

## M E M O

TO: Board of Directors  
FROM: District Manager  
PREPARED BY: Environmental Planner  
SUBJECT: Environmental Department Status Report  
DATE: May 20, 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)

### **GRANTS (ONGOING)**

#### CONJUNCTIVE USE GRANT (JUNE 2021)

Public engagement Workshop with Mike Podlech (aquatic ecologist) on the fisheries assessment was completed at the June 2020 Environmental Committee meeting. Fisheries assessment available on website [here](#).

Water right changes; working with legal counsel. Memo to be provided outlining the associated water rights and their interpretations by end of May 2021.

Meetings with resource agencies completed on March 11, 2021.

Staff has begun providing data on associated infrastructure and mapping to Rincon for CEQA process. Staff conducted site visits with the consultant the week of 2/16/21. Draft IS-MND is being internally reviewed by staff.

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

Public informational meeting completed on May 12, 2021. The presentation can be viewed on the District's website [here](#).

#### **CAL OES - COMMUNITY POWER RESILIENCY ALLOCATION TO SPECIAL DISTRICTS PROGRAM**

On March 12, 2021 the District was awarded an allocation of \$300,000 through the Cal OES - Community Power Resiliency Allocation to Special Districts Program. This funding will help the District pay for generators and other operational equipment.

#### **FIRE/FUEL REDUCTION GRANTS**

Further information on grants related to fire management and fuel reduction can be found in the "FIRE MANAGEMENT PLANNING" section of this report.

#### **URBAN WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN (UWMP) (June 2021)**

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.

Draft chapters including the Water Shortage Contingency Plan will be brought to the June Environmental Committee meeting.

Engineering staff completing seismic risk analysis for UWMP by end of May.

#### **STREAMFLOW, TEMPERATURE AND RELATED OBSERVATIONS FOR THE SAN LORENZO VALLEY WATER DISTRICT'S SURFACE SOURCES (ANNUAL)**

##### **WATER YEAR 2020**

Staff reviewing draft data report. Once finalized it will be made public and presented to the BOD.

##### **WATER YEAR 2021**

Staff having internal discussions on monitoring for WY2021. Final decisions of monitoring will be presented as part of the FY21/22 budget.

## BALANCE HYDROLOGICS DATA

Monitoring has supported the Fall Creek fish ladder project, conjunctive use studies and various agency compliance in WY2019-WY2020.

## WATER RIGHTS (On-going)

### CITY OF SANTA CRUZ PETITIONS

In March 2020 the District submitted a protest to the City of Santa Cruz's petitions for change of their water rights in Felton & Loch Lomond. A response from the City of Santa Cruz is required by the State Water Resource Control Board (SWRCB) within 60 days of receipt of the protest.

## SANTA MARGARITA SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AGENCY (SMGWA.ORG) (GSP January 2022)

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

President Gail Mahood & Director Mark Smolley are SLVWD's representatives on the SMGWA Board. Director Louise Henry is the alternative.

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 May 27nd 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 (ONGOING)

### SANDHILLS HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN FOR THE SAN LORENZO VALLEY WATER DISTRICT CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (DECEMBER 2021)

Staff secured the AmeriCorps Team for a special project in the Olympia Watershed for invasive broom removal. The team completed their Independent Service Project (ISP) with the District on March 19<sup>th</sup> -21<sup>st</sup>. US Fish & Wildlife Service approved the work in March 2021.



District is preparing a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) 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 2022.

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

As part of the OCA Management Plan annual reports must be submitted to the US Fish & Wildlife Service. A proposal from Jodi McGraw was approved on March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021 by the BOD.

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
  - Planning to go to bid May 2021
  - 100% design received and final modifications complete
  - Construction proposed to start June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021
- Lyon Treatment Plant Access Road Slide (FEMA funded - 2023)
  - Held interagency meeting on March 11, 2021 to discuss alternatives with resource agencies.
  - Engineering staff is working on an additional alternative.
- Swim Tanks Replacement (Redwood Park Tank)
  - IS-MND public review complete
  - Property purchase complete.
- 5 Pipeline Project (Highway 236/Douglas/Quail Hollow Road)
  - Quail Hollow IS-MND was approved at the February 4<sup>th</sup> BOD meeting

- Final designs in process
- Tank Recoatings
- Felton Acres Tank
- Conjunctive Use (grant funded)
  - CEQA in process
  - Completed plan June 2021
- 5-mile pipeline
  - RFPs released
- Zayante Drive Pipeline
  - Initial permitting review

## **WATERSHED MANAGEMENT/ STEWARDSHIP**

### **FIRE MANAGEMENT PLANNING (FINAL MAY 2021)**

The final plan is part of the Board of Director's meeting agenda, 5/13/21 and is pending adoption from the Board.

Panorama and staff worked with local fire agencies to begin prioritization of tank fittings, road access, and site access planning. The kick-off meetings (virtual) occurred in March 2021. Field visits with all fire agencies are being planned.

Panorama & staff are meeting with the RCD of Santa Cruz County to determine projects (within the Fire Management Plan) that could be eligible for grant funding.

Panorama & staff are working with the Coast Conservancy to secure a grant funding award through the Wildfire Resilience Grant program.

The District received CAL FIRE CFIP funding in the amount of \$6,822.00 to help fund the District's Fire Management Plan. Once the plan is complete the District can apply for CFIP for implementation funding.

### **INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT POLICY (IPMP) (ONGOING)**

Staff is working internally to begin implementation. Planning and implementation process will be brought to the May Environmental Committee meeting.

Trainings and kick-off for operation staff will begin in Spring 2021.

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

### **PG&E (ONGOING)**

The District sent a letter to PG&E regarding hardening their power lines and corridor throughout District property. The Letter was approved by the BOD on April 1<sup>st</sup> and has been sent to the approved contacts. No response received as of 5/13/21.

PG&E completed mitigation on the District's Harmon access road in January 2021.

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.

#### OLYMPIA PATROL (ONGOING)

Report for April 2021, had no trespassing reports but did report French Broom taking over the upper loop trail.

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 (ONGOING)

##### DROUGHT STAGE

Board of Directors reaffirmed the 'Stage 2 Water Shortage Emergency (Ordinance 106) restrictions at the May 6th, 2021 Board of Directors meeting. The District is requesting a voluntary reduction of outdoor usage by 10%-20%.

Total rainfall for this water year in Boulder Creek (as of 4/7/21): 17.07 inches of the average 46 inches.

##### 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. April newsletter focused on earth day and water conservation. May newsletter & bill stuffer included Stage 2 Water Shortage Emergency information and rebate offerings.

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.

#### 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](http://watersavingtips.org)

#### PUBLIC OUTREACH

##### BUZZ PR

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

Buzz PR's contract was budgeted until January 2021. Staff will be working with the Buzz PR on a month to month basis until a full report is presented to the BOD for a contract extension. Special projects will be approved as needed.

### April Performance Summary

#### Cross-Network Performance Summary

View your key profile performance metrics from the reporting period.

Impressions ⓘ <b>63,861</b> ↗344%	Engagements ⓘ <b>1,258</b> ↗131%	Post Link Clicks ⓘ <b>149</b> ↗126%
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Audience Metrics	Totals	% Change
<b>Total Audience ⓘ</b>	<b>2,405</b>	<b>↗4.4%</b>
<b>Total Net Audience Growth ⓘ</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>↗210%</b>
Twitter Followers Gained	33	↗3,200%
Facebook Page Likes	54	↗315%
Instagram Followers Gained	19	↘5%

### May Outreach as of May 13, 2021:

Stage 2 Press Release

Stage 2 Bill Stuffer

State Rent & Utility Relief

Conjunctive Use Workshop

2020 Customer Confidence Report (CCR)

CCR Press Release

CIP - Hillside Drive

CIP - California Drive

How to report an emergency after hours?

Newsletter sign-up

BOD meetings

Water Conservation

Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency

Rebates

April Outreach:

Online bill pay  
Auto pay sign-up  
Water conservation  
Olympia Broom removal project  
Kirby treatment plant/Felton library project  
Federal infrastructure bill  
Board of Directors vacancy  
FAQ  
Rebates  
Flushing  
State of the San Lorenzo River Symposium  
Newsletter & alerts sign-up  
Rent & Utility Relief State program  
Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency  
Debris Flow info.  
Customer Service info.  
Earth Day  
How to test for leaks

March Outreach as of 3/11/2021:

FAQ questions & answers  
State of the District  
Consolidation  
System Flushing  
811 - call before you dig  
BOD & Committee meetings  
Newsletter sign-up

February Outreach as of 2/11/2021:

State of the District mailer  
State of the District ads  
State of the District social media posts  
Consolidation press release (Miller & Maxfield)  
Joe Cone retirement  
2021 "System Flushing" alerts  
Emergency Main Breaks  
Surplus Redwood Tank  
Debris flow preparation  
Water conservation  
FAQs  
RFP advertising  
Infrastructure posting

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**

Seventh Annual State of the San Lorenzo River Symposium  
Saturday April 17, 2021--9am-12pm via zoom

Join City of Santa Cruz Mayor Donna Meyers and local natural resource managers as they share their knowledge and recent research supporting recovery and resiliency of the watershed!

Topics include:

- Post-fire geologic hazards and morphological processes
- Post-fire water quality impacts
- County of Santa Cruz Environmental Health Services Fire Response
- Lagoon water quality
- Riparian conditions
- Climate change adaptation

Learn more at [tinyurl.com/soslrs](https://tinyurl.com/soslrs)

**CLIMATE ADAPTATION**

The District renewed its membership with the Climate Registry and will be addressing climate in its UWMP

## **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.