

MEMO

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Betsy Herbert, Ph.D.

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS STATUS REPORT
WEEK ENDING July 10, 2009

DATE: July 8, 2009

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Directors review and file the Environmental Programs Status Report for the week ending July 10, 2009.

BACKGROUND:

WATERSHED PLAN

Staff is meeting with the District Manager and Director of Operations on July 13, 2009 to continue updating objectives and policies for Chapter 4, Part II of the district watershed plan. The updated policies and objectives are to be discussed at the July 16, 2009 Environmental Committee meeting.

Color copies of Part I: Existing Conditions Report are ready for distribution to the board and public agencies.

EDUCATION PROGRAM GRANTS

Staff organized a meeting with the District Manager and Director of Operations and 2009 Education Program Grant recipient Dr. Katie Monsen to select District streams for benthic macro-invertebrate monitoring. On July 2, 2009 staff accompanied the Director of Operations and Dr. Monsen on a site visit to District stream diversions on Harmon, Foreman, and Fall creeks, which will be evaluated by Dr. Monsen's project.

Staff prepared information for a page on the District website summarizing all the grants awarded to date under the Education Program Grant program.

OLYMPIA WELLFIELD MANAGEMENT

USFWS Partners Grant

Staff prepared the work plan for the District's USFWS "Partners Grant" selected for funding last month. Staff is working with the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County and the USFWS to complete the project work plan by July 13, 2009.

Weed Management Area Grant

Staff is working with the Santa Cruz County Resource Conservation District to finalize the contract for the District's 2009 grant award to continue with acacia eradication on the Olympia wellfield.

CalFire shaded fuel break project

On June 13, 2009 CalFire and the Zayante Fire Department completed the Olympia fuel break project on the western boundary of the District Olympia Wellfield property. Staff visited the site several times during the operation to ensure that prescriptions for protection of special status species were observed. Large native oaks were limbed to reduce ladder fuels, acacia and broom were cut and stem-treated. Large wood was hauled off site, and the remainder of the debris was chipped and piled along the railroad right of way. Due to fire crews being pulled off the project to fight fires, resources were not available to treat targeted areas on District lands.

WATER CONSERVATION

Staff is preparing a report for the Environmental Committee to update the District's rebates and credits for water-saving devices. Staff will present the report at the June 16, 2009 meeting of the Environmental Committee.

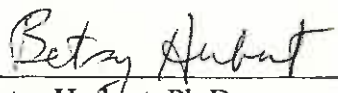
Staff created a new water conservation flyer to be distributed with customer bills beginning July 15, 2009.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

The Valley Press published an article about the District's newly approved Watershed Management Plan, Part 1.

Staff was elected to the Board of Directors of the Santa Cruz Mountains Biodiversity Council, a science-based group that meets quarterly to promote conservation of local watersheds and biotic resources.

Staff has been invited to join the newly formed Steering Committee for the "Conservation BluePrint for Santa Cruz County," a collaborative project of the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County, funded in part by the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation. The group will meet 4-6 times over the next 16 months to guide the planning process and ensure the integrity of its scientific approaches and process.



Betsy Herbert, Ph.D.
Environmental Analyst