

M E M O

TO: Board of Directors
FROM: District Manager
PREPARED BY: Environmental Planner
SUBJECT: Environmental Department Status Report
DATE: July 16, 2020

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 the District's water supply portfolio to ensure a resilient water supply as we adapt to a changing climate through the following efforts:

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

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 Environmental Committee meeting.
- Water right changes in beginning stages; working with legal
- Draft Conjunctive Use Plan underway - working deadline July 2020
- CEQA internally being discussed. Aiming to have final CEQA direction by end of July.
- The complete Conjunctive Use Plan is 80% complete and should be available for public review by end of August.

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.

Request for Proposals (RFP) released in July 2020. The RFP should close in August and will be brought to the BOD for approval in September.

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

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. Staff is internally reviewing the water year 2018 & 2019 data reports. Once finalized these reports will be available for the public.

SANTA MARGARITA SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AGENCY (SMGWA.ORG)

Montgomery and Associates the 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 July, 23rd 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. As of December 2019 chapter 3 was completed.

The Olympia Conservation Area Management Plan was completed by May 31st 2020 and is available for public review as of July 18th, 2020. Staff has reviewed and provided feedback. Jodi McGraw will present the plan to the Environmental Committee in July.

An end of fiscal year invasive vegetation removal was completed by Environmental & Operations staff in June in the establish Olympia Conservation Area.

CIP PROJECT PERMITTING

Staff is working to secure permits for the following Projects:

Fall Creek Fish Ladder Project (all permits in process - awaiting CDFW's determination)

Lyon Treatment Plant Access Road Slide (FEMA funded)

Swim Tanks Replacement (Redwood Park Tank)

5 Pipeline Project

Tank Recoatings

WATERSHED MANAGEMENT/ STEWARDSHIP

FIRE MANAGEMENT PLANNING ON DISTRICT WATERSHED LANDS

Staff is working to prepare a Fire Management Plan through partnership with Panorama Environmental INC. The plan will improve mapping, road access for fire personnel and improve communications with Fire Prevention Agencies. Staff is also working to create a post-fire plan to ensure the most efficient recovery of District's water resources following a fire event.

Contract with Panorama awarded in March 2020.

Panorama has begun mapping priority infrastructure and lands. Next steps will include securing grants and begin plan preparation.

All data for GIS mapping received by consultant in April 2020. Internal mapping data portal initiated. Panorama & staff have begun to work with local agencies & organizations to secure regional grants. Panorama & staff will be submitting an application for CalFire's CFIP grant program and submit projects for Coastal Regional Prioritization Group (CRPG) Regional Prioritization Plan Survey. CFIP application should be ready for submission by end of July.

Prometheus Fire Consulting (sub-contractor) began site visits on June 9, 2020 starting with the District's most vulnerable poly & redwood tanks. These site visit will continue throughout July; including vulnerable pipelines.

INTERGRATED PEST MANGEMENT POLICY (IPMP)

First draft of IPMP was reviewed by staff March 2020.

Second draft completed in April 2020. The Environmental committee approved the draft at the May Committee meeting to be brought to the Board of Directors (BOD).

BOD & Public received the draft at the June 4, 2020 BOD and approved the policy.

Staff is working on final edits to release to website and begin implementation.

PG&E

PG&E letter was approved at the May 7th Special BOD meeting & was sent to the approved contacts by end of May 2020.

PG&E has responded to the letter and it was included in June's BOD agenda.

OLYMPIA PATROL

The Land Trust of Santa Cruz County alerted the District of the upper equestrian loop being overgrown at the Olympia property. Operations is working with a consultant to clear the over-growth and maintain the trail.

New fencing and cameras were installed in April 2020 to prevent mountain biking destruction on the Olympia property.

WATER CONSERVATION

REBATES

Funding for the District's rebate Program has been fully committed for fiscal year 2019/2020.

On July 1st (new fiscal year) customers are able to apply for the rebate program.

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY WATER CONSERVATION COALITION

Value of water campaign - focus on importance of infrastructure underway. Radio ads planned for June 2020. Outreach materials to be provided.

District staff provide photos and facts on infrastructure for the Value of Water campaign. Website is being updated with provided information.

Updated shared website - watersavingtips.org

PUBLIC OUTREACH

CHATTERBOX PR

Chatterbox is reviewing and plans to submit results from the April 2020 customer survey May 25, 2020. Chatterbox will also be advising the District on its completed outreach and social media plan in June. Chatterbox presented its findings and plan to the BOD & public on June 4.

July outreach planned (as of July 7) includes:

- Lompico Assessment District Annual Report
- July E-newsletter
- Auto-pay & online billing campaign
- Low-income program
- Lewis Tank Project Updates
- District Public meeting social media posts (on-going)
- Leak detection
- Water quality - switching to wells post

June outreach includes:

- Creation of District Twitter
- Auto-pay signup campaign
- Survey Results press release
- PG&E PSPS - generators press release
- Aerator Donation 'thank you' Social media post
- Various social media updates
- Committee meeting summaries
- COVID update video
- BCBA Facebook feature
- PSPS & generator update
- District Public meeting social media posts (on-going)
- Infrastructure project update
- Prepared Not Scared - fire preparation mailer (paid by Fire Safe Council)

May outreach includes:

- COVID-19 Updates
- Customer Survey
- Customer Confidence Report
- Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency Update
- System Flushing
- Earth day

April Outreach included:

- COVID-19 Updates (including article in Press Banner April 3rd, 2020)
- Bear Creek Slide Construction Update
- Customer Survey
- Customer Confidence Report

March outreach included:

- COVID-19 Updates

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.