

M E M O

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

RECOMMENDATION:

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

GRANTS (ONGOING)

CONJUNCTIVE USE GRANT (JUNE 2021)

Grant period ended June 30, 2021. Staff & consultants wrapping up billing and deliverables to be submitted in September 2021.

A public informational meeting was completed on May 12, 2021. The presentation can be viewed on the District's website [here](#) for a full description of the project.

The Conjunctive Use Plan & CEQA IS-MND public review closed on August 30th, 2021. Staff & consultants are working on responding to public comment. Staff working to bring final direction to BOD in November 2021. Water right petition drafts will be delayed until BOD direction is made. BOD can plan to discuss water right petitions in November 2021.

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.

Staff is working to complete the grants progress report due November 30th, 2021.

FIRE/FUEL REDUCTION GRANTS

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

AMERICORPS (JANUARY 2022)

District is working with Camp Harmon to co-sponsor an AmeriCorps team in 2022. The team will assist the District with restoration projects such as invasive removal, native planting, and community education.

SEE GRANT TRACKING TABLE AT END OF REPORT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON DISTRICT GRANTS

URBAN WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN (UWMP) (June 2021)

The Urban Water Management Plan was approved by a 4:1 vote on 6/30/21. The final plan can be found on the District's website [here](#) and was submitted to DWR.

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

WATER YEAR 2017 - 2020

All final reports & data can be viewed on the District's website [here](#).

WATER YEAR 2021

Staff is having internal discussions on monitoring for WY2021 and will be entering into a contract to complete limited data collection with Balance for WY2021.

BALANCE HYDROLOGICS DATA

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

Balance Hydrologic presented WY2020 data to the Environmental Committee on September 1, 2021. The presentation will be available as part of the meeting minutes.

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 was received and was reviewed at the 7/8/21 BODs meeting.

CONJUNCTIVE USE WATER RIGHT PETITIONS – FELTON

Further information on Felton water right petitions can be found in the Grants section of this report under Conjunctive Use Grant.

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

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

Agency staff released the GSP draft in July 2021 for public review.

The District has incorporated SMGWA updates on its social media pages, newsletters and BOD agenda packets monthly.

The next SGMWA Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 28 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)

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 31st 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 18th, 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 received
 - 100% design received and final modifications complete
 - Operations & Maintenance Manual complete
 - Construction proposed to start June 2022
- 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 4th BOD meeting
 - Final designs in process
- Tank Recoatings
- Felton Acres Tank
- Conjunctive Use (grant funded)
 - CEQA in process
 - Completed plan July 2021
 - Water right petitions & CEQA IS-MND September 2021
- 5-mile pipeline
 - RFPs released & closed June 8, 2021
 - Feasibility study in process
- Zayante Drive Pipeline
 - Initial permitting review
- Quail Hollow Pipeline
 - RFP out for construction
 - Staff sourcing three quotes for biological monitoring
- HUD pipeline replacement
 - Initial permitting review

WATERSHED MANAGEMENT/ STEWARDSHIP

FIRE MANAGEMENT PLANNING (ADOPTED JUNE 2021)

The final plan was adopted by Board of Director's at the 6/3/21 meeting and implementation is beginning to take place.

Panorama & staff coordinated with the RCD of Santa Cruz County to secure \$440,000 of grant funding through CALFIRE's Forest Health Grant to complete projects identified within the Fire Management Plan.

Panorama & staff secured a \$200,000 grant through the Coast Conservancy's Wildfire Resilience Grant program. Implementation of the vegetation fuel reduction is slated to begin in early September.

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. Plan will be complete and ready for Board of approval prior to December 2021.

INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT POLICY (IPMP) (ONGOING)

Staff is working internally to begin implementation. Planning and implementation process was discussed at the June Environmental Committee meeting. Moving from pesticides to traps for generators and pump stations to begin. Hardening facilities to occur over the next 1-3 years.

Trainings and kick-off for operation staff will begin in Winter 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 1st and has been sent to the approved contacts. A response was received on August 13th and discussed at the September 2nd BOD meeting. PG&E has been in discussion with staff about reforestation and removal of downed trees on the District's Ben Lomond Mountain properties as part of their mitigation related to the Coastal Commission's enforcement post-fire.

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 August 2021, had no trespassing reports but hiking and equestrian activity present. Overgrown paths noted.

As of October 13th, the September 2021 report had not been received.

Contract with the Land Trust is currently expired and work will be completed/billed month to month until new contract is established. Staff is awaiting updated scope.

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%.

Conservation banners & truck decals installed.

REBATES

Budget for rebates for FY21/22 approved.

Social media postings on water conservation taking place 1-2 times a month. April newsletter focused on earth day and water conservation. Newsletters & bill stuffers included Stage 2 Water Shortage Emergency information and rebate offerings.

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY WATER CONSERVATION COALITION

Value of water campaign – focus on importance of infrastructure underway. District staff provided photos and facts on infrastructure for the Value of Water campaign. Website is updated with provided information. Updated shared website – watersavingtips.org

WCC will be represented SLVWD and all other water agencies in the County at the Santa Cruz County fair in September.

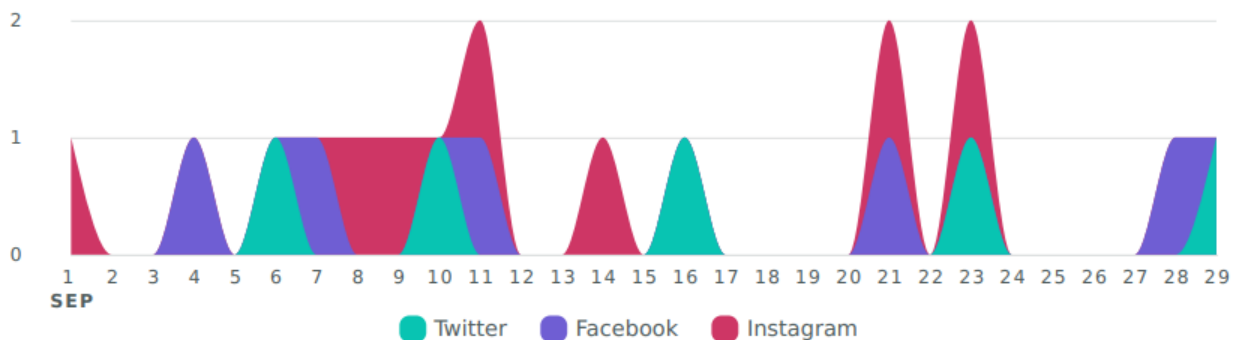
PUBLIC OUTREACH

BUZZ PR

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

Staff interested in putting out a RFP for outreach for 2022-2023.

September Performance Summary



Audience Metrics	Totals	% Change
Total Audience ⓘ	2,531	↗ 1%
Total Net Audience Growth ⓘ	7	↘ 78.1%
Twitter Followers Gained	5	↘ 50%
Facebook Page Likes	5	↘ 58.3%
Instagram Followers Gained	7	↘ 65%

October Outreach as of 10/13/21:

HUD Line press release

Stop/Start Service

Water conservation

Drought updates

Hiring ads
PSPS
Zayante Woody Debris Project video
After hours' emergency contact info.
Fire preparedness
BOD meetings
FAQs
Auto-pay

September Outreach:

HUD line break & request for water conservation
Hiring Ads
PSPS
Rate assistance
"In the news"
Water conservation
Fire preparedness
BOD & committee meetings
San Lorenzo Valley 35th Annual River & Road Cleanup
Emergency repair update
FAQs
Newsletter sign-up
811 call before you dig

August Outreach:

Media Day Coverage
CZU Fire Damage video
Prop 218 Fire Surcharge
Drought updates
Stage 2 water shortage
August Newsetter
District FAQs
Conservation devices
Prepared, Not scared – webinar
Fire preparedness
Hiring posts
VOC monitoring
Employee update
BOD meetings

July Outreach:

Fire preparedness social media posts
July newsletter
Media Day tour
Fire Surcharge
Hiring advertisements
SMGWA

Outdoor water conservation tips
Indoor water conservation tips
“In the news” media day coverage
Water conservation devices
Lompico tanks
BOD 7 Committee meetings
System flushing
Online bill pay

UPCOMING EVENTS

None

CLIMATE ADAPTATION

The District renewed its membership with the Climate Registry and addressed climate in its 2020 UWMP.

Other climate adaptation initiatives can be found [here](#).

NETWORKING & COLLABORATIONS

GREEN BUSSINESS PROGRAM (ONGOING)

In 2017 the District was certified as a Santa Cruz County Green Business. The District was approached to recertify in October 2021. Staff is working with Green Business certifiers to complete certification for 2021-2022. The program is free to participate by businesses. Benefits include local outreach and water conservation opportunities with local businesses in SLVWD’s jurisdiction.

SANTA CRUZ NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM EARTH STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM (NOVEMBER 2021)

The District was recently approached by the Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History’s Earth Steward Program (ESP) to begin a partnership. The ESP is a group of 7-15 Ben Lomond high school students who dedicate Fridays to community projects throughout the Santa Cruz County. There is special interest in working with the water district to help involve local students with projects in their own backyards. To kick off the partnership the District will have the group begin with work at the Kirby Water Treatment Plant removing invasive plant species followed by a tour. Future projects are being discussed and developed

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 MOUNTAIN STEWARDSHIP NETWORK (SCMSN)

<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.