



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

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

Department Name: Water Agency  
Department No.: 054  
For Agenda Of: 01/11/2011  
Placement: Administrative  
Estimated Tme: N/A  
Continued Item: No  
If Yes, date from:  
Vote Required: 4/5

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**TO:** Board of Directors, Water Agency

**FROM:** Department Scott D. McGolpin, Public Works Director, 568-3010  
Director(s)  
Contact Info: Jonathan S. Frye, Interim Deputy Public Works Director, 568-3444

**SUBJECT: MOU for Funding for Emergency Sedimentation Removal for Twitchell Dam,  
Fifth Supervisorial District**

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**County Counsel Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Auditor-Controller Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Other Concurrence:**

As to form: N/A

**Recommended Actions:**

- a) Approve and authorize the Public Works Director or his designee to execute an Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Twitchell Management Authority in the amount of \$350,000 to help fund the emergency desilting at Twitchell Dam to restore water conservation releases; and
- b) Approve the attached Budget Revision Request (BJE No.0001263) for the Water Agency to release designations in the amount of \$350,000 to pay for costs associated with execution of the above MOU (4/5 vote required).

**Summary Text:**

Twitchell Dam was constructed in the late 1950s by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation as part of the Santa Maria Project. Twitchell Dam and Reservoir is a dual purpose facility providing for water conservation and flood control. Water conservation is provided by the storage of inflows to the reservoir for later release downstream. These releases infiltrate into the Santa Maria Groundwater Basin. No direct diversions from Twitchell occur.

Flood Control benefits are derived from the storage of heavy flood inflows for release as soon as downstream conditions allow.

All releases are managed through the outlet works at the base of the dam. Releases then flow downstream in the Cuyama River. However, deposition of sediment from releases has now filled in the

downstream channel to the extent that water is backed up against the dam's toe drain and as such operation releases are not advisable until this situation is corrected.

While the dam is operated by the Santa Maria Valley Water Conservation District (SMVWCD), the Twitchell Management Authority (TMA) has proposed to assist the SMVWCD with completion of a minimum amount of work to allow conservation release to occur. There are approximately 10,000 acre feet of water in the reservoir currently.

TMA in turn has asked for assistance from the County Water Agency, as the Water Agency holds the Master Contract for the Twitchell Project, as it does with the Cachuma Project. Given the benefits of the Twitchell Project to the County, staff concurs with the request of TMA for a contribution of funds to complete this needed work on a one-time basis. TMA and the SMVWCD will continue to work on a longer term permanent remedy to the downstream sedimentation problem.

As the operating and managing entity of the dam, the SMVWCD filed and distributed a CEQA Notice of Exemption under Guideline Section Public Resources Code: 21080 (b)(4) on August 19, 2010 for this emergency project.

**Background:**

Santa Barbara County has two federally constructed water supply projects; Cachuma and Twitchell. The federal government requires a local agency with broad taxing powers to contract with the United States to ensure the applicable portion of the project is repaid by the beneficiaries. In each case, the County Water Agency is the local agency to provide the federal government this surety. The Water Agency in turn contracts with other local agencies for the payment.

In addition, the Water Agency has historically cooperated with other local agencies for various projects associated with Cachuma and Twitchell and will continue to do so.

The SMVWCD, by agreement with the County and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, operates Twitchell Dam for general operations and maintenance and for water conservation releases. If and when the reservoir exceeds the water conservation capacity, the project is run by order of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in close consultation with the Flood Control District.

Since its construction, Twitchell Reservoir has experienced sedimentation far beyond what was expected during its design. This situation has caused a faster than expected loss in volume in the reservoir due to sediment, and has also precipitated increased sedimentation immediately downstream of the dam. This deposition is what now threatens operation of the dam for water conservation releases.

Twitchell Reservoir also provides an estimated 20,000 acre feet of groundwater recharge per year and as such is a vital element of the Santa Maria Valley's water supply for both agriculture and municipal needs.

As a result of past groundwater litigation, the TMA was created to manage and administer all new projects to maintain the Twitchell Project yield this includes sediment management. The County Water Agency has an advisory role with TMA but does not currently provide annual funding to TMA.

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

Budgeted: No

**Fiscal Analysis:**

<u>Funding Sources</u>	<u>Current FY Cost:</u>	<u>Annualized</u> <u>On-going Cost:</u>	<u>Total One-Time</u> <u>Project Cost</u>
Water Agency funding	\$ 350,000.00		
State			
Federal			
Fees			
Other:			
Total	\$ 350,000.00	\$ -	\$ -

Narrative:

This project was not included in this year's budget. Attached for approval is a budget revision requesting to release designations from the Water Agency to pay for costs associated with this MOU.

**Staffing Impacts:**

**Legal Positions:**

**FTEs:**

**Special Instructions:**

Direct the Clerk of the Board to send a copy of minute order and Budget Revision Request (BJE No. 0001263 ) to the Water Agency office, Attn: Christina Lopez.

**Attachments:**

MOU (Funding for Emergency Sedimentation Removal) (copy)  
Budget Revision Request (BJE No. 0001263)

**Authored by:** Thomas D. Fayram, Interim Parks Director, 568-2467

**cc:**