

M E M O

TO: Board of Directors
FROM: District Manager
PREPARED BY: Environmental Planner
SUBJECT: Environmental Department Status Report
DATE: January 21, 2021

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Directors review and file the Environmental Department status report.

SUSTAINABLE WATER SUPPLY PLANNING (ONGOING)

The District is working on a multi-tier effort to optimize operations, sustainably manage water supply and diversify its water supply portfolio to ensure a resiliency as we adapt to a changing climate through the following efforts (details on each effort within staff report below):

- Conjunctive Use - improving System Efficiencies through (Using surface water when available to rest and recharge groundwater sources)
- Water Conservation Planning (Including UWMP)
- Capital Improvement (increasing pipeline sizes, reducing leaks, and increasing storage tank capacities)
- Permit Intertie Pipelines to optimize operations and sustainably manage water supply.
- Water Right petition changes
- Sustainable Groundwater Management (SMGWA.ORG)
- Climate Adaptation and Mitigation (The Climate Registry)

CONJUNCTIVE USE GRANT

- Fisheries assessment complete - available on website [here](#).
- Public engagement Workshop with Mike Podlech (aquatic ecologist) on the fisheries assessment was completed at the June 2020 Environmental Committee meeting.
- Water right changes; working with legal. Memo to be provided outlining the associated water rights and their interpretations.
- Meetings with resource agencies to be scheduled in early 2021.
- CEQA Request for Proposals closed in November 2020. County and District staff recommended the consultant Rincon Consulting - Board approved

recommendation on December 3rd, 2020. Kick-off meeting planned for week of January 18th, 2021 with SLVWD, County, and Rincon staff.

- The complete Conjunctive Use Plan is 90% finished and should be available for public review by Spring 2021.

URBAN WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN (UWMP)

The UWMP is a public planning document required of urban water suppliers every five years to ensure that adequate water supplies are available to meet existing and future water demands.

The Board of Directors approved the District Manager to execute a joint contract with Water Systems Consulting (WSC) in November 2020. Staff began providing data to WSC after the project's kick-off in December 2020. Drafts of the plan's sections throughout the project will be brought to the Board of Directors or the Environmental Committee.

STREAMFLOW, TEMPERATURE AND RELATED OBSERVATIONS FOR THE SAN LORENZO VALLEY WATER DISTRICT'S SURFACE SOURCES

WATER YEAR 2020

BOD approved WY 2020 monitoring of stream flow in water supply streams in June. Staff is working on a water right agreement with the SWRCB for the Lompico Creek water right; using this data.

BALANCE HYDROLOGICS DATA

Monitoring has supported the Fall Creek fish ladder project, conjunctive use studies and various agency compliance in WY2019-WY2020. Staff is internally reviewing the water year 2018, 2019 & 2020 data reports. Once finalized these reports will be available for the public. If recommended a public work shop can be held to discuss these data.

During the CZU Lightning Complex fires a majority of Balance Hydrologics gauges were lost and will need to be reinstalled. Discussion of Balance Hydrologics monitoring turbidity occurred in November. Due to predicted winter debris flows gauging will resume in Spring 2021.

SANTA MARGARITA SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AGENCY (SMGWA.ORG)

Montgomery and Associates the agency's Technical Consultant has been working on the following:

- Correct the deficiencies identified in the hydrologic model.
- Assist with the technical writing of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Plan.
- Explore the concept of Management Areas.
- Determine Sustainability Criteria.

Agency staff is working on reviewing the GSP sec 2: Plan Area and Basin Settings.

Office hours with agency staff are being offered to the BOD

The District will begin to incorporate SMGWA updates on its social media pages, newsletters and BOD agenda packets monthly.

The next SGMWA Meeting is scheduled for January, 28th at 5:30 PM. For more information <http://smgwa.org/>. Due to the circumstances regarding the ongoing shelter-in-place orders all Agency meetings will be held in an exclusively remote-access format until further notice.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE - CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

SANDHILLS HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN FOR THE SAN LORENZO VALLEY WATER DISTRICT CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

District is preparing a Habitat Conservation Plan to mitigate the impacts to listed species in sandhills habitat which result from the District's Capital Improvement Projects. This approach will greatly reduce the timeline and cost for project permitting compared to preparing individual HCPs for each project or site. The draft version of the plan is aimed for completion in early 2021.

The Olympia Conservation Area Management Plan was completed by May 31st 2020 and is available for public review [here](#). Jodi McGraw presented the plan to the Environmental Committee in July 2020.

The District is also working with consulting ecologist Jodi McGraw to potentially pursue funding through PG&E's mitigation credit program through the District's Olympia Conservation Easement. Once an approach is established a presentation will be conducted for the Environmental Committee and then brought to the Board for approval.

CIP PROJECT PERMITTING

Staff is working to secure permits for the following Projects:

- Fall Creek Fish Ladder Project (all permits in process - CDFW's agreement received August 2020 - awaiting NMFS determination)
- Lyon Treatment Plant Access Road Slide (FEMA funded)
- Swim Tanks Replacement (Redwood Park Tank) (IS-MND public review complete) (Notice of Determination filed and ends February 2nd)
- 5 Pipeline Project (Highway 236/Douglas/Quail Hollow Road) (Quail Hollow IS-MND will be brought to the BOD for approval on February 4th)
- Tank Recoatings
- Felton Acres Tank
- Conjunctive Use
- Harmon Creek Emergency Debris Project
- 5-mile pipeline

WATERSHED MANAGEMENT/ STEWARDSHIP

FIRE MANAGEMENT PLANNING

In August 2020 the San Lorenzo Valley experienced significant fire damage during the CZU Lightning Fire Complex fires. Approximately, 1600 acres along the Ben Lomond Mountain were burned. District staff have been evaluating burned areas with emergency construction contractors, registered foresters, erosion control specialist, geologists, Cal Fire, and the County of Santa Cruz.

Since September the District has been working to prioritize debris flow and erosion projects, identify hazard trees, and secure grant funding.

Prior to the CZU fires staff were working to prepare a Fire Management Plan through partnership with Panorama Environmental INC. The plan will improve mapping, road access for fire personnel, improve communications with Fire Prevention Agencies, and give direction on fire hardening/forest management.

Mapping proved valuable during the fires; helping the District prepare for fire moving through the area, and giving Cal Fire access to facilities.

The draft plan outline is complete and Panorama will be presenting at the BOD's February 18th, 2021 meeting. Once the plan is completed and approved, staff will begin implementation under the direction of the Board.

INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT POLICY (IPMP)

BOD & the public received the draft IPMP at the June 4, 2020 BOD meeting and approved the policy.

The final policy can be viewed [here on the District's website.](#)

Internal meeting conducted in November 2020 with staff to begin cataloging all pesticides/ rodenticides/herbicides used and begin implementation of policy throughout District sites. In early 2021 the IPMP will be brought to the Environmental Committee for discussion and implementation on all District properties.

PG&E

PG&E is interested in mitigation for Sandhill species on District lands. PG&E could potentially provide funding for restoration of District lands. Staff is working with PG&E and Ecologist, Jodi McGraw.

PG&E is working on mitigation on the District's Harmon access road.

OLYMPIA PATROL

As of August no destruction recorded in patrol reports. No site visits were conducted in September. Site visits resumed December 2020.

Contract is currently expired and work will be completed/billed month to month until new contract is established pending 2021/2022 budget direction.

WATER CONSERVATION

REBATES

Budget for 2021/2022 rebates will be determined during budget discussions.

Social media postings on water conservation taking place 1-2 times a month.

Due to the CZU Lightning Complex Fires the District will be focusing on conservation messaging to help address reduced storage and limited access to surface water.

Further discussion of water conservation planning in 2021/2022 will be brought to the Environmental Committee in early 2021.

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY WATER CONSERVATION COALITION

Value of water campaign - focus on importance of infrastructure underway. Outreach materials provided to local businesses and radio ads ran in Spring 2020.

District staff provide photos and facts on infrastructure for the Value of Water campaign. Website is updated with provided information. Updated shared website - watersavingtips.org

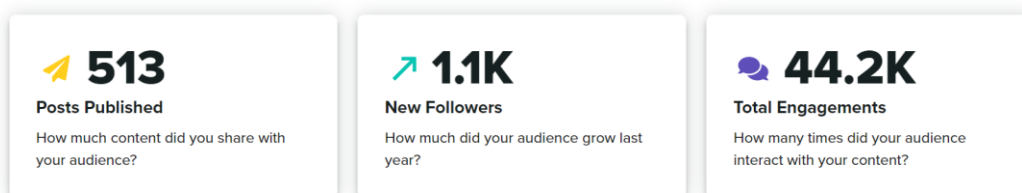
PUBLIC OUTREACH

CHATTERBOX PR

Chatterbox is working with staff on outreach through daily updates, distributing information to press, social media sites, and print sources.

In 2020 the District had the following stats for its social media pages:

Aggregate data pulled from Facebook, Twitter and Instagram between 1/1/20-11/18/20



January Outreach as of 1/12/2021:

Annual 2019/2020 review mailer (District wide)

New Board of Directors information

District Facts, Answers, Questions (FAQ)

Water Quality & CZU Fire

Probation Tank (storage/CIP post)
Community Tap for DND/DNB areas
Emergency main line repair
How to participate in a public meeting
UC Berkeley Research
Newsletter sign-up
811 - "call before you dig"

December Outreach included:

Erosion & winter preparedness posts
Emergency notification sign-up information
Committee Member Position Openings
Post-fire Dos/Don'ts
Lompico Tank Project update
SMGWA posts
County Rain Gauge website
Harmon Creek Emergency project
Board of Director meeting summaries
Refill station information
Water|Ways Boulder Creek Museum
Water Conservation
FEMA information
We are hiring posts
Water conservation
Pipeline construction
BOD meeting summaries
BOD meeting advertisements w/ agenda summary

UPCOMING EVENTS

None - due to Shelter in Place Order

CLIMATE ADAPTATION

The District renewed its membership with the Climate Registry

NETWORKING & COLLABORATIONS

SANTA MARGARITA GROUNDWATER AGENCY- <http://smgwa.org/>

Under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014, over-drafted groundwater basins need to be sustainably managed by a Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) through the development of a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). The GSP must be completed by 2022, and the basin must reach sustainability by 2040.

FIRE SAFE COUNCIL OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY <https://www.firesafesantacruz.org/>

Staff represents SLVWD and participates as one of the Directors on the Community Outreach Committee.

District Environmental Planner represents SLVWD on the Board of Directors

WEED MANAGEMENT AREA OF SANTA CRUZ (WMA)

The Weed Management Area of Santa Cruz (WMA) meets 4 times annually. The group is working on the Strategic Plan, and prioritizing efforts for Santa Cruz County, and working to acquire resources to achieve the goal of fighting invasive species that impact biodiversity.

SAN LORENZO 2025

San Lorenzo River 2025 is a collaborative effort focused on addressing the risks facing the San Lorenzo River over the next ten years. Through a partnership between local governments, water districts, the Resource Conservation District and local nonprofits, San Lorenzo River 2025 seeks to achieve **reliability** of water, **restoration** of watershed habitats, and a **resilient and safe** community resource. This effort will increase both the pace and the scale of investment into the San Lorenzo Watershed.

WATER CONSERVATION COALITION

<http://watersavingtips.org/>

The Water Conservation Coalition is a partnership between all the local Water Districts in Santa Cruz County as well as the County Water Resources Division, Ecology Action and other groups who share a passion for water conservation and public education. Our goal is to combine efforts and share resources to provide a common message about water conservation issues to residents throughout Santa Cruz County.

SANTA CRUZ STEWARDSHIP NETWORK (SCSN)

<http://scmsn.net/>

The Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network is a region-wide and cross-sector collaboration of independent individuals and organizations who are committed to practicing effective stewardship on their own lands and coordinating their efforts with other land stewards to enhance stewardship on a regional level.

Working with network to facilitate fire management grants.

The District's Environmental Planner represents the District.