

**SANTA BARBARA
COUNTY AGENDA
BOARD LETTER**

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
Room 407 105 E. Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Agenda Number:
Department: Water Agency/Public Works
Budget Unit: 054-04-3007
Agenda Date: 10/11/04
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Time: N/A
Continued Item: NO
Document Name: Brdoct11.Cloudseeding.Doc

TO: Board of Directors
Santa Barbara County Water Agency

FROM: Phillip M. Demery
Public Works Director

STAFF CONTACT: Thomas Fayram, Deputy Public Works Director, Ext. 3436
Dennis Gibbs, Hydrologist, Ext. 3543

SUBJECT: **Cloud Seeding Program 2005-2006**

RECOMMENDATIONS: C.A. Recommendation: _____

That the Board of Directors:

- A. Concur with the attached Planning and Development Department's finding that CEQA Section 15164 is applicable to 00-ND-29 and that this document is adequate to meet the requirements of CEQA for the Santa Barbara County-Twitchell Reservoir Cloud Seeding Program;
- B. Approve the 2005-2006 cloud seeding program and authorize the Chair to execute the agreement with North American Weather Consultants. Inc., a vendor located at 8180 South Highland Drive, Suite B-2, Sandy, Utah 84093 for cloud seeding for the period of October 12, 2005 through June 30, 2006 unless earlier terminated, in an amount not to exceed \$238,495;
- C. Approve and authorize the Chair to execute the attached Lease Agreement with Clear Channel Santa Barbara for ground based cloud seeding activities for the period of November 1, 2005 through October 31, 2007 in the amount of 1,000.00 per year; and
- D. Approve and authorize the Chair to execute the attached Extension and Renewal of Lease Agreements with the following property owners for ground based cloud seeding activities for the period of November 1, 2004 through October 31, 2005:
 - 1. Community Radio Inc., in the amount of \$1,200.00;
 - 2. Young America's Foundation, in the amount of \$1,200.00;
 - 3. Earl J. Dolcini, in the amount of \$900.00; and
 - 4. Goleta Water District (Corona Del Mar facility) at no charge

ALIGNMENT WITH BOARD STRATEGIC PLAN:

The recommendations are primarily aligned with Goal No. 5. Maintain and Enhance the Quality of Life for all Residents.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & DISCUSSION:

The cloudseeding program uses state of the art methods accepted by California Department of Water Resources to augment rainfall in designated target areas by injection of silver iodide into the cloud mass, acting as artificial condensation nuclei to form more raindrops. Cloud seeding has long been recognized as a cost-effective supplemental water supply alternative and, for that reason, has been an ongoing program of the County Water Agency since 1982. Storage space is available in many county reservoirs and several ground water basins remain close to or in a state of overdraft. Specifically, Lake Cachuma has 15,000 acre-feet of storage space available, Gibraltar Dam has 1,700 AF of storage space available and Twitchell Reservoir currently has 95,000 AF of storage space available.

Proposed Program And Agreements

The attached agreement with North American Weather Consultants, Inc. (NAWC) provides for an aerial and ground based cloud seeding program, similar to programs conducted during the last twenty-three years (excluding 1985-86). The program was bid as a "professional services contract" in 2004 with an option to re-hire the contractor without re-bidding for three years and NAWC was awarded the contract with three bids submitted, all from outside the local area. There are no local cloud seeding vendors. This year's proposed program again not only targets the Middle and Upper Santa Ynez Watersheds but also includes seeding of drainages located in San Luis Obispo County which will augment runoff into Twitchell Reservoir. Meteorological monitoring services provided as part of the cloud seeding contract have proved to be invaluable during winter storm events. The program's full-time certified meteorologist (who has access to sophisticated radar capability) is used to augment the Flood Control District's existing storm-monitoring capabilities.

The attached Extension and Renewal Lease Agreements will secure the existing favorable land based seeding sites for the upcoming rain year.

Alignment with other River System interests and Safety concerns

When it is apparent that Lake Cachuma or Twitchell Reservoir will fill, seeding operations immediately cease in that watershed. The program includes operational constraints designed to preclude or limit seeding effects over flood sensitive areas. Only backcountry areas behind major reservoirs are targeted.

As a standard practice, the Flood Control District retains final decision-making authority over all seeding operations for safety reasons. The Gaviota Fire area has recovered and as it is not a target area or near the target areas mentioned above will not affect the cloud seeding program. The California Department of Water Resources labels cloudseeding as a "safe and effective means of augmenting local water supplies".

Compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act

On November 28, 2000, your Board approved 00-ND-29 pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines (CEQA). The Planning and Development Department reviewed the proposed 2005-06 program and made the finding that CEQA Guidelines Section 15164 is applicable thus no additional review is required.

MANDATES & SERVICE LEVELS:

Cloud seeding is not a mandated program. The proposed program will result in no change in programs or service level compared to last year. The program's objective is to enhance regional water supplies and thus may be considered an important public service.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The program cost continues to be split between the Water Agency and local water districts with the Water Agency providing administration of the project. This agreement is considered equitable because the areas in the county located outside of water districts' service areas derive much of the benefits from the cloud seeding program. In years past, the support from the County's Water purveyors has eroded leaving the County Water Agency bearing a greater share of the costs. On May 15, 2001, your Board directed staff to return the program to a true 50-50 cost share.

The cloud seeding program was included in the 2005-06 Adopted Budget under the Water Agency's cost center of the Water Resources Division of the Public Works Department as identified on page D-326 in the budget book. The program costs will be paid from Dept: 054, Fund: 3050, Acct: 7460, Program: 3009.

<u>Total Program Costs (Estimated):</u>	
NAWC, Inc.	\$238,495
Leases, Noticing, Utilities and other direct costs	\$ 11,700
Total	\$250,195
<u>Total Revenue Sources:</u>	
County Water Agency Contribution	\$125,097.50
Purveyor Contribution	\$125,097.50
Total	\$250,195

In addition to the contractor and lease costs, the Water Agency has allocated \$30,000 in staff costs for the administration of project operations.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

Please return two originals of the Cloud Seeding Agreement, one original of the Lease Agreement, and three originals of the four Extension and Renewal Lease Agreements with a copy of the minute order to the Water Agency office, Attn: Christina Lopez.

Concurrence: Auditor-Controller, County Counsel, Risk Management