

M E M O

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Betsy Herbert, Ph.D.

SUBJECT: WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN, PART 1: EXISTING
CONDITIONS REPORT

DATE: April 29, 2009

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that your Board consider and approve the Board Review Draft of the District's Watershed Management Plan, "Part I: Existing Conditions Report, Rev. 1.6," attached under separate cover, as recommended by the Environmental Committee on March 19, 2009. Once approved by the Board, the Board Review Draft will become the final version of the San Lorenzo Valley Water District Watershed Management Plan, Part I: Existing Conditions Report.

BACKGROUND:

On November 4, 1985 the District approved Resolution 26, which adopted the District's existing Watershed Protection Plan. Your Board directed staff in 2004 to review and update the 1985 document, which had not been revised since its inception. Staff re-organized, rewrote, edited and worked with consultants to complete the Administrative Draft over approximately three years, under the advisement of the Environmental Committee. On December 6, 2007, your Board accepted the Administrative Draft, Rev. 1.3 for public review, approved a 60-day public review process, and approved a list of expert peer-reviewers, as recommended by the Environmental Committee at its November 2007 meeting.

The public review process for the Administrative Draft began within a week of the Board's acceptance of the document. Staff posted the Administrative Draft to the District's website, made digital copies available at the front desk, and distributed printed copies to local libraries. Staff also distributed copies to the peer-reviewers.

After the close of the public comment period, staff collected all public and peer-review comments and analyzed them under advisement of the Environmental Committee throughout meetings in 2008. Staff met with some reviewers to gain more insight into their comments. Staff invited proposals from two experts to complete some of the information gaps identified in the review process. Staff continued to revise and rewrite parts of the document. Revision 1.4 of the Administrative Draft was finalized in January 2009, reflecting these changes. The main issue that the Environmental Committee had with Revision 1.4 was how to address remaining information gaps identified in the review process. In Revision 1.5, the Environmental Committee directed staff to mark all known information gaps with special icons to clearly

acknowledge them, and to enable them to be addressed and prioritized in “Part II: Goals, Policies, and Practices.” Staff completed Revision 1.5 in March 2009. Revision 1.6 includes subsequent editing and changes requested by the Environmental Committee and our volunteer proofreader, as well as the addition of acknowledgments to the many contributors.

PURPOSE:

The District’s Watershed Management Plan, “Part I: Existing Conditions Report” describes, to the best of the District’s knowledge, the natural conditions of the District’s watershed properties in the context of the larger San Lorenzo River watershed. The document clearly acknowledges several gaps in information, providing an opportunity for the Environmental Committee to prioritize and address these gaps at the appropriate times, and make further recommendations to the full Board. After final approval by your Board, “Part I: Existing Conditions Report” will serve as a reference to aid your Board in refining the 1985 watershed management goals and updating its watershed planning policies and practices (to be addressed in “Part II: Goals, Policies, and Practices,” which is already underway). “Part I: Existing Conditions Report” will also serve as a baseline for tracking the success of approved policies and future projects as they are implemented.

It is recommended that the Board of Directors consider and approve the Board Review Draft of the District’s Watershed Plan, “Part I: Existing Conditions Report, Rev 1.6.,” thereby making it the final version of this document.

Betsy Herbert, Ph.D.
Environmental Analyst