will allow the County of San Luis Obispo to apply for loans and grants on behalf of homeowners of Los Osos to help defray the costs of the \$165 million sewer and wastewater treatment system conversion project that is needed in the community in order to comply with various state and federal environmental and clean water requirements.

Congressman Kevin McCarthy (CA-22) issued the following statement:

*“I am pleased that we could work together in a bipartisan fashion to cut through the red tape to make sure that Los Osos has the ability to invest in much needed water infrastructure improvements. This eligibility has a dual purpose--it is a necessary step to help ensure the residents of Los Osos have safe and clean water and continue to protect the natural resources and environment in and around the community.”*

Congresswoman Lois Capps (CA-23) issued the following statement:

*“This is another important step forward for the County as they work to secure a safe source of water for the Los Osos community. For years I have worked tirelessly to help the community build this much needed sewer system. The approval of this waiver by the House Appropriations Committee is a significant sign of progress as we work to provide the County with additional federal support and resources for this project. I will be working closely with my colleagues in the coming weeks to ensure the waiver is approved by the full House and included in the final bill signed by the President.”*

Background:

- Homeowners in the Los Osos community are under a California State Water Resources Control Board, due in part to Clean Water Act regulations, the community is obligated to convert current individual septic tanks to a community sanitary sewer and wastewater treatment system

to stop contamination of the Morro Bay National Estuary, protect the shallow portion of the Los Osos groundwater basin, prevent saltwater intrusion into deeper ground water levels, recharge groundwater supplies, and ensure clean and safe water.

- As nearly 25% of the homeowners in Los Osos are over 60 years old and about 33% are on fixed incomes, by making Los Osos eligible for programs administered by the Rural Utilities Service, this will help defray the cost of this \$165 million conversion project, which is a high priority of San Luis Obispo County.